

GERALD FLURRY



ZECHARIAH

The Sign of Christ's
Imminent Return

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IMMINENT RETURN

BY GERALD FLURRY

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This prophetic book has only now been fully understood! The book of Zechariah contains prophecy about two end-time churches of God. One church is doing God's Work. It is even prophesied to build a majestic physical house for God, which is now finished, so anybody can see it. It is a symbol of fulfilled prophecy, which proves that God's master plan always prevails. That royal house is also a symbol of endless hope. God's government rules that house and is about to rule all mankind and bring us joy forever. The other church, which is Laodicean, fails in its commission to do God's Work. The key to understanding these churches is a flying scroll. It shows us what God is doing today and where it is all leading.

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Chapter 1

Crisis in God's Church

THE CENTRAL THEME OF ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY IS *GOD'S TEMPLE*. Acknowledge this theme and the book is much easier to understand. Also, to understand this book, you must realize that the prophecy in it is dual. It was delivered to ancient Judah at the time of the construction of the second temple; however, God's message through Zechariah could not be understood until our time—today!

God is working out His great master plan. That plan involves both the world and the Church. When we look at the plan of God operating in our day, we must realize that the events happening *within God's temple*—the Church—are *more important* to God than events happening within the world. God's main concern *right now* is with His Church, the people who are striving and struggling to do God's Work and enter into His Family. Zechariah's prophecy does deal with the destruction of Israel, but the book's prophecies have more to do with *BUILDING CHARACTER* than with destruction. This prophecy reveals that in this end time, some of God's people are failing to build the character that God wants them to build! Are we building godly character in our lives? Zechariah holds a crucial message for all of God's true Church today.

BE NOT AS YOUR FATHERS

According to *Soncino*, Zechariah came on the scene only two months after Haggai. "In the eighth month, in the second year

of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers” (Zechariah 1:1-2). God is displeased with us when we disobey Him. “Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *Turn ye unto me*, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts” (verse 3). Several translations, including the Revised Standard Version, say the word *turn* is actually *return*. *Return unto me!* God is saying. This is addressed to people who had been with God and then turned away. It is speaking to the end-time Laodiceans.

“Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD” (verse 4). God spoke and is speaking to them. But how? Through His human messenger today.

The former prophets cried this to Israel anciently, and they are crying the same message to the Laodiceans today. What God expects of His people is very plain. God wants us to turn to Him. If we turn to Him, He will turn to us. That is the way it works. If we don’t turn, He won’t turn! God pleads with us not to be like our fathers—ancient Israel. These people did not hear God. They did not respond to God’s call to repentance. They refused to turn to Him, so God had to punish them severely. That is not what God desires for us.

Yet today we see massive rebellion within the Church. God is highly displeased with the Laodicean Church today because of the turn it has taken.

GOD’S WORDS ABIDE FOREVER

Then Zechariah asks a penetrating question: “Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, *do they live for ever?*” (verse 5). Why did God inspire Zechariah to ask this? One, two or three prophets died; but the people who heard their messages were *still alive*. God wanted the people to think deeply about what they had witnessed. Do prophets live forever? No, they do not.

ZECHARIAH 1:5 SHOWS THAT GOD PLACES A GREATER RESPONSIBILITY ON THOSE PEOPLE WHO *LIVE AT THE SAME TIME* AS THE

PROPHET OR APOSTLE. God sends His prophets onto the scene; they deliver their God-inspired message, then they die like everyone else. So we had better take heed when we hear one of God's prophets or apostles speaking to us.

In this end time we must also recognize this fact. Herbert W. Armstrong was God's chosen apostle and a type of God's end-time Elijah (Matthew 17:11). He delivered God's message, which you can prove from your own Bible, and now he is dead. He didn't live forever—and that actually upset a lot of people! Look at what happened to the Church when he died. Even the commentaries say this verse is talking about the recent past. We know that is true.

Apostles die—that is the nature of physical life. So why should things be so radically different after Mr. Armstrong died? Why did God's Church simply go spiritually crazy after he was gone? Clearly, the people had some weaknesses that they didn't deal with. This verse certainly implies that they were looking to a man. Zechariah wants us to ask this question and to realize that time is short. Human beings don't live long. We need to take advantage of the short span of time we've been given.

Prophets don't live forever, and neither do apostles. But does that make the message null and void? God wants us to gain a certain perspective here. Although a prophet or an apostle does not live forever, something *does live forever*.

“But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? ...” (Zechariah 1:6). PROPHETS OR APOSTLES DO NOT LIVE FOREVER; GOD'S MESSAGE OR WORDS, HOWEVER, DO LIVE FOREVER. WHEN ONE OF GOD'S LEADERS DELIVERS A MESSAGE, WE MUST LEARN TO PUT OUR FOCUS IN THE RIGHT PLACE. We should not look to the men who die, whose breath is just like the animal—they lose their breath and they are gone. WE MUST LOOK TO GOD'S WORDS THAT LIVE FOREVER. That is where we must focus.

Most people make the serious mistake of not focusing on God's words. That is the problem within the Laodicean Church today. Herbert Armstrong is dead and gone. Many believe the words he spoke and wrote should have died with him. BUT THEY ARE GOD'S WORDS!

“[A]nd they returned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according

to our doings, so hath he dealt with us” (verse 6). God punished the people in ancient Israel for having the wrong focus. God dealt with those people according to their doings. God will deal with us today in the same way.

GOD’S GLOBAL WORK

The vision recorded in the next few verses is confusing to most, but the meaning can be easily understood. “Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. *Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest*” (verses 7-11). Zechariah didn’t know what this vision meant. He was somewhat daunted by these symbols. However, the angels prophesied that these symbols are easily understood when God reveals them to us. Let’s walk by faith and be determined to understand!

The angel showed him that the man or angelic beings riding horses represent God’s agents on the Earth.

WE MUST REALIZE THAT GOD AND CHRIST DIRECT THEIR WORK ON THE EARTH THROUGH ANGELIC BEINGS. THESE ANGELIC BEINGS WALK AROUND THE EARTH AND REPORT BACK TO GOD. God uses these beings to make sure His plan is carried out through the *whole Earth*, because God’s Work is a GLOBAL work. GOD’S AGENTS WALK “TO AND FRO” THROUGH THE ENTIRE EARTH.

END-TIME CRISIS IN GOD’S CHURCH

Study verses 12 through 16. They show that Israel (today the United States and Great Britain) is in a great crisis.

Notice what God says in verse 17. “Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem” (verse 17). Remember, *Zion* in prophecy is a type of God's Church (Hebrews 12:22-23). At the same time as Israel's crisis, God has also decided to NOT YET choose or comfort Zion. In other words, the Church is also about to enter into the Great Tribulation with the nations of Israel. This verse shows that the Church is going to need to be comforted. God has not comforted it yet.

“Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. And the LORD shewed me four carpenters. Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it” (Zechariah 1:18-21). The four horns represent the power of God. God uses this power to carry out His plans. God has the power to comfort Zion but He *refuses* to do so. Why?

“Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD” (Zechariah 2:6). God sends a message to Jerusalem (or Israel) to flee from the land of the north. The “land of the north” is referring to Germany and the European Union. God is telling people that they had better run—the fearsome king of the north is coming!

Who is this talking to? He says, “I have spread you abroad.” During the Tribulation, physical and spiritual Israel—that is, those who are *not* protected in a place of safety—are going to be *spread abroad!* Because of their sins, God is going to do that personally! That should strike fear in people.

God makes His warning even stronger in the next verse: “DELIVER THYSELF, O ZION, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon” (verse 7).

Here is Zion, God's own Laodicean Church, *dwelling with the daughter of Babylon!*

God tells Zion to deliver *themselves* from this same

political conglomerate. God does not plan to deliver them. Why? Because they are “dwell[ing] with the daughter of Babylon”—spiritually.

God promises the Philadelphians a place of protection (Revelation 3:10; 12:14). So this message must be directed at God’s Laodicean Church. How is the Laodicean Church dwelling with the daughter of Babylon? By the doctrines it teaches. The Worldwide Church of God (WCG) now teaches a gospel emphasizing the person of Jesus Christ rather than the message He brought. Essentially, the WCG is teaching BABYLONIAN doctrine.

That problem also afflicts those churches that left the WCG, except the Philadelphia Church. They have become Laodicean, or lukewarm. (For proof, request our free book *Malachi’s Message to God’s Church Today*.)

How does God feel about these Laodicean changes? He warns that if you get all tangled up with Babylon, then you will have to *deliver yourself!* There is a great world crisis coming. The European Union (or as God calls it, *Babylon*) will wreak untold havoc on this world. God plans to deliver His Philadelphia Church from this Tribulation. But God says to the Laodiceans, YOU DELIVER YOURSELVES FROM WHAT IS COMING! The Laodiceans no longer believe in a place of protection, so God refuses to protect them. The great tragedy is that the Laodiceans will NOT BE ABLE to deliver or protect themselves.

If the Laodiceans don’t trust God, then when the Tribulation comes, God is going to leave them without protection. That’s what He is saying.

This is strong correction that the Laodiceans today *need to hear!* We have been talking about the place of safety for decades, and yet so many of God’s people today dismiss it. That does not change the truth of the Bible!

God is going to teach us to tremble before His every word—one way or another—or we cannot inherit His Kingdom.

THE APPLE OF GOD’S EYE

Though God is giving blistering correction, we must never forget WHY. Is it because He hates the Laodiceans? No—it is because *they are His sons!* His love for them is *unfathomable*—and He is

doing all He can to bring them back! “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for *he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye*” (Zechariah 2:8).

Does God not love the Laodiceans? They are the apple of His eye! Literally that means the gate through which light enters the eye. This group of people is so very important to God!

“For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and YE SHALL KNOW THAT THE LORD OF HOSTS HATH SENT ME” (verse 9). This is the prophet talking. Prophetically speaking, it is referring to a *type* of Zechariah during the Laodicean era. Those people who refuse to accept God’s word are going to *know* that God sent a man in this end time. This is a promise: God tells this man, *You deliver the message, and I guarantee the time will come when they will KNOW it’s a message from me. It’s only a matter of WHEN.* (That is fully explained in my free booklet *Who Is “That Prophet”?*)

The Rotherham Version renders verse 9, “Thus says the Eternal of hosts, *for his own honor* has he sent me unto the nations that are spoiling you, and you shall know that the God of hosts has sent me.” God sent this man—for His own honor! The Jerusalem Bible reads, “The Eternal says this, ‘He whose glory has sent me here, as regards the nations who spoiled you.’” The Septuagint says, “The Almighty has sent me to you.”

People can reason around this today, but sooner or later the truth will come out, and all mankind will *know* what God was doing. They will have to admit that God sent this message.

Zechariah 1 is talking about those angelic agents. Zechariah 2 is really talking about the prophet being sent by God.

DWELL IN YOUR MIDST

Even though God plunges the Laodiceans into the Tribulation, He does so for their benefit. “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee” (Zechariah 2:10-11). You can’t say this is a gloomy message. First of all, God gives another gigantic promise of

hope: He says that *very soon*, MANY NATIONS are going to JOIN THEMSELVES WITH GOD! Not a few nations, but MANY NATIONS!

And how will God respond? By dwelling right in their midst! When the nations repent, God will dwell with them. The *whole world* has a *wonderful future* to look forward to! What a hope!

Even the Laodiceans still have this glorious opportunity. If they would only turn from their sin and return to God, He would dwell within them today.

Again at the end of verse 11 you have this statement from the prophet, that people in this end time are going to KNOW that God sent a man to warn them. When the time comes that they repent, Zechariah is going to tell them, and God is going to show them, just WHO WE ARE.

Mr. Armstrong did not understand very much about the books of Haggai and Zechariah—because he didn't *need* to. God simply didn't reveal it to him. But *today*, WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THIS, because it is specifically for this last era of God's Church. There's just a little time left to understand it! And God tells us, *Look—I did the sending! All of this understanding and revelation—it came from ME!*

He's talking about a man here, but we have to see how God IS BEHIND IT. The same was true of Mr. Armstrong, who was an end-time type of Zerubbabel. As Zechariah also wrote, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; *and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you*" (Zechariah 4:9). People are going to know God sent that man! God uses men—but the focus must remain on the great GOD WHO DID THE SENDING!

ALL FLESH

"And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again" (Zechariah 2:12). Notice that! *Two times* within this passage (here and in Zechariah 1:17), God reminds us that HE IS GOING TO CHOOSE JERUSALEM AGAIN! As we saw in Chapter One, this is the magnificent hope the Laodiceans need to recapture. Whatever the trials and challenges that lie before us, we will be able to endure if we never let our focus slip from the vision of God choosing Jerusalem.

“Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation” (Zechariah 2:13). When the Tribulation begins, the whole world should take great hope. Jesus Christ will soon intervene and save mankind! *All flesh* will be ruled by God—every person on Earth!

Chapter 2

Zerubbabel and Joshua

THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT KEY TO UNDERSTANDING ZECHARIAH chapters 3 and 4. “For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be *seven eyes* [T]hey shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those *seven*; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth” (Zechariah 3:9; 4:10).

The “seven eyes” refer to the seven Church eras. “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches” (Revelation 1:20). The seven candlesticks (or lamps) are also the seven Church eras (see Revelation 2 and 3).

“And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof” (Zechariah 4:2). The word “candlestick” would be better translated “lampstand” (see *Anchor Bible Commentary*). The lampstand has SEVEN LAMPS, which again represent the seven Church eras of Revelation 2 and 3.

Lamps give light. Eyes are used to see. These seven Church eras are given spiritual light and spiritual sight by God. They see and understand God’s plan and world events because they are led by God’s Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6). No other group

is given this understanding by God—only God’s very elect.

People in this world are in the blackest kind of night because they don’t have God’s lamp. They can’t see how to solve their many frightening problems. They could know, but they reject the light that God has always tried to give them through His message.

The seven eyes are listed in the Joshua section (Zechariah 3:9) and in the Zerubbabel section (Zechariah 4:10). The seven lamps (or seven eyes) are also mentioned in Zechariah 4:2. GOD IS EMPHASIZING THE SUBJECT OF CHURCH ERAS because Joshua and Zerubbabel both are in this end-time prophecy. That is just another indication that this is a prophecy for NOW. The seven eras *start* at Christ’s first coming and *end* at His Second Coming. God wants us to think in terms of CHURCH ERAS. This is crucial to understanding Zechariah 3 and 4. Then the chapters are easy to grasp.

“[U]pon *one stone* shall be seven eyes.” That Stone is Jesus Christ, the Rock. There is a Stone that ruled every era of God’s Church. But still, FIVE OUT OF THOSE SEVEN TURNED AWAY FROM GOD. Just read the history in Revelation 2 and 3. That is a frightening statistic! The ratio is overwhelming. Anyone who thinks we don’t have the potential to make mistakes and to fall away needs to look at what has happened to God’s people through the ages!

After Zerubbabel’s death came the Joshua work, which turned away from the Zerubbabel work (just as it happened in Revelation 3).

Zechariah 3 talks about a Joshua who had authority. A modern Joshua rules an era too. So when God talks about Joshua and Zerubbabel (in the context of Church eras), two eras and two leaders are discussed. Therefore, in modern times they must have each led a Church era. This evil Joshua is presented first in Zechariah 3; however, he was Zerubbabel’s assistant (Haggai 1:1). Zerubbabel was a leader before Joshua, so let’s start with Zerubbabel.

‘THE HANDS OF ZERUBBABEL’

When the Bible refers directly to Christ doing the building, it is usually stated as “not made with hands” (2 Corinthians 5:1), or something is accomplished “without hands” (Daniel 2:45),

or “a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands” (Hebrews 9:11).

“The *hands* of Zerubbabel have laid the *foundation* of this house; his *hands* shall also *finish* it . . .” (Zechariah 4:9). It is clearly talking about a hands-on operation.

This verse twice mentions *hands*, designating a starting and finishing of a project. The *Anchor Bible Commentary* says *hands* is LITERAL, and expresses *participation* in temple building (book of Zechariah). That is, it was built through a human being with “hands,” not built “without hands”—as Christ does it directly.

MR. ARMSTRONG STARTED AND FINISHED AN ERA that “restore[d] all things.” HE STARTED IT AND FINISHED IT before he died, with the power of God’s Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6). His *hands* laid the foundation and *his hands* FINISHED THE HOUSE—the Philadelphia era.

Mr. Armstrong wrote a letter to the Church on March 19, 1981. It said, in part: “Zerubbabel built the second temple to which Jesus came the first time. John the Baptist prepared the way before the FIRST coming. But WHO was to build the SPIRITUAL temple to which Christ shall soon come the second time? Who was to prepare the way before His Second Coming?”

“Remember, God does things in DUAL stages. As Zerubbabel built the first temple of MATERIAL stone, wood and other materials, he was a forerunner or type of one through whom Christ would raise up or build the SPIRITUAL TEMPLE—His Church of our time, prior to the Day of the Lord and Christ’s Second Coming. As John the Baptist prepared the way in the PHYSICAL wilderness of the Jordan River for the first coming of the HUMAN Jesus (both man and God), then coming to His MATERIAL temple, and to His PHYSICAL people Judah, ANNOUNCING the Kingdom of God to be set up more than 1,900 years later, so God would use a human messenger in the SPIRITUAL wilderness of 20th-century religious confusion, to be a voice CRYING OUT the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, about the SPIRITUAL CHRIST, coming in SUPREME POWER AND GLORY to His SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, to actually ESTABLISH that spiritual KINGDOM OF GOD.

“Brethren, HAS THAT BEEN DONE BY THIS CHURCH?”

“Did God raise up a one-man LEADERSHIP to be used by Him in building this spiritual TEMPLE and in proclaiming after 1,900 years the true GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD in ALL THE

WORLD—to even go to kings and heads of nations (Revelation 10:11)—in bringing the Church back to the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED? (Jude 3).

“HAS THIS HAPPENED, IN YOUR DAYS, AND HAS GOD BROUGHT YOU INTO THIS PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT AS A PART OF IT?”

“HAS ANYONE ELSE DONE IT?” (emphasis his).

Did Mr. Armstrong think *one* man would and did fulfill this prophecy? Absolutely! He speaks of “*one*,” “*a* human messenger,” “*a* voice,” “*a one-man* leadership”—and then ends by asking, “HAS ANYONE ELSE DONE IT?”

Why are Laodicean leaders today, without proper biblical support and proof, so intent on changing *major* prophecies Mr. Armstrong taught us?

Mr. Armstrong continued: “God has never removed a man called to a specific leadership or assignment or commission *until* his commission is COMPLETED.” Did Mr. Armstrong complete his mission? Did he finish “this house,” “restore all things” and “turn the heart of the fathers”? He most certainly did!

We shouldn’t be too quick to say we can’t understand Zechariah. God’s angel chided the Prophet Zechariah for having this attitude (Zechariah 4:4-5).

‘THIS HOUSE’

“The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of THIS HOUSE; his hands shall also FINISH it; and THOU SHALT KNOW THAT THE LORD OF HOSTS HATH SENT ME UNTO YOU” (Zechariah 4:9). Every person on this Earth is going to know that God sent this end-time type of Zerubbabel—Herbert W. Armstrong! Now or in the future, mankind must learn that God was behind that man.

“House” is a very common word in the Bible. In the *Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance*, the scriptures where “house” is used cover 13 PAGES. The word “temple” in the same book covers only ONE FOURTH OF A PAGE. “Temple” is not used here—and “temple” is not nearly as common in the Bible as the word “house.”

The word “house” can mean an “inner part”—or only a part of something greater. It’s a name given to human bodies as being frail and transitory (Job 4:19). The word is used as “tent” (Genesis 27:15; 33:17). It is used as “a spider’s house”

(Job 8:14; see margin). It's applied to wealth, property and all that belongs to a family. All uses of this word are very *temporary* (like a Church era). The word *temple* is used in a more permanent way or to indicate a very long period of time. For example, the word "temple" often applies to ALL SEVEN CHURCH ERAS. It also applies to ETERNAL LIFE.

The subject is "this house" and IS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SEVEN CHURCH ERAS (Zechariah 3:7-8; 4:2, 10; Revelation 1:20). If we put all the scriptures together, it could just as well be called "this era." And Zerubbabel did *finish it*. Mr. Armstrong not only laid the *foundation*, as we often say today—HE BUILT THE WHOLE HOUSE. When he died, the PHILADELPHIA ERA WAS COMPLETED. He "restore[d] all things" (Matthew 17:10-11). No more foundational doctrines need to be added to the house. WE NEED TO WALK IN Mr. Armstrong's FOOTSTEPS, WHICH IS WHAT JOSEPH TKACH SR. SAID HE WOULD DO. However, the Laodiceans have torn down the house that Zerubbabel built (Daniel 8:11-12). Now the Philadelphians in the Laodicean era must "raise up [the] ruins" (Amos 9:11). We must finish the Elijah work.

Dr. Donald Ward, president of Ambassador College in the late 1980s, said, "Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of Zerubbabel." But that is spiritualizing away God's truth. Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of everything—if He lives in us (Philippians 2:5). Still, there was a *man* named Zerubbabel who built the restoration temple. And there was a specific man who built the Philadelphia era of God's Church. Mr. Armstrong was a type of Zerubbabel. He believed it and said so himself, MANY TIMES!

The word of the LORD IS TO ZERUBBABEL (Zechariah 4:6). It doesn't make sense if Christ is talking to Himself. Christ is talking to a *man* who fulfilled that office in this end time. Also, Zechariah 4:9 is not referring to Christ directly finishing the house, but to a man—*Zerubbabel*—finishing the house.

It's illogical to say Zerubbabel is Christ. Is the Elijah Christ? How about John the Baptist? Haggai? Zechariah? Malachi? Of course not. God works through MEN!

God fits the last two eras of His Church into the seven eras in Zechariah, chapters 3 and 4. These chapters give us the *overview*. Then it all becomes very clear.

THE ZERUBBABEL INSET

The story flow of Zechariah 3 and 4 is about Joshua and the Laodicean era. Zerubbabel is not an active part of this story flow. The story flow would be much better if you skipped the inset that includes verses 6, 7, 8, 9 and two thirds of verse 10 in chapter 4. An inset is an insertion that is added *later* by the editors *after* the original story was written.

The *Critical International Commentary* (and a few others) even puts this inset in another section of Zechariah.

Why an inset? It was put there *after* the Joshua story was recorded by those who canonized the Bible. Remove it and you have Joshua and the Laodicean era just before and during the Tribulation, which is concluded by Christ's return (Zechariah 3:8). That is the *time* setting.

Joshua and "[his] fellows" are repeating the sins of the 1970s, when God's Church became polluted with liberalism until Mr. Armstrong set it back on track. They are relying too much on their own power—not the power of God's Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6). VERSE 6 IS A PART OF THE ZERUBBABEL INSET. God says Zerubbabel (Mr. Armstrong) built the house with God's Holy Spirit, but the Laodiceans REFUSE TO FOLLOW. They have a great example to follow, but they REFUSE. God considers this a rejection of HIS AUTHORITY AND GOVERNMENT!

Verse 9 says that Zerubbabel's hands "shall also finish it." That prophecy begs the question, *What is going to happen after he finishes it?* Looking at it in retrospect, you can see it almost implies that something negative would follow—which certainly did.

As aged as Mr. Armstrong was, he took the Spirit of God and accomplished more in those last seven years of his life than in the 50 years that preceded them! *Anybody* who saw Mr. Armstrong those last seven years would surely have to know that he was empowered by the Spirit of God in a spectacular way. He would totter up on the stage with helpers, barely able to walk, and then he would start speaking and transform into a human dynamo! He came to life, with fantastic power! Does anyone doubt that was the power of God in action?

Mr. Armstrong wrote *Mystery of the Ages* in the last year of his life, and he said, "I feel I myself did not write it." What a

miracle! He felt God's Holy Spirit moved and stirred him, as God has always led His great leaders. Mr. Armstrong understood how to let God rule and guide him. HE DIDN'T EVEN TAKE THE CREDIT FOR WRITING THAT BOOK! Spirit beings were putting those thoughts in his mind! Look at what God can accomplish through His Spirit.

Zechariah said we would know this man was sent by God to fulfill an end-time role of Zerubbabel. The very elect know that now. The Laodiceans and others shall learn that lesson in the Tribulation. The remainder will learn it in the Day of the Lord and beyond.

That is because this man did a great work for God—THE greatest work in this end time. Even a MOUNTAIN couldn't stop God's Work through this man! (verse 7).

However, MOST OF GOD'S PEOPLE ARE SO SPIRITUALLY BLIND IN THIS END TIME THAT THEY CAN'T EVEN SEE A MOUNTAIN! They don't know where Christ and His lamp are. They don't have the Stone; they don't see the seven eras.

Joshua *failed* to let Christ rule him with the Holy Spirit. He rejected Zerubbabel's example—that is what Zechariah chapters 3 and 4 are all about.

Even though Mr. Armstrong is dead, he left us a FINISHED HOUSE. But that spiritual house was destroyed. Our job has been to raise up the ruins. Mr. Armstrong restored all things (Matthew 17:10-11)—he finished the house and then died. But he didn't die until he FINISHED THE HOUSE. What does it all mean? The Zerubbabel inset gives the same warning Malachi gave: "Remember" what Elijah taught (Malachi 3:16; 4:4-6). WE MUST ALSO REMEMBER what and how Zerubbabel (typed by Mr. Armstrong) built.

The *Anchor Bible Commentary* says that the Zerubbabel inset "is not extraneous to understanding the whole." In other words, the Zerubbabel inset is an entirely separate thought from the surrounding scriptures, but it is critical in helping us understand these two chapters. THE INSET IS CALLED A "GLARING INTERRUPTION." That means it interrupts for an essential reason: When you include the inset, you can understand what it takes to *continue* being a Philadelphian *after* Mr. Armstrong died. YOU MUST FOLLOW WHAT CHRIST ESTABLISHED THROUGH HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG!

Mr. Armstrong said people in the 1970s wanted him out of the way; some even wanted him to die. And when it happened, look at the disaster that resulted.

This inset describes the same problem discussed in Revelation 3:7-21: changing from a Philadelphian to a Laodicean attitude.

The Laodiceans despise the example set by Zerubbabel. They could be a smashing success, but **THEY TURN AWAY** from this history. It's showing them how they must look to Zerubbabel to succeed. **THE "FRUITS" SHOW HE KNEW HOW TO BUILD SPIRITUALLY!** Several major prophecies tell us that our salvation has everything to do with **FOLLOWING CHRIST'S INSTRUCTIONS THROUGH MR. ARMSTRONG.** You'll see more of these prophecies as we continue.

The inset is there for one main reason: to reveal Joshua's sin and tell us how to avoid it. **HE DOESN'T FOLLOW ZERUBBABEL'S EXAMPLE.** That is getting to the very heart of what a Laodicean is. They turn away from what Christ established through Zerubbabel (Mr. Armstrong). The Laodicean sin revolves around this **REBELLION!** The inset was added by editors, **INSPIRED BY CHRIST,** as a *warning* for the Church today!

Satan's greatest attack on the Church in the end time is *from within*. Our greatest test is to resist his deceit and seduction. Joshua failed—Zerubbabel succeeded. The inset tells us *how* and *why*. *Remember*, it's not possible to deceive the "very elect" (Matthew 24:24). Those who are God's "very elect" will discern Satan's deception today by *using* God's Holy Spirit and obeying every word of God (Zechariah 4:6). Only by using God's Spirit can we be saved from deception.

The Zerubbabel inset is another way of indicating that this prophecy applies after Mr. Armstrong is dead. It's as if God is giving all of us the same instructions that Paul gave the Philippians while he was in jail and no longer able to be with them. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but **NOW MUCH MORE IN MY ABSENCE,** work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13). "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Philippians 4:9).

God is giving us the same instructions today. WHAT YOU “HAVE BOTH LEARNED AND RECEIVED, AND HEARD, AND SEEN IN ME”—OR Mr. Armstrong—“DO”! Paul told them to USE GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT—and “WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.” That “fear and trembling” is what the ministers in Malachi 2:4-9 lack. So we must not follow their example. FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL AND MR. ARMSTRONG!

Mr. Armstrong is dead, but we must *remember* what we learned from him and his example, which was INSPIRED BY CHRIST. We *must* “remember” and “DO”!

That is the MAJOR FAILURE of Joshua and “[his] fellows.” Mr. Armstrong’s “traditions” have been pushed aside now, as they were in the 1970s.

In Mr. Armstrong’s waning years, at times you could see a certain hostility and a contempt for him and his office and his government. We all need to *continually* evaluate our own attitude toward God’s government. Is it self-willed—or is it truly childlike and humble, honestly wanting to do everything exactly God’s way?

Again, God is discussing Church eras here (Zechariah 3:8; 4:2, 10). THE TIME SETTING IS JUST BEFORE CHRIST RETURNS. The Philadelphian and Laodicean eras are the subject.

Zerubbabel had the “plummet” or “plumb bob”—a measuring device that is used to test any vertical structure for deviation from a true line. This symbolized Zerubbabel testing the accuracy of truth or departure from previously revealed truth. IF WE AREN’T TESTING OUR TRUTH VERY PRECISELY AND CAREFULLY, we can easily depart into a Laodicean attitude. If we don’t look to Mr. Armstrong’s method of building, we face disaster in the future.

Verse 10 mentions the eyes of the Lord running to and fro through the whole Earth. It is part of that Zerubbabel inset—and you can certainly link that with Mr. Armstrong preaching the gospel in all the world for a witness unto all nations (Matthew 24:14).

When Mr. Armstrong measured and built, he didn’t do so with his own ideas. There was a plummet in his hand “*with those seven*”—the seven Church eras. He had the big overview, and really understood those seven eras. And remember, those eyes are upon the Stone. Mr. Armstrong measured the way he

was taught by the Stone, who founded the Church and guided all of those churches through the ages. He always wanted to be ruled by the Stone.

We must have that overview. We need to understand Christ's leadership over His Church throughout Church history. We need "the plummet ... with those seven ... the eyes of the LORD."

God gives His Church such incredible understanding—He gives us penetrating spiritual vision that He doesn't give *anyone else*. We have the eyes of the Eternal, which have seen it all—even back through the history that unfolded during those seven eras—and that run to and fro through the *whole Earth*—and the *universe*, for that matter!

Here is the majestic perspective Mr. Armstrong had, and that we need. This is what we are part of! This Church didn't begin on December 7, 1989. It didn't begin with Mr. Armstrong. It began with Jesus Christ!

What a luminous glow this understanding puts into our lives. We are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).

'THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS'

On October 9, 1933, the first radio program in the Philadelphian era of God's Church aired on a 100-watt station in Eugene, Oregon. The *Plain Truth* magazine, mimeographed by hand, began in February 1934, with 234 copies. Ambassador College began in 1947, with four students and eight professors. It all seemed so *small* and *insignificant*. (Likewise, the work of the PCG began very small.) But from its small beginning, the WCG grew into a great and powerful worldwide organization.

"For who hath despised the day of small things? ..." (Zechariah 4:10). Do some today despise "the day of small things"? The *Anchor Bible Commentary* uses the word *scorned* instead of *despised*. This commentary says *scorned* "indicates rejection." What is being *rejected* today? WCG leaders have *rejected* what CHRIST built through Mr. Armstrong. Some of these leaders have an *attitude* problem toward what Christ restored through Mr. Armstrong, which means they are rejecting the very GOVERNMENT of God. It wasn't the work of Mr. Armstrong—IT WAS THE WORK OF CHRIST. These scorners fail to see God's Spirit (verse 6) in the work CHRIST

accomplished through Mr. Armstrong. It is God's Spirit and God's GOVERNMENT they reject!

Zechariah 4:6-10 show that many people are going to be tripped up on this issue in the end time. This attitude of "despis[ing] the day of small things" has affected virtually every single minister in the Laodicean Church! They just can't believe that God could be working through the Philadelphia Church of God. Most Laodicean members feel the same way.

God has prepared a monumental test for all of His people in this end time. He has seen 95 percent of His people turn away from Him. God has raised up another small work (the PCG) to take its place. GOD WANTS TO SEE WHO WILL NOT DESPISE THE DAY OF SMALL BEGINNINGS! Remember though, it is only a small *beginning*. This Work is about to fill the entire Earth!

Zechariah 4:9 says a Zerubbabel would "finish" the major phase of God's Work in this end time. It is interesting that "the day of small things" (verse 10) is mentioned *after* Zerubbabel finished his work.

Shortly after Mr. Armstrong died, the WCG began to turn away from God. After I was fired in December of 1989, the PCG began with 12 people—a very small beginning. That is no big problem to God's very elect because they saw the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, which signified that God was measuring the Church. This means they did not look to Mr. Armstrong, but to the God directing him. This way, whether it is a day of small or big things is of little importance. God's loyal remnant see God behind the scenes.

God tests us to see if we "despise the day of small things"—or know how to totally trust God. God wants to know if we are willing to give up anything or anybody—FOR HIM!

Mr. Armstrong was tested severely by God. He and Loma kept God's holy days alone for seven years. They went through 28 years of oppressive poverty, and with few Church members. They were tried and tested. God wanted to know if they would not despise the day of small things. God tested them to see if they would look to Him and not men or things!

Mr. Armstrong said so many times that he and his wife, Loma, were poor financially, but rich spiritually. It was a day of small things physically when the Philadelphia era began. But God was working powerfully in their lives. Mr. Armstrong

said he had to learn to give up anything for God. He learned not to despise the day of small things. This is a powerful lesson we must all learn!

“If any man come to me, and hate [actually, love less] not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26-27). We read that passage to every person seeking baptism. God tells you in the very beginning that you may even have to give the ultimate sacrifice—your own life! Nothing must stand between you and God—absolutely nothing!

You are also going to be tested in this way before you can enter into God’s Family. God must know if we have faith only in Him, before we can be trusted with enormous power. He will never have another satanic-type rebellion.

The Laodiceans lack the faith to see and follow Christ in a small beginning! They are “rich, and increased with goods” (Revelation 3:17), and have lost much of their faith and vision. The size of their work is very important to them. Personal and collective income has become too important to them.

If Christ is in a small beginning, it will flourish and become a powerful work! The Philadelphians keep their focus on Christ—not on things or status.

We all need to examine ourselves in this area. How strong is our faith in small beginnings? We must make sure we remain sharp and strong in our faith. People in the 1970s and 1980s lost their faith. They came to dislike being called a *cult* by some people. They worked hard to get the college accredited, regardless of the cost. They compromised in other areas that took the Church INTO BABYLON. Mr. Armstrong stopped it in the 1970s! Why? He didn’t desire the world’s approval—but he knew he had God’s approval! How about us? Do we desire the world’s approval, or do we want God’s approval?

The Philadelphia Church is a small church, but we still have God’s government. And yet there are people out there, Laodicean ministers and members, who simply will not take God’s direction from us. They have a monumental government problem. They just refuse to submit to God’s government.

All who have come to be a part of the PCG will be tested on

government. Are we allowing God to lead us under any circumstances—no matter what? We must learn *not* to have contempt for God's government. We must come to love it *because it is God's government!* At this time, God's government on the Earth is being administered by human beings. Human beings make mistakes. But these can be straightened out. However, we must never follow these men unless they follow Christ.

We must keep guard over our attitudes. We can still fall prey to the Laodicean contempt for God's government. We must not allow ourselves to get into the attitude of not liking the government in God's true Church. Some are staying with bigger groups just to be free of government. In other words, they don't want God to rule them. Do we want to be free of God's government? If we do, then we want to be free of God! Do we understand the depth and seriousness of the Laodicean problem? *Rebellion against government IS THE HEART AND CORE OF THE LAODICEAN PROBLEM.*

THE WHOLE ZERUBBABEL INSET IS A WONDERFUL PASSAGE! IT SHOWS YOU *HOW NOT TO BE A LAODICEAN.* It shows where the Laodiceans went wrong, where they made their dastardly mistake. God put it right there *SO THEY COULD SEE.* He wants them to be measured, and to measure things the right way, as Zerubbabel did!

God has revealed the true understanding of the Zerubbabel inset *since Mr. Armstrong died.* Mr. Armstrong himself didn't understand that inset. But he read from it continually.

What a builder Mr. Armstrong was! We look to him today for everything as we raise up the ruins. He really knew how to build. He is gone, but the plummet is still here! We can still measure—and we must! (Revelation 11:1).

“Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet; The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place” (Isaiah 28:17, New King James Version). There's a right way to build, and there's a wrong way to build. The unlawful Joshua made the mistake of *rejecting that plummet.* We must get it right!

“For who hath despised the day of small things?”—or small *beginnings.* If we have the plummet and we're measuring properly, we will never make that mistake. We will know, whether we have a small organization or a huge one, that **GOD IS WITH US.**

Chapter 3

Two Joshuas

IN MALACHI'S MESSAGE, I FOCUSED ON A PITIFUL DEPICTION OF AN end-time Joshua in Zechariah 3. We all know who fulfilled that prophetic office, what we could term the “unlawful Joshua” in this end time.

But there is another end-time Joshua spoken of in the temple prophets—a *lawful* Joshua—whom we haven't paid nearly as much attention to.

Nebuchadnezzar took the Jews captive in 585-604 B.C. Seventy years later, the Jews returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Haggai and Zechariah prophesied about the rebuilding of the temple, and so did Ezra and Nehemiah.

Haggai and Zechariah were the two leading prophets used in the work of the second temple. They were contemporary prophets. From what I can determine, their messages anciently were delivered within two to three months of each other.

The books of both Haggai and Zechariah are *mainly* for this end time—specifically for God's Church today.

Zerubbabel and Joshua were two of the leading builders on the second temple. More importantly, they are two key figures in the building of God's *end-time spiritual* temple.

And the role of Joshua—anciently fulfilled by only *one individual*—is fulfilled by *two separate* individuals in this end time—one lawful and one unlawful.

We all must make sure we are grounded in this understanding.

THE ZERUBBABEL SIGNET

Haggai 2:23 reads, “In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and WILL MAKE THEE AS A SIGNET: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Herbert W. Armstrong fulfilled the role of Zerubbabel in this end time, and God said He would make that man a *signet*. It’s important to note, however, that the *context* of this passage is the *Laodicean era*.

According to the *Anchor Bible*, God calls Zerubbabel “MY signet.” In the second verse of this book (Haggai 1:2), God talks about “*this* people,” not *my* people—because they have become Laodicean. But here He refers to “MY signet”!

Mr. Armstrong is a signet for *us today*. *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* defines *signet*, “An impression made that had the same legal validity as an actual signature. Without a seal no document is considered authentic.” The *Anchor Bible* says, “The use of such a seal was the way of carrying out the authority of the person to whom the seal belonged.”

The seal represented the authority or government of the individual to whom it belonged. The only time you need a signet is when the person in authority is *not there*. It is like using a king’s ring to stamp a document.

Obviously, if there is a signet, it presupposes that somebody is there to USE IT. Who is that? Who is carrying out that authority, and to whom does the Zerubbabel seal belong today?

The Work of God today revolves around an end-time Zerubbabel. If you understand Zerubbabel and his work, you will know what God is doing today. This is why Haggai 2:23 is such an important prophecy. If we understand about that man, his work and the physical house he helped build, then we will see God’s signature written all over them.

God’s remnant today *must* have that signet. We are not even *authentic*—we are a fraud—if we don’t have the Zerubbabel signet!

Now notice the relationship between the end-time Zerubbabel and Joshua prophesied in the book of Haggai.

THE LAWFUL JOSHUA

In Haggai, you will see five mentions of *Joshua* (Haggai 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4), the high priest anciently. The history here and in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah indicates that *this Joshua was loyal to God when the temple was being rebuilt*. He was a type of a “lawful Joshua” in this end time.

Here is one of those instances: “Then ZERUBBABEL the son of Shealtiel, and JOSHUA the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all THE REMNANT of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God...” (Haggai 1:12).

Throughout Haggai, you repeatedly see *Zerubbabel, Joshua, and a remnant*. You couldn’t see that breakdown when Mr. Armstrong was here, if you just look at the way the history unfolded.

This prophecy clearly shows there is something this Joshua and this remnant know and cling to.

Mr. Armstrong restored all things (Matthew 17:10-11). This end-time Joshua type is lawful because he accepts Mr. Armstrong as a signet and fully accepts all things that were restored by him. This little remnant battled in a court case to *hold on* to all things restored. That fight was all about the Zerubbabel signet. We fought to get the treasures of the temple (Mr. Armstrong’s writings), because without those we couldn’t even do the Work! We need Zerubbabel hanging over us like a fiery cloud, or we’re not doing this Work right—we’re illegitimate.

In the book of Haggai, Zerubbabel is a signet. In the book of Zechariah, he is an inset (Zechariah 4:6-10). In both prophecies, he is playing a role when he really is no longer there. He has left the scene—but *what he taught* is right with us!

Throughout Haggai, Zerubbabel and the lawful Joshua are together, even when Zerubbabel is a signet.

The Zerubbabel-Joshua relationship represents God’s GOVERNMENT AT WORK! It is government to keep me and all of God’s people in line. Without the authority of Mr. Armstrong over us, we are not God’s remnant. With it, however—small though we may be—God speaks and delivers His revelation to us.

ANOTHER JOSHUA

There was no record of an *unlawful* Joshua anciently. But there is an unlawful Joshua *prophetically* spoken of in this prophecy (e.g. Zechariah 3:1, 3). The books of both Haggai and Zechariah are mainly for this end time. So what Zechariah states about Joshua's filthy garments in Zechariah 3 must be for the *end time only*. There is nothing in Ezra-Nehemiah about a Joshua with filthy garments, and Ezra-Nehemiah contains the history of Zerubbabel, Joshua, Haggai and Zechariah.

Though there was one Zerubbabel anciently and one Zerubbabel type today, there are *two types* of Joshua in this end time—one lawful and one unlawful. *Both were successors to Zerubbabel.*

The unlawful Joshua type was revealed in this end time. He caused a split in God's Church *after Mr. Armstrong died*. That too is why the Zerubbabel type in this end time, Mr. Armstrong, is referred to as a *signet*.

Joseph Tkach Sr. and I both were ministers in the Philadelphia and Laodicean eras. The Church split makes part of this end-time Work depart from the way events occurred anciently with Joshua (so far as we can tell from the Bible). That is why it is logical for God to refer to two Joshuas in this end time, even though the biblical history shows that there was only one Joshua anciently.

THE SIGNET MAKES IT VERY EASY TO DETERMINE WHICH JOSHUA IS LAWFUL.

In fact, the signet could imply that there are two end-time Joshuas and God shows us how to know which one to follow. Otherwise, why even mention the signet?

The picture in Zechariah 3 is one of the most pitiful, despicable sights in the Bible! Look at what happened to a leader of God's Church! All of God's ministers today—including me—need to take close note of this. Here is a man given the charge of leading God's people who is in *abject bondage*, tied up and bound BY THE DEVIL! Another man described in 2 Thessalonians 2 is apparently *possessed* by the devil! (That is fully explained in my book *Malachi's Message*.) THAT IS A STRONG WARNING TO ALL OF US ABOUT SATAN'S POWER. This could happen to *any* of us if we allow it! What worse fate is there than that?

WHO IS JOSHUA?

Zechariah chapters 3 and 4 is a prophecy about a modern-day Joshua and “[his] fellows” who are failing to build the way Zerubbabel did. They adopt the world’s scholarly approach to the Bible, which LEADS TO ONE OF THE GREATEST DISASTERS EVER IN GOD’S CHURCH!

“And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” (Zechariah 3:1-2). A modern-day Joshua died in his rebellion toward God.

Some of God’s people are going to be in the Tribulation—and plucked out—or not plucked out! Nobody who survives the Tribulation could fulfill this scripture more than a Laodicean. Fifty percent of the Laodiceans will lose their eternal lives (Matthew 25:1-10). A *repentant* Laodicean in the Great Tribulation would indeed be a “brand plucked out of the fire.”

If we put all the pieces together, we can see that Joshua and Zerubbabel represent two Church eras. Zechariah 3 and 4 are about the Joshua era. The Zerubbabel inset is there to emphasize to Joshua where he got off track—how his garments became filthy, spiritually. And it’s all to occur just before Christ’s return (Zechariah 3:8). IT HAS TO BE THE LAODICEAN ERA! Many people will follow Joshua’s example into the Great Tribulation—a Joshua who died wearing *filthy garments*. Other major prophecies of the Bible say virtually the same thing. More on that later.

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel” (verse 3). The Hebrew word for “filthy” designates an extreme condition of filth. The word can even be used as “excrement.”

Notice something important about this picture. This passage calls Joshua “the high priest.” I believe it is significant that it doesn’t call him the “chief priest.” This man in the end time was not the HEAD PRIEST. You can see the distinction between these two offices in other passages of scripture. In Ezra 7:5, Aaron is called the *chief* priest. Chief priests are also mentioned in 2 Kings 25:18 and Jeremiah 52:24, and a few places in Chronicles. Joshua was just a *high priest*.

The term “high priest” is used seven times for Joshua in Haggai and Zechariah, which may be somewhat of a message in itself. (Seven is the number of *completion*.) But I believe what God is telling us is that the person on the scene after Mr. Armstrong died was not the head priest. Even though Zerubbabel was gone, the signet was still there, and he remains the number-one man. God used him to prepare the way as His messenger (e.g. Malachi 3:1), and we only continue in that job.

We can't afford to lose that perspective, or we will meet the same fate as the unlawful Joshua in Zechariah 3 met! Why did this Joshua get into so much trouble? We must not forget this history.

A GOVERNMENT PROBLEM

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by” (Zechariah 3:3-5).

The central act here revolves around the headgear. The *fruits* in this end time illustrate that something was wrong with Joshua's head, and with that turban, which is a symbol of government. This was the cause of all of his problems: He couldn't submit to the Zerubbabel signet! He couldn't submit to a man that God used to restore all things—a man I view as one of the great men of the Bible!

These verses reveal that Joshua's real problem was with GOVERNMENT. THE TURBAN REPRESENTS RULE, AUTHORITY AND GOVERNMENT. PLACING THE TURBAN ON THE HIGH PRIEST'S HEAD WAS THE CENTRAL ACT OF THE ORDINATION CEREMONY (Exodus 29; Leviticus 8). Here, Joshua needs a new mitre. This shows that he had a problem with government or the Head.

Why would any of the Laodicean leaders or members want to dwell with the daughter of Babylon? They have a problem with God's government. They don't want God to be their Head. That is the problem that all Laodiceans have—every single

one of them. They all follow Joshua's lead in that respect. He had a problem with the mitre, or the government—THE HEAD! So do his followers, before and after his death.

The central act is positioning a pure turban. His big problem WAS HOW HE RULED—AND FAILED TO FOLLOW ZERUBBABEL'S EXAMPLE! This prophecy says there was to be a leader in God's Church who had a serious GOVERNMENT problem! He refused to submit to what Christ established through Zerubbabel! God called for REPENTANCE FROM THE TOP! THAT IS WHERE THE MAJOR GOVERNMENT PROBLEM IS.

“And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by” (Zechariah 3:6-7). *IF* you do this, and *IF* you do that, this says—it is all *conditional* upon his carrying out God's commission. He gets a pure turban *ONLY IF HE REPENTS*. This is addressing a definite person with a specific priestly item that is filthy—a turban—which symbolizes GOVERNMENT. He had a *SERIOUS GOVERNMENT PROBLEM!* He rejected the *AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST!*

He was to receive a pure turban only *if* he repented. But if you look at the history, there is no evidence this man did so. He said he wouldn't be “ruled from the grave” by Mr. Armstrong—but he should have been, if it's God's truth! And it was—it was *ALL THINGS RESTORED!* But this Joshua went out on his own and utterly destroyed what God had built.

We must learn from that history and be diligent to ensure we don't fall prey to the same government problem.

'THY FELLOWS'

“Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and *THY FELLOWS* that *sit* before thee: for *THEY ARE MEN WONDERED AT: FOR, BEHOLD, I WILL BRING FORTH MY SERVANT THE BRANCH*” (Zechariah 3:8). *Hear NOW*, God says! Joshua had only a little span of time to *HEAR*. The same is true of us—we must hear God's message *NOW!*

The *Anchor Bible* says the word “sit” could mean “rule, exercise authority.” Joshua is not alone. It is Joshua and “thy fellows.” *Strong's Concordance* says this expression could be

rendered “your pastors.” *Thy* (or *your*) is a personal possessive pronoun which shows possession of something (the car’s engine, the baby’s toy, etc.). They BELONGED to Joshua—they were HIS “fellows,” and continue to be so after his death. They don’t BELONG to Christ. THEY FOLLOW MEN—NOT CHRIST! THAT’S THE BIG PROBLEM! They are not as spiritually motivated as they should be (Zechariah 4:6—and remember this verse is a part of the Zerubbabel inset). If they were properly motivated, they wouldn’t be following Joshua, who has filthy garments. That is why they “[despise] the day of small things.” They have contempt for Zerubbabel (Mr. Armstrong) and what he taught. So they move away from the Philadelphia standard.

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by” (Zechariah 3:7). “[K]EEP MY CHARGE” refers to the act of *guarding*. It means “a place where guards are set.” THE BIGGEST SIN OF JOSHUA AND HIS FELLOWS WAS A FAILURE TO GUARD WHAT THEY HAD—WHAT ZERUBBABEL LEFT BEHIND. (Malachi 2:7 has the same meaning for the word “keep.”) Their job is to guard tenaciously what Christ established through Mr. Armstrong and gave to the Church. TODAY, THE WCG LEADERS HAVE REJECTED ALMOST ALL OF THE KNOWLEDGE REVEALED BY GOD.

This is the same problem as in 2 Thessalonians 2:15. They reject the “traditions” or “instructions” of the past.

THERE IS ALSO THE MOST WONDERFUL GOOD NEWS THAT WE COULD HEAR! JOSHUA’S FELLOWS ARE A *SIGN* THAT CHRIST’S RETURN IS VERY NEAR (Zechariah 3:8). The *Soncino Commentary* says, “FOR THEY ARE MEN THAT ARE A *SIGN*.” The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* also translates it “sign.” It could also read “WONDROUS SIGN,” BECAUSE OF WHAT FOLLOWS ALMOST IMMEDIATELY—*CHRIST’S RETURN!* (verses 8-10).

It is the *same* SIGN we see in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 of a FALLING AWAY, which also shows that Christ’s return is very near! This is almost the same language as in Zechariah 3. It’s also the same story as Revelation 3, about the Laodicean Church. *Signs* are to be read, understood and heeded—or we get lost. THOSE REBELLIOUS LAODICEANS ARE A *WONDROUS SIGN* THAT JESUS CHRIST IS ABOUT TO RETURN!

Chapter 4

The Eternal Has Chosen Jerusalem

NEW JERUSALEM IS THE CRUX OF REVELATION 3:12. GOD'S Philadelphians are infused with a strong vision of new Jerusalem. Our Father wants His vision of new Jerusalem to consume the minds of His people.

Revelation 3:12 says, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is NEW JERUSALEM, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

Throughout the Philadelphia Church of God's history, we have been reading this verse and applying it to God's Philadelphians. We may have read this verse hundreds, even thousands, of times. But how much have we thought about what God means when He says *new Jerusalem*? God tells us in this verse that His Philadelphians have their minds on *new Jerusalem*.

After Jesus Christ returns and has removed the sins from this world, the Father will come to rule His Family from new Jerusalem. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. . . . And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending *out of heaven* from God, Having the glory of God. . . . And I saw no temple therein:

for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:3, 10-11, 22-23). God the Father YEARNS TO BE WITH HIS FAMILY. Our Father will inhabit new Jerusalem with us—after the 1,000-year Millennium has ended and there are no more physical beings.

We need this vision to endure the hardships ahead. “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise” (Hebrews 11:8-9). These faithful men knew that our bodies are temporary—like tabernacles. WE MUST HAVE A VISION THAT REACHES BEYOND THIS LIFE AND EVEN BEYOND THE MILLENNIUM! “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (verse 10). Abraham saw new Jerusalem and God’s eternal Family.

Abraham is known as the father of the faithful (Galatians 3:7). He set an example in righteous obedience. He looked forward to the city built by God the Father. Think about the spiritual depth of this man!

We all need to really *think* about new Jerusalem, and the time when the whole universe will be inhabited by the Family of God. Human beings, and all the problems we face on this Earth, will be gone. New Jerusalem will be here. So will God the Father.

The Philadelphians will be stationed in the Jerusalem headquarters forever. “[H]e [each Philadelphian] shall go no more out . . .” God is making it personal for each one of us. Most of God’s own people have become lukewarm today. They have lost this part of their reward already, because they lost the new Jerusalem vision. Then Satan got to them. What an eternal price they must pay for that failure—even the 50 percent who repent in the Tribulation.

Do we see how real these promises are? And how costly it is if we fail?

We must overcome as Christ overcame (Revelation 3:21). He overcame the devil. The lukewarm Laodiceans fail to do so before the Tribulation.

This strongly indicates that anyone who loses the vision of new Jerusalem becomes far more vulnerable to Satan's attacks.

God will go to extreme lengths to help us understand and focus on new Jerusalem. We are in the last hour, and I believe one of the most profound and spectacular ways God is getting us to focus on new Jerusalem is *by building and properly using His house*. Armstrong Auditorium is a \$20 million facility we have built at our headquarters campus. We made it the highest quality we possibly could, because it points us to the new Jerusalem that we will inhabit in the future! THE SAME GOD WHO SHALL GOVERN NEW JERUSALEM RULES THIS HOUSE TODAY—HIS ETERNAL MESSAGE FLOWS FROM THAT BUILDING! We need to think deeply about this; *God's house and new Jerusalem are connected in a very special way*. The new Jerusalem vision reverberates within the walls of this most royal house.

God in His love warns Joshua and the Laodiceans about losing this vision in the context of their rebellion. He has the strongest desire for them to overcome the devil. He gives them every opportunity.

WHY THE LAODICEANS FELL PREY TO SATAN

“And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; *even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem* rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” (Zechariah 3:1-2).

These verses are talking about an evil Joshua, who represents the entire Laodicean, or lukewarm, era of God's Church. (This is fully explained in my free book *Malachi's Message*.) The whole era has been taken captive by Satan—that includes 95 percent of God's own people. Most of them are going into the Tribulation, where 50 percent of them will repent and be *plucked out of the fire*. The other 50 percent will die forever in the lake of fire.

What caused this Laodicean era to be taken captive by the devil? How did this wholesale falling away happen? There is an important element to this verse, which I hadn't thought much about, that answers these questions. In verse 2 God says, *the Eternal has chosen Jerusalem*. What does that mean? Why would God talk about the vision of new Jerusalem in

the context of this lawless end-time *type* of Joshua who is in bondage to Satan?

This astonishing scripture reveals why this evil Joshua and the Laodiceans became captives of Satan, and how we can avoid falling into the same trap.

The Eternal has chosen Jerusalem: God is showing us that the Laodiceans got into serious trouble because they stopped focusing on *new Jerusalem*. THEY QUIT THINKING LIKE GOD. GOD'S MIND IS CONTINUALLY SET ON NEW JERUSALEM: HIS ENTIRE PLAN IS BUILT AROUND NEW JERUSALEM. But Joshua and his followers allowed their minds to stray from God's vision of new Jerusalem. That led to what is probably the worst disaster ever in God's Church.

Verse 8 says, "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH." Notice, God says He is going to bring forth the Branch, Jesus Christ. God the Father is directly and intimately involved in these events. He brings forth His Son. But what happens just *before* Christ, the Branch, returns? Joshua's fellows are looking to Joshua rather than the Father and Son; they have lost *the Eternal has chosen Jerusalem* vision. The expression *men wondered at* would better read *men of sign*. They are *a sign* the Messiah is about to return! The bad news is still good news—a sign of the most wonderful news we could hear.

Christ is about to change and beautify Jerusalem as this world has never seen it. It will become the capital city of the world. Then after the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment, a still greater change is coming. God the Father and new Jerusalem are coming to this Earth!

"For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day" (verse 9). The Stone is a symbol of Christ, and the seven eyes are the seven Church eras, over which Christ is the Head. God gives His Church *sight*. He gives His people the ability to understand world events and to comprehend spiritual knowledge. The Laodiceans have lost this ability because they have gotten away from the Stone and the vision of new Jerusalem given to them by God the Father. They are now *blind* (Revelation 3:17).

HOW TO CONQUER DISCOURAGEMENT

The Eternal has chosen Jerusalem is the deep understanding needed to conquer Satan and remain Philadelphian. Realize what a tremendous blessing it is that we can understand the vision of new Jerusalem! NEW JERUSALEM SHOULD BE OUR GREATEST GOAL! IT IS THE VISION OF ANOTHER WORLD—ANOTHER UNIVERSE!

The Laodiceans were deceived by Satan because they lost sight of the vision of new Jerusalem. They don't know that the Eternal has chosen Jerusalem. It is really the deepest vision in the entire Bible.

God is telling us that if we want to avoid being deceived, and if we want to live exciting, positive, hope-filled lives, then we must understand this vision of new Jerusalem. We must anchor our minds in this mind-inspiring hope. *The fact that we think about new Jerusalem the way God does shows we are His sons!*

The context of these scriptures in Zechariah is God's people turning away. NOTICE HOW GOD TRIES TO RESCUE HIS SONS: HE IMPLORES THEM TO GET THEIR MINDS ON NEW JERUSALEM.

God is talking about types of Joshua and Zerubbabel, two very real men in this end time. We know God works and governs through men (Ephesians 2:19-20). And the fact is, we are not going to understand this vision of new Jerusalem if we have a government problem. The example of the Laodiceans teaches us this lesson.

We need to think deeply about why our Father wants to get our minds to embrace new Jerusalem. *Only* the PCG has this majestic vision. God wants us to remember that we are His unique remnant. We, like our Father, have chosen Jerusalem. God uses our anniversaries and other occasions to remind us how special we are to Him and how to sustain that miraculous Family relationship. We must do all we possibly can to give this message to the Laodiceans especially, since their salvation is at stake. The devil attacks us continually, grinding on our emotions and seeking to drag us into the depths of despair and discouragement. He tries to destroy the abundant joy we have in the new Jerusalem vision.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO GET DISCOURAGED WHEN WE ARE FILLED WITH THE VISION OF NEW JERUSALEM. How many times have you gotten discouraged when your mind was filled with this vision? Not

once! This is not to say we won't experience rough patches in our lives, but we can avoid discouragement and sadness by setting our hearts and minds on new Jerusalem. Our trials will overwhelm us if we haven't chosen Jerusalem. We won't purify ourselves without this understanding.

JERUSALEM ABOVE

Galatians 4:25-26 read, "For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But *Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*"

These verses are talking about two Jerusalems. There's the Jerusalem of today, a disunited city plagued by violence and discord, and a symbol of this tragic world. Then there's Jerusalem above, the Eternal's Jerusalem, the mother of us all, the source of power and understanding. We are *free* in a way that is beyond human understanding. This picture of new Jerusalem helps us understand the brutal reality of Jerusalem and this world today.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" (Hebrews 11:8-10). Abraham "looked for a city which hath *foundations*...." This city, whose builder and maker is God, was vividly real to Abraham! HE CLEARLY SAW THE FOUNDATIONS OF THIS CITY THAT WILL DOMINATE THE UNIVERSE FOREVER! You can read about those dazzling foundations in Revelation 21:19-20.

What a mind-dazzling future God has for His Family!

Also read Hebrews 12:22-23: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, *the heavenly Jerusalem*, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." How much do you think about the *heavenly Jerusalem*, "the city of the living God"?

JERUSALEM AND THE PHILADELPHIANS

In the booklet *Ezekiel—The End-Time Prophet*, I wrote: “Jerusalem is a type of national Israel. But there is also a Jerusalem above, ‘the mother of us all,’ which is the Church In Ezekiel 16, God’s primary focus is on Jerusalem above—the end-time Church of God. God’s Church receives truth from *Jerusalem above*. *This is probably one of the most inspiring chapters in the Bible!*” We should all study Ezekiel 16 again. God’s true Church on Earth is empowered by heavenly Jerusalem.

We support an archeological project in Jerusalem today, sending some of our Herbert W. Armstrong College students over there to dig in the dirt. Why? BECAUSE THE ETERNAL HAS CHOSEN JERUSALEM! We are preparing for Christ’s return to Jerusalem, where He will rule with His Bride. Then for 1,000 years, we will prepare for the Father’s coming to Jerusalem to rule His Family from there forever.

THE SEVEN CHURCH ERAS

In Zechariah 3:9, God compares the seven Church eras, beginning with Ephesus in the first century down to Laodicea in the last, to seven eyes. God emphasizes *sight* here because He wants His people to *see*. If we are doing God’s Work, we will see what’s going on in the world and in the Church! Zechariah 4:10 refers to the eyes again: “For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.”

The lesson is that we must have the eyes of God if we are to see. That applies to all seven Church eras. The end-time Laodiceans are blind because they have strayed from God and lost sight of His vision of new Jerusalem. God’s very elect are the only people on Earth who see as God sees! What a magnificent blessing.

Zechariah 4 continues this theme. “And [the angel] said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven

lamps, which are upon the top thereof" (verse 2). These seven lamps also represent the seven Church eras.

What does a lamp do? It sheds light in darkness. Today the PCG is a shining lamp in a pitch-black world.

Revelation 4:5 explains further what these lamps are a type of: "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunders and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."

Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon states that the root of "lamps" means "to make a field shine." The PCG work shines brightly in this very dark world. The house of God is the most resplendent representation of that glorious light!

The light shining from the PCG is only a *type* of the lamp in heaven. God has given us a portion of His brilliant light that shines in heaven. Then we let it shine for the whole world, whether people realize it or not. What is shining up in heaven is also a light for all humanity. People should be able to recognize it; they are without excuse.

We must always remember that God's Holy Spirit fuels these lamps. It takes oil to make our lamp burn. Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that empowers us. The more of God's Spirit we have, individually and collectively, the brighter this Work will shine. Herbert W. Armstrong taught us this lesson. It wasn't by Mr. Armstrong's might or power that the work was performed, but by the Spirit of God (Zechariah 4:6). The only way we can grasp the vision of new Jerusalem and do the will of God is by the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Consider that in the tabernacle in ancient Israel and in Solomon's temple, the lamp burned continually. It never went out. This is how we must be individually and collectively. **WE MUST MAKE SURE OUR LAMP IS CONTINUALLY BURNING BRIGHTLY!**

How brightly is your lamp burning? How much light do you shed? **WE NEED TO BE LAMPS THAT RADIATE THE BRIGHTNESS AND GLORY OF HEAVENLY JERUSALEM!** And we can only do this if we are continually drawing on the Spirit and power of God.

TWO OLIVE TREES

God has given me some beautiful revelation that shows an area where something the Church believed for years was incorrect.

“And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof” (Zechariah 4:3).

I always heard that those two olive trees represented the two witnesses, which are prophesied to come on the scene just before Christ’s return (Revelation 11). But I will show you why that is *not* true.

“So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying . . .” (Zechariah 4:4-6). At that point begins the Zerubbabel inset, which continues through most of verse 10.

Verse 11 picks up the subject again: “Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?”

If you’re going to understand the truth about the two olive trees, you’re going to have to look to Zerubbabel, and you’re going to have to use the Holy Spirit as he did (verse 6). This is spiritual understanding!

Who are the two olive trees? We get a clue by looking at another reference Zechariah makes in this context.

TWO OLIVE BRANCHES

“And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? . . . Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the LORD of the whole earth” (Zechariah 4:12, 14).

Before, Zechariah saw two olive *trees*. Now here are “two olive *branches*,” which are “two anointed ones” that deliver golden oil.

If you look ahead in the context, Zechariah 5 talks about the flying scroll (I discuss this in Chapter Five). That is a pre-Tribulation prophecy. That would suggest that this prophecy in Zechariah 4 about the two olive branches will also be fulfilled *before* the Tribulation. We know that the two witnesses come on the scene *during* the Tribulation.

Anciently, God commanded that the temple lamps be supplied with pure olive oil. “And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the

light, to cause the lamp to burn *always*” (Exodus 27:20). The COMMAND was also that the lamp be kept burning *always*, or continually.

Today, we are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:20-22). The pure olive oil is a type of God’s pure Holy Spirit, which flows from God (e.g. Exodus 30:22-33; 1 John 2:20). Only God’s Holy Spirit in us can do the Work (Zechariah 4:6). We must not pollute God’s message with carnal reasoning.

The light from the lamp is God’s message to the world, through the collective body and our individual example.

Today, God commands us to cause that lamp to burn always and with power. Why is such a command necessary? Look at what has happened to God’s temple, or Church, today. We have repeatedly shown that 95 percent of God’s people are not delivering God’s message in this end time. They have rejected much of God’s truth and become lukewarm. They lack the oil, or power, to do God’s Work of proclaiming His message to the world. They are too selfish to love all humanity as God does.

But who are these *two anointed ones* through whom the golden oil flows out to the whole world? This is end-time prophecy. We must know now!

Throughout these scriptures we have seen a lot of focus on the seven Church eras. In Zechariah 4:11 you see *two olive trees*, one on either side of the candlestick, or lampstand, that represents those seven eras.

THE TWO OLIVE TREES REPRESENT GOD THE FATHER AND JESUS CHRIST. They are there alongside *all* of the seven eras.

But then in verse 12, the focus shifts to *two* of those eras: “What be these *two olive branches*?” the prophet asked. These are the last two Church eras—the only two discussed in detail.

God has used two men in the last two eras to give golden oil from the Father and Son. The golden oil is new revelation that flowed in the sixth era and is flowing in the seventh era.

Where do we get the oil? From the *two olive trees*—the Father and Christ.

The two olive branches are *two men in two eras*. God’s golden oil, His Holy Spirit, flows through these two men when they deliver revelation to the Church.

Who are these leaders? Where is this golden oil flowing? You and I must know! Do you see evidence of *golden oil* today?

Look at the enormous amount of revelation God has given His Church in this end time. We have a whole library of books and booklets from Mr. Armstrong and from me filled with new revelation from God!

Can you see where God's golden oil was flowing during the time of Mr. Armstrong? Can you see where God's Spirit is flowing today? When we find where God is revealing His knowledge, that is where God's oil is flowing. It is all God's doing, but He uses a man to lead His Work in each of the last two eras.

God has called people to back and support *two leaders* in this end time. Together, the physical leader and supporters can make God's lamp shine brightly with that golden oil!

GOLDEN OIL

One commentary said this passage about the two olive branches was speaking of Zerubbabel and Joshua, and I said, *Well, that's not true.* But once I started thinking about it, my mind began to change as I thought about that golden oil.

God is trying to get us to understand the value of His revelation! This is golden oil flowing through golden pipes into the golden bowl! The *Soncino Commentary* says of this scripture, "The oil flowing from golden pipes into a golden bowl and seen in the light of the lamp seems to be golden." All this gold pictures the spiritual purity and splendor of what God is giving.

Look at all the new revelation God has given through Mr. Armstrong, and now through me. Isn't that what God is talking about here? When people leave God's Church today, they tend to criticize some twiggly area, or some insignificant speculation. But they fail to see the golden oil flowing in those golden pipes and into the golden bowl!

Only two men on this Earth have received new revelation from God for His Church in this end time—Herbert W. Armstrong and me. That will sound arrogant to some people, but you can easily prove it!

Read the books and booklets we have written and you will see where the new revelation is. **YOU WILL FIND IT NO PLACE ELSE ON THIS EARTH!**

These two olive branches are "the two anointed ones, that stand by the LORD of the whole earth." *The two anointed ones*

literally means the two sons of oil, or sons of fresh oil.

They are called sons of fresh oil for good reason! These two men give fresh golden oil—or new revelation—to God’s Church. God doesn’t talk about the other eras this way—but in these last days we have all things restored—and that fresh, golden oil is just pouring into God’s true Church! The light in this lamp is radiating in a special way as God gives more and more of that oil! That is what sets these men apart—not because they did anything spectacular: It is ALL GOD’S DOING.

Do you see this golden oil flowing? What a majestic and splendid image! What value do you put on revelation from God? We understand and appreciate the value of physical gold. But what about golden oil that flows from the Father and from the Stone through the golden pipes into that golden bowl? If you can’t see that, then you had better stir up the Spirit (2 Timothy 1:6).

How else do you explain all the truth that God revealed through Mr. Armstrong even when he was in the sunset years of his life? That man was terribly weak, physically—there is no way he could have done the Work by physical might. He did it by GOD’S SPIRIT. The golden oil was flowing through the golden pipes into the golden bowl—through a man who was 87 years old, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92! We have the evidence!

The same terminology is used in Revelation 11, but notice the difference: “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” (verses 3-4).

There is nothing here about golden oil, and I think for good reason. This is a time when new revelation has come to an end, or is about to. These two men won’t be printing literature—they will be fighting for their lives! (e.g. verses 5-6). They will have real power! But they will be proclaiming prophecies that we already understand and have already written up.

The Laodiceans believe they are rich and increased with goods (Revelation 3:17), but they don’t even see this golden oil, or the pipes, or the bowl, or the Stone, or the Father!

In Lamentations 4:1, God describes how the Laodicean ministry, which at one time God likened to fine gold,

has become tarnished (you can read about this in our Lamentations booklet). In the next verse, the faithful ministers are called the “precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold”!

God just keeps trying to get us to understand what a golden opportunity He is giving His people! We must see this God’s way, and look at it through the Stone’s eyes, the eyes of the Eternal. There is nothing more inspiring!

Chapter 5 God's Physical House Was Prophesied!

ON THIS EARTH TODAY, GOD'S GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE found in the Philadelphia Church of God. That is an astounding statement—but true. As we have seen, the Laodicean churches no longer have God's government; they have rejected it. We must come to see the significance God places on government.

Let's now look at another of Zechariah's incredible visions. It is related to both God's Work and God's government.

"Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits" (Zechariah 5:1-2). God shows Zechariah a flying roll. The *Anchor Bible* refers to the *roll* as a *scroll*. That is a better description of the vision.

THE FLYING SCROLL

Zechariah gives us the precise measurements for the scroll. It is 20 cubits long and 10 cubits wide. This translates to approximately 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. This was not a small piece of writing. The largeness of the scroll indicates its importance.

What is this flying scroll? Can we know? GOD WOULD NOT HAVE RECORDED THIS END-TIME VISION IN A BOOK FOR US IF HE DID NOT WANT US TO UNDERSTAND IT!

We must use our minds.

How can we come to understand the meaning behind this vision? Remember, THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH DEALS MAINLY WITH GOD'S TEMPLE. THAT IS THE KEY: THE FLYING SCROLL CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF GOD'S TEMPLE. Wanting to understand about the flying scroll should be very important to each one of us. If it is not, then it could indicate we have some serious spiritual problems.

Here is an example of how God wants us to *precisely measure*. If you have Zerubbabel's plummet, you can measure this.

THE MEASUREMENTS OF THE SCROLL TIE IT DIRECTLY TO THE TEMPLE. "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD. And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits. And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house" (1 Kings 6:1-3). These scriptures refer to the building of God's house at the time of King Solomon. Where is God's house or temple today? Spiritually, we know it is the Church (Ephesians 2:21). The temple in Solomon's time represented the center of God's Work. The same is true of God's Church today.

However, there is *duality* in this prophecy—it also prophesies that we would build a physical house for God. More on that later.

NOTICE THAT THE DIMENSIONS FOR SOLOMON'S PORCH ARE THE SAME AS ZECHARIAH'S SCROLL: 20 CUBITS LONG AND 10 CUBITS WIDE, or roughly 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. The porch—where the ministers assembled in the outer court—was the entrance into the temple courtyard. The entrance to the holy of holies was from the courtyard. We can begin to get some idea of the meaning behind the scroll. *It is directly related to the temple.*

There are important reasons why God gives us the temple measurements in cubits. One of the major reasons is that these cubits are tied to God's spiritual temple today.

The flying scroll is also measured in cubits and helps us to understand *prophecy* about God's Work in His Church (or temple) today.

WEEPING AT THE PORCH

Again, the flying scroll is the same dimension as the temple porch. That was the entrance to the temple anciently (1 Kings 6:1-3). What did God instruct the priests to do at the porch? The book of Joel gives us additional insights. "Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" (Joel 2:17). The book of Joel is an end-time prophecy. It is for our day. God instructs the priests, His ministry, to weep for the people between the porch and the altar.

As I stated above, the porch was the entrance to the temple courtyard. But here we see that it was also the entrance to the altar. The events surrounding the altar involved the work of the priests, or ministry. We can make a DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PORCH AND THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

The scene here in Joel is a tragic one. God's people (in the end time) are about to be taken captive by heathen peoples. This can only refer to the Laodicean Church. God tells the priests to come and weep for the people. God expects the priests to make intercession for the people. Why? To understand, let's ask a second, related question.

What is the result of the end-time Joshua's government problem? "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by" (Zechariah 3:7). Joshua did not walk in God's ways. He proved to be unfit to judge God's house. Because of his government problem, he gave the people wrong judgments.

His priests, or "fellows," have also failed to do their job in leading the people. In fact, they have misled people. The end-time Joshua and his priests have given the people wrong judgment. *Joshua and his priests are responsible for the calamities*

coming upon the Laodicean people. God expects the priests to make intercession for the people because they led the people astray. As it states in Joel 2, during the Tribulation things will get so bad that the people are going to wonder—*where is God?*

It is the job of God's ministers today to make sure God is *in the Church*. We want the Father *in the house*. The Laodicean ministers failed in that responsibility.

A REVIVAL OF JUDGMENT

So what does the flying scroll have to do with the porch? The *Anchor Bible Commentary* states, "The association in this vision [Zechariah 5:2] of the ulam or temple forecourt area with the flying scroll would represent the revival of the priestly role in the administration of justice." Can we begin to make the connection? The vision in Zechariah 5 has everything to do with judgment in God's temple, or house. It has everything to do with the Work of God and His ministry!

I stated above that Joshua and his fellows come on the scene just before Christ's return. So when did God's judgment stop in His Church? When Joshua took control of the Church. Zechariah 5 shows that God revived His Work someplace else: within the Philadelphia Church of God!

If a church turns away from God (that is what Zechariah is all about), what does God do about it? He revives judgment in some other place. GOD USES A FLYING SCROLL AND REVIVES HIS WORK. *The scroll is a type of entrance into the temple and it signifies righteous judgment.*

This is more clearly understood by comparing the size of the scroll with the large cherubim within the holy of holies.

CHERUBIM GUARDING THE ARK

"And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that was by the oracle he overlaid with gold" (1 Kings 6:22). The golden altar was where the priests burned incense every day (e.g. Exodus 30:1-8). That altar typifies God's ministry today. The fact that it was overlaid with gold indicates the extremely high value God places on His faithful ministers, as we also saw in Lamentations 4:2.

“And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high. And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one measure and one size. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub. And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another IN THE MIDST OF THE HOUSE [or temple]” (1 Kings 6:23-27). These cherubim were right there in the holy of holies, where God dwelled!

The *Anchor Bible Commentary* states about these verses: “A second dimensional connection between the fifth vision and the temple, also based on the absolute value of the numbers, appears in the size of the two cherubim, those fanciful composite creatures whose wings were spread out over the ark within the debir, or holy of holies. The text of 1 Kings 6:23-26 explains carefully that each cherub stood 10 cubits high and that one wing of each was five cubits long. That is, each cherub was 10 cubits wide, wing tip to wing tip, and 10 cubits tall. Since the cherubim were identical in size and shape, and since they were positioned next to each other with their outer wings touching the walls of the debir and with their wings on the side next to each other just touching the middle of the debir, THE CHERUBS TOGETHER OCCUPIED A SPACE 20 CUBITS WIDE AND 10 CUBITS HIGH.... *The outstretched wings of the cherubim sheltered ‘the ark of the covenant of Yahweh’ (1 Kings 8:6-7) which contained the ‘two stone tablets which Moses placed there at Horeb, where Yahweh made a covenant with the people of Israel’*” (1 Kings 8:9).

Lucifer was a covering cherub. A cherub is the highest-ranking spirit being under God today. Lucifer’s wings covered the very throne of God at the headquarters of the universe. He was also one of only three archangels mentioned in the Bible, until he rebelled and became Satan.

The ark of the covenant is a symbol of God’s throne. God ruled from there on the Earth. So those two covering cherubs undoubtedly represent Michael and Gabriel—the only two

remaining archangels of which we are aware. Only these archangels are qualified to hold such towering positions—or so it would seem according to the Scriptures.

So what does all of this measuring in cubits mean? THE SUBJECT IS SOLOMON'S TEMPLE, OR THE CHURCH OF GOD TODAY. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT AND THE COVERING CHERUBS REPRESENT GOD'S THRONE AND THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT IN GOD'S TRUE CHURCH! That means we must study these verses with extreme care and submit to the government emanating from God's royal throne!

This prophecy is for God's people today.

WHEN WE COMPARE THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FLYING SCROLL WITH THE *CHERUBIM IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES*, WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE EXACT REPETITION OF THESE DIMENSIONS IS NOT BY CHANCE. IT HAS BEEN CAREFULLY DESIGNED BY GOD. Zechariah's flying scroll is extremely important. THAT FLYING SCROLL FLOWED FROM OUR CREATOR AND THE RULER OF THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE! God gave it only to the Philadelphia Church of God. We were commanded to deliver it to the Laodiceans. That was our only commission for the first seven years.

WHAT DOES THE SCROLL REPRESENT?

Remember that the cherubims' wings sheltered the ark of the covenant of God. Within the ark were the tablets of the Ten Commandments—God's LAW. These awesome angels kept watch over God's law. Zechariah's scroll has everything to do with God's law—guarding it and keeping it. Also found within the ark was Aaron's rod, a symbol of government. There are many Church members out there reading and studying, but they don't understand how the Laodiceans are violating the law of God. They just cannot see how they are breaking God's law. Yet, all of their doctrinal changes show that the Laodiceans are not keeping watch over or guarding God's law. If you reject God's government (and they have), you also reject God's law. Many members of God's Church are going to find themselves in the Tribulation because they will not submit to the government which implements God's law.

The ark, with the Ten Commandments and Aaron's rod, was a symbol of God's covenant with ancient Israel. In this

end time, God's Church also entered into a covenant with God. We made a covenant to submit to God's law and government. WE MADE A COVENANT WITH GOD TO GUARD WHAT WE WERE TAUGHT! The Laodiceans have seriously violated that covenant. But now there is a flying scroll reviving the Work.

If you carefully study into the porch, the cherubim in the holy of holies and the flying scroll, you can fully understand what is wrong with the Laodiceans today. THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT HERBERT ARMSTRONG'S WORK WAS BEING DIRECTED FROM THE HOLY OF HOLIES! They do not have the faith to see that the work of the PCG is being directed from the holy of holies.

THE FLYING SCROLL REPRESENTS THE WORK OF THE PCG DURING THE MASSIVE LAODICEAN REBELLION. What is happening in the PCG is truly awesome. We are a little Church doing a GIGANTIC WORK!

The rod of Aaron clearly shows us that God gives His government to a man. He must implement the law as Aaron was commanded to do.

Then God reveals His Zechariah prophecy to that man. The flying scroll vision was given to Zechariah. But he, like Daniel, didn't understand what the vision meant. That is because it was mainly, if not solely, for the time just before Christ returns.

So where is the *type* of Zechariah today who receives the flying scroll revelation from God? You can find him where you find God's law and government. He is used by God to *measure* His very elect with that government and law.

God is trying to keep our minds on His throne and His law! The holy of holies is where God dwells. Never lose sight of the great, majestic God who rules from His throne!

FIRST THERE IS GOD AND HIS THRONE, SYMBOLIZED BY THE MERCY SEAT ON TOP OF THE ARK. That means that the government and law must *always* flow from the unparalleled MERCY of God! We see the law and Aaron's rod inside the ark. But there is another ingredient inside the ark: manna. If we submit to God, His law and His government, then God feeds us spiritual manna (John 6:49-50). Then we understand the prophecy of Zechariah.

We recognize *that prophet* as the man who fulfills Zechariah's role in this end time. (For a more complete study on this subject, request our free booklet *Who Is "That Prophet"?*)

Ancient Israel was led by the ark physically. God's loyal ministers today are those who follow that ark of God spiritually and lead God's people.

God wants us to clearly understand that the flying scroll came from the holy of holies, or the inner temple, or the *inner court* where God dwells. Don't forget that important fact. THIS MESSAGE DID NOT COME FROM A MAN! IT CAME FROM THE VERY THRONE OF THE LIVING GOD! The specific dimensions of the scroll and the cherubim remind us of that wonderful truth!

THE CURSES ON THE SCROLL

It is our job to warn the Laodiceans, our nations of Israel and ultimately this world of the coming punishment for sin. Ours is no easy task. But God requires us to issue His warning message.

The flying scroll is a warning to all sinners. But that warning begins at God's sanctuary, or Church (Ezekiel 9:1-6). "Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof" (Zechariah 5:3-4). These verses show that the whole world is breaking God's law. The whole world must be warned. Again, as we stated above, ours is a GLOBAL work.

The whole truth is that no human being wants to submit to God's law. And curses always come if we do not repent of our sin. Do you want to steal? Do you want to swear falsely by God's name? Do you want to have phony religion? God plans to cut off any such people forever if they do not repent.

God wants His flying scroll to come flooding into our lives. It will either bring blessings or curses: blessings if we repent; curses if we continue to violate God's law. We had better pay close attention to this flying scroll. We do have a choice—we can choose blessings or curses.

TWO WOMEN ON AN EPFAH

“Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their resemblance through all the earth. And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah” (verses 5-7). The angel now shows Zechariah an ephah. The angel says the ephah goes forth, then shows a woman sitting in the middle of it. To most this may seem strange. But this new vision is directly connected to the scroll, the porch and the angels of the temple.

What is an *ephah*? An ephah is used 27 times in the Bible as a technical device for measuring grain. However, wheat is not being measured here. A *woman* is being measured. We know that a *woman* in the Bible is a symbol for a church—whether it’s true or false. God’s Church is being measured here. We, the members of God’s Church, are being judged now (1 Peter 4:17). The world is not *yet* being judged. At this time, during our day, at this very moment, those in God’s Church are being judged by God.

Let’s look at how God measured the woman. “And he said, This is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof” (Zechariah 5:8). God finds wickedness in this church. God is very displeased with this measurement.

Now look at what happens next. “Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out *two women*, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base” (verses 9-11). The angel now shows Zechariah two women. Remember, these two women come on the scene at the time of Joshua’s turning away from God. This is an end-time event. Have we seen two women in the end time discussed anywhere else in Scripture? Yes, we have.

Do we see how clearly this pictures the split between the WCG and PCG? Under Herbert Armstrong there was ONE Church. Then he died. A Laodicean ministry assumed power and introduced great wickedness into the Church. Then, on December 7, 1989, the PCG was born. Now there are two women—the Laodicean woman and the Philadelphia woman.

God raised up the Philadelphia Church of God to, as one commentary puts it, revive the priestly role in the administration of justice. God has raised us up to revive His government administration and His law within the Church!

THE OUTER COURT

Remember, the flying scroll also has the same dimensions as the porch, or entrance, to the temple anciently (1 Kings 6:1-3). This is where the ministers assembled. But it was in the *outer court*.

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and MEASURE IT NOT; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Revelation 11:1-2). First God had His leader measure the altar—a type of the ministry. Almost all of God’s ministers are in the outer court. That is where they are assembled today. And they remain there. That is the lesson of the scroll size. GOD GIVES US THESE DIMENSIONS FOR A REASON. These are not just idle words in the Bible that we can ignore! It shows why there is a second woman, and who is responsible most of all: the ministers.

As Mr. Armstrong always said, the Bible is a coded book, and only God can break that code. That is what God is doing in this message.

These ministers lead God’s own people to break His law and become cursed! (as in Zechariah 5). Over 95 percent of God’s own people are under a curse today.

Some of these people come to the PCG, and almost all of those who do say they were starving spiritually. They were not being fed spiritual manna. The church they came from did not have Aaron’s rod, or God’s government. They “stumble[d] at the law.”

There are two women mentioned in Zechariah 5. One is in the inner court and one is in the outer court.

These prophecies are not that hard to understand after God reveals them. They are all focused on a short span of time just before Christ returns.

The dimensions of the scroll, the cherubim and the porch also indicate that these ministers and their followers have a connection to the holy of holies. THE LAODICEANS HAVE A SPIRITUAL HISTORY WITH THE GREAT GOD! Nothing can change that history!

The great tragedy is that God no longer dwells in their midst as He did in the days of Herbert W. Armstrong.

COUNTERPART OF REVELATION 10 AND 11

Zechariah 5 is a counterpart to Revelation 10:1-11:2 specifically and chapters 10 and 11 generally. The *little book* of Revelation is about how God's Church splits and becomes two women. That is also the subject of the flying scroll.

THE FLYING SCROLL AND THE LITTLE BOOK ARE THE SAME! Zechariah 3 and 4 are explained in detail as a part of *Malachi's Message*, or the little book.

After John discussed the little book, he wrote about measuring. After Zechariah discussed the flying scroll, he too wrote about measuring. In both cases, it is a *woman*, or church, being measured. And there is another church that refuses to be measured.

The little book is given ample and critical space in the Bible. It is a direct warning to God's people in this end time. That message comes *from the supreme, majestic throne of God and the covering cherubs!* God's people who reject the little book are plunged into the Great Tribulation. Fifty percent of them will still reject the little book even then. That is why they will be lost forever!

Beyond that, the little book is a strong warning to the whole world about the deadly seriousness of sin.

The Apostle John "ate it up." We too must eat and digest the little book. Only then will we fervently *prophesy again* as God commands.

"And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings"

(Revelation 10:11). The commission for this new work is to *prophesy again*—with the emphasis, this time, on *prophesy*.

Now we have entered an era when prophecy—a warning message—is the *primary* message.

A prophet is a person to whom God has revealed His prophecies. If the commission is to prophesy, there must be a *prophet* to lead the work. More specifically, *that prophet*.

If we have a spiritual focus, we will be continually thanking God for His revealed prophecies. Mr. Armstrong often said our greatest sin is *ingratitude*. Are we *spiritual* enough to *continually* thank God for His revealed prophecies?

The Laodiceans became ungrateful when they were “rich, and increased with goods.” Physical things became more important than God’s spiritual gifts! Beware of that deadly Laodicean sin.

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein” (Revelation 11:1). A *man* is given a rod—God’s government—to measure God’s very elect. God uses a man to implement His law, which is likened to Aaron’s rod. God’s own Church is being cursed, so this man is directed to measure himself and God’s very elect with God’s *law*.

Zechariah 5 discusses the curse for breaking God’s law. However, one woman kept the law—or was measured by the law. Another woman refused to be measured and was cursed.

“But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Revelation 11:2). When this man measures the very elect with God’s law, the result is an inner court, where God dwells, and an outer court, which refuses to be measured. That means there are two women, just as described in Zechariah 5. One church became wicked; the other was obedient to God. Suddenly you have two churches—one Philadelphian and one Laodicean.

“Then shall *two* be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Matthew 24:40). The Revised Standard Version and the New King James Version read not just “two,” but “two men.” God appoints one man as the “ruler over his household” (*that prophet* with Aaron’s rod; verse 45). There *may* be another man whom God views as the leader of the Laodiceans.

This is all in the context of the two women, or the Church split. “Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (verse 41). One woman (Philadelphian) is taken and the other woman (Laodicean) is left behind. God takes His very elect to a place of safety (Revelation 12:14). The Laodiceans must go through the Great Tribulation because of their rebellion (verse 17).

The storm is building fast (Matthew 24:34). Christ is about to return! (verses 35-37).

Revelation 10 and 11 and Zechariah 5 discuss two women. Zechariah’s scroll is about two women. So is the little book. The central message about the two women is the flying scroll. The centerpiece of our work to God’s Church is the little book.

The flying scroll discusses a measuring of God’s obedient people. God has given the PCG a measuring responsibility.

It is a *flying scroll*. *Malachi’s Message* has been advertised on television and radio. It has been mailed around the world—by airplanes. It gets around as if it had wings.

The flying scroll has huge dimensions. The little book has been seen by most of God’s Laodicean people and read by many of them. It has had a real impact inside God’s Church. That is exactly what God prophesied would happen!

One church does not understand the importance of the flying scroll. The other allows the scroll to lead and guide it!

Who fulfills a type of the Zechariah office today? Who had the flying scroll revealed to him? And the little book? Who is used to prophesy again—to measure God’s Church with God’s law?

Let me emphasize once more: This flying scroll, or the little book, came from the holy of holies—where God dwells!

Now let’s go back to the fifth chapter of Zechariah to one of the most inspiring revelations in this book.

“Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?” (Zechariah 5:9-10). Both women have wings like storks—a symbol of God’s power. Each woman has access to God’s power, but only the Philadelphian woman is using that power before the Tribu-

lation. Both women are carrying the ephah because each one of them must be measured before she can enter God's Kingdom.

That prophet and his followers are told to rise and measure the temple (Revelation 11:1). The *Companion Bible* says he has a *measuring reed* (or measuring rod). The *Anchor Bible Commentary* says the rod served as a surveyor's rule. This Church had a device (God's revealed truth) like Zerubbabel's plummet (Zechariah 4:9-10). This was a measuring device given by God to measure and establish the very elect and His Work.

For more than 20 years, God has shown us that the PCG uses His revealed truth to measure the Philadelphians. The Laodiceans refuse to be measured.

The Philadelphians are in the *inner court where God dwells*. They are being measured now. The Laodiceans are in the outer court where God does *not* dwell (Revelation 3:20; 11:1-2). Still, they are a part of God's temple, or Church, in this end time, even though they are lukewarm.

GOD'S HOUSE PROPHESED

Here is another wonderful truth: It was on December 7, 2007, when God revealed to me where the Bible prophesied that the PCG would build God's physical house! Such an inspiring miracle on that day helps us remember what a miraculous day December 7, 1989, really was—the day the PCG started—and what a marvelous, wondrous vision the Philadelphians have.

On Thursday, December 6, 2007, I had an extremely busy day. I was quite tired and went to bed at 10 p.m., hoping to get a good night's sleep. Something woke me up at about 1 a.m. After tossing in bed for about an hour, I got up, a little depressed because of awakening so early. It was now December 7, the PCG's 18th anniversary. I had jotted down a few notes about what I wanted to speak about on the Sabbath, December 8, when we would celebrate our anniversary. Somehow I had left my notes at the office; this made me sadder still.

So instead of thinking about my notes, I went directly to the Bible scriptures that were included in those notes. I believe God was behind this chain of events, and as I read those scriptures I began to understand the verses in a way that I never had before. Though I was disappointed because I hadn't

gotten much rest, as I sat there reading in the early hours of December 7, I became filled with excitement. I saw some scriptures in a way I'd never seen them before. This new understanding drove out every trace of sadness from my mind.

I was reading from the book of Zechariah.

The final verse in Zechariah 5 is thrilling. In verse 10, Zechariah asks, *Where are they taking the ephah?* The answer is in verse 11: "He said to me, 'To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it; and when this is prepared, they will set the ephah down there on its base'" (Revised Standard Version).

Shinar, in this instance, is another term for Babylon. Other Bible translations even say *Babylon*, instead of *Shinar*. Throughout the Bible, Babylon pictures the world before Christ's return, the world we are living in today (Revelation 18).

Both the Philadelphian and Laodicean churches are working in the land of Shinar, or *Babylon*. Shinar is mentioned in Zechariah 5:11 for a very good reason. One woman (the Laodiceans, found with wickedness) is "dwelling" with Babylon. The other is doing God's warning Work in Babylon.

According to *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, the word *house* refers to a physical structure most of the time, but not always. Here it refers to both God's spiritual and physical houses. This is a prophecy about God's spiritual house, or Philadelphia Church, building a physical house.

One woman submitted to God's measuring. God then led her to build Him a physical house and do His Work.

The expression in the King James translation "set there upon her base" is a literal Hebrew translation. The second physical temple, built by Zerubbabel, was located on the exact same place on which Solomon built his temple (Ezra 3:1-3).

Looking at it spiritually, we measured and built exactly the same way Herbert W. Armstrong did. Even God's physical house today was patterned after the one Mr. Armstrong built in Pasadena, California.

The Laodiceans rebelled against the way Mr. Armstrong measured and built. The flying scroll is all about getting back to the way he built—spiritually and physically!

God gave the Philadelphians the honor of building His physical house before Christ returns because they submit to His measuring today.

You will find God's very elect where you find God's house. They are the only ones building for God today. Only they are doing God's Work.

We have multiple buildings on our land in Edmond, Oklahoma, and God's truth, in a manner of speaking, emanates from them all. But until our auditorium was constructed, not one of these buildings was built specifically to house God and His truth. Each was constructed for another reason, though each is being used to further God's Work.

ZECHARIAH 5:11 IS A PROPHECY ABOUT GOD GIVING HIS VERY ELECT THE JOB OF CONSTRUCTING A BUILDING SPECIFICALLY INTENDED FOR HIS TRUTH. GOD'S HOUSE IS A HOUSE FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD THAT IS BEING USED TO MEASURE THE PHILADELPHIANS CURRENTLY, BUT WILL MEASURE THE LAODICEANS IN THE GREAT TRIBULATION. God's truth, the ephah, emanates from the house of God in Edmond, and points people toward new Jerusalem, God's eternal house!

The Interpreter's Bible says that a "house, that is, a temple, is to be built for the ephah measure." EVEN BIBLE COMMENTARIES, TO SOME DEGREE, RECOGNIZE THAT THIS VERSE IS A PROPHECY ABOUT A PHYSICAL HOUSE BEING BUILT FOR GOD'S TRUTH. The Bible is Jesus Christ in print. God's truth flows out from that house. God the Father and His Son are there in Spirit. They fellowship with us in that house!

Barnes' Notes says: "A house or temple was to be built for it, for its honor and glory . . ." That is the truth of God. We were given the job of building a house for God that would declare the honor and glory, the perfection and magnificence, of the truth of God. What greater opportunity, or *responsibility*, is there today than to build the house for God?

The *Anchor Bible* says the word *temple*, the Hebrew word for house, is used as a "*designation for a divine residence.*" God lives in this house! The truth flows from God and His house. It is measured precisely by God Himself.

The *Anchor Bible* also writes about a structure "upon its bases" and states that "most commentators take [that] to refer to a kind of 'base' or 'pedestal,' as indeed the word is commonly used in the Bible (e.g., 1 Kings 7:27-43 . . . it is used 13 times in reference to the 10 bronze stands of the temple of Solomon)." This is obviously referring to a physical structure. The *Companion*

Bible says it shall be established “for that ephah, and it’s going to be prepared for it, and IT WILL BE SET THERE OR FIXED OR SETTLED. IT RELATES HOW THE BASE EQUALS A FIXED RESTING PLACE.” *Lange’s* says this house will give the ephah a “permanent habitation.” It is to be “established and settled on its base.” These verses clearly refer to a spiritual and a physical house.

God’s truth is permanently housed in the auditorium on the PCG’s land. It is the most splendid building of grandeur on this campus by far.

We must grasp the magnitude and depth of this revelation! We were commissioned to build a house for God’s truth. God fellowships with us in this house, and He will continue to give us more and more of His truth.

GOD’S HOUSE AND NEW JERUSALEM

The Eternal has chosen Jerusalem is the most awesome vision in the Bible (Zechariah 3:2). It is the key of David vision expressed in a way that enhances our understanding on a practical level.

I HAD NOT UNDERSTOOD THE DEPTH OF “*THE [ETERNAL] HATH CHOSEN JERUSALEM*” BEFORE DECEMBER 7, 2007. IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT WAS ON THAT SAME DAY THAT GOD REVEALED TO ME THE PROPHECY IN ZECHARIAH 5:9-11, WHICH SAYS THE PCG WILL BUILD A HOUSE FOR GOD. *WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHY GOD LINKED THESE TWO TOPICS IN SUCH A WAY!*

GOD’S HOUSE AND NEW JERUSALEM ARE INTIMATELY CONNECTED. WE HAVE BUILT A SPECTACULAR STRUCTURE THAT POINTS PEOPLE TOWARD NEW JERUSALEM AND SHOWS THE WORLD THAT *THE ETERNAL HAS CHOSEN JERUSALEM!* THE ETERNAL HAS ETERNAL GOALS. WE MUST ALSO HAVE ETERNAL GOALS!

We must start by looking to the city of Jerusalem today. That is where new Jerusalem will be located.

The city of Jerusalem today is about to be altered mightily with Christ’s imminent return. Herbert W. Armstrong College is involved in an archaeological dig in Jerusalem. We are already helping to prepare, in a physical way, for Christ’s Second Coming!

God’s goal is to get us, and this world, into new Jerusalem. Building God’s house is a primary means of getting our minds

focused on new Jerusalem and the time when God's Family will be comprised of spirit beings only. The auditorium has a message of hope for a world that is ready to crash and burn. The splendor of that building will help millions of people to better appreciate the glory of God and His truth!

The Laodiceans have turned their backs on God because they lost sight of new Jerusalem. They no longer see that *the Eternal has chosen Jerusalem*. We must learn from their example and WORK DILIGENTLY TO CAPTURE THE DEEP VISION OF NEW JERUSALEM!

The Eternal has chosen Jerusalem. Now the Eternal's sons must also choose Jerusalem!

Chapter 6

Only Nuclear Bombs Bring Repentance

ZECHARIAH 6, AFTER DESCRIBING GOD'S POWERFUL ANGELIC agents (verses 1-8), gets back to the subject of God's temple and the return of Christ.

“And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God” (verses 12-15).

Notice, God says “if ye will diligently obey.” You have to prove yourself to God. You must obey the voice of the flying scroll—the law of God, the authority of God, the government of God.

“And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu; When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regem-melech, and their men, to pray before the LORD, And to speak unto the priests which

were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?" (Zechariah 7:1-3).

There is weeping going on because of something wrong with these priests and prophets in God's house. God is concerned about this. What is going on in the world is not nearly as important to God as what is happening in His Church.

His people are not heeding the flying scroll. We either heed the flying scroll, or we become deceived and arrogant. "Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying, Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, *did ye at all fast unto me*, even to me?" (verses 4-5).

Here is the Laodicean problem. Even when they fasted, it wasn't for God. They were *selfishly* motivated. And God won't have any of that! If they were directing their fasts toward God, where would they be today? They would certainly know about this flying scroll. They would be asking God to rule them, and God would lead them to His Work!

Verse 6: "And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" When you eat and drink, do you do it to glorify yourself or God? Here again the Laodiceans fall short. And look where they are today. You cannot show them their errors, because they are so self-righteous. IT WILL TAKE NUCLEAR BOMBS WITH UNPARALLELED SUFFERING TO TURN 50 PERCENT OF THEM AROUND!

It will also take that nuclear holocaust to get the nations of Israel to repent.

How dangerously self-willed human nature is!

"Should ye not hear the words which the LORD hath cried by the *former prophets*, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?" (verse 7). They won't hear the words of the former prophets, which contain prophecy for us today. God discusses the former prophets two more times in Zechariah, as we will see.

"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil

against his brother in your heart. But *they refused to hearken*, and pulled away the shoulder, and *stopped their ears, that they should not hear*" (verses 9-11).

The Laodiceans just stopped their ears. Therefore, they cannot understand our message. They are hard, and they are becoming even harder.

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

"Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the *former prophets*: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore IT IS COME TO PASS, THAT AS HE CRIED, AND THEY WOULD NOT HEAR; SO THEY CRIED, AND I WOULD NOT HEAR, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS" (verses 12-13). These former prophets have prophecy for today. God sent His message to the Laodiceans by His Spirit. He *cried* to them through the Philadelphia Church, and they wouldn't listen. Then when *they* cry in the Tribulation, God says *He* won't listen. Isn't that fair? Isn't that just?

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words *by the mouth of the prophets*, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built" (Zechariah 8:9).

Many of God's people heard all this right out of the mouth of a prophet. Certainly we did in this end time. We heard it right out of the mouth of Mr. Armstrong. God warns us that there is a greater responsibility when we've heard somebody say something from their own mouth. God even says many of us heard these words when the foundation was laid. He is very specific about the time—when Mr. Armstrong was alive. Then from Mr. Armstrong's work comes the works of the Philadelphia Church and the Laodicean Church.

"But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus *the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned*: for they laid the pleasant land desolate" (Zechariah 7:14). THERE WILL NOT BE A MAN LEFT TO CROSS PATHS WITH ANOTHER MAN! THAT IS ABOUT A NUCLEAR ATTACK. WHAT A HORRIFIC ENDING.

Zechariah 14:21 talks about spiritual Canaanites. There are spiritual Canaanites in God's house today. They are spiritual pagans, spiritual Gentiles, spiritual *Babylonians*—just before the “times of the gentiles” physically (Luke 21:24). But Christ will return to stop these “times of the gentiles,” and God will rid His house of the Canaanites. “In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be NO MORE THE CANAANITE IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD OF HOSTS” (Zechariah 14:20-21).

Chapter 7

The Blood Covenant

IT IS EASY TO BE CASUAL ABOUT THE NEW COVENANT. SO ZECHARIAH emphasizes the covenant *of blood*. Christ, who was God in the flesh, gave His own blood to make the New Covenant possible. Without that precious blood, there would be no hope for mankind.

Zechariah was one of the temple prophets, according to Ezra (Ezra 6:14). The main subject of the book of Zechariah is God's temple, which in prophetic terms is God's Church (Ephesians 2:19-21; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Hebrews 3:6). We can understand Zechariah much more easily if we realize it is a prophecy about God's Church today.

This vision applies directly to God's Church. We are in a covenant with God, and if we have His law and government, He will feed us spiritual manna, or revelation. (Of course, being under the New Covenant, this requires the Holy Spirit as well.) It should be clear to all of those in the Church that God is sending us that manna. We also have been given a great deal of precious new revelation from God.

No other church on this Earth receives spiritual manna or new revelation from God! All you have to do is read and study the writings of Herbert W. Armstrong and me to prove what I say. It is that simple. In these writings you will find the most astounding new revelations ever received in God's true Church!

Zechariah also talks about God's covenant with His Church. Chapters 9 through 11 of Zechariah discuss a special covenant—a "blood" covenant.

‘THE BLOOD OF THY COVENANT’

“As for thee also, by the *blood of thy covenant* I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water” (Zechariah 9:11). If you check the Hebrew, God (through Zechariah) is talking about what could be termed a *blood covenant*.

We need to understand our spiritual condition apart from God. We are *prisoners of Satan* in a dark *pit* without any *water!* (Water is a type of God’s Spirit.) This is the normal condition of man without God’s Holy Spirit.

Unless we have and use God’s Holy Spirit, *we are prisoners of Satan in a dark pit without any water!* What horrifying darkness. God vividly *describes* our hopeless and terrifying spiritual condition without the use of His powerful Spirit!

Remember that frightening and despicable description of those in captivity to Satan.

It takes the power of God’s Spirit to bring us out of the spiritual pit. That Spirit keeps us focused on the *bloody* price paid so we could enter into the New Covenant. We must view Christ’s sacrifice as God does. Only God’s Spirit makes that possible. Then God’s spiritual food, including new revelation, flows into God’s true Church.

It took Christ’s blood and the Spirit of God to get us out of a stifling, dark dungeon. It can happen only if we enter into the New Covenant with God.

If we are doing our part, God says He will bring us out of the pit where there is no water. Because He has made this blood covenant with us, we don’t have to be where there is no water, no food, no revelation.

We made a covenant with God. And the reason we are able to understand God’s truth is because Christ died. He suffered a savage butchery to make it possible for us to be able to keep all the conditions of the New Covenant, and to enter into it at His Second Coming. That’s the price of that covenant. God will never break His part of the covenant. He has already spent the blood of His Son to show His total commitment. Jesus Christ spilled His blood to let mankind know the depth of God’s indescribable love for each one of us.

What does it take to give us the opportunity to enter that covenant? Would the blood of bulls and goats make it

possible? Absolutely not—IT TOOK THE BLOOD OF GOD IN THE FLESH TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO ENTER INTO THE NEW COVENANT! We must never forget that: The ULTIMATE PRICE was paid so we could enter this covenant!

Why can't we enter the New Covenant until Christ returns? Because men can fail. God made the Old Covenant with the people of Israel, and they didn't keep their part of it. So now God says, *I'm going to make you do what I command FIRST, and THEN you'll enter the covenant.* He wants to see how much we love it first. So we are keeping the conditions of that covenant to assure that it is consummated by God.

But we must never forget about the blood of that covenant. Always remember the ultimate price God paid to even make that covenant possible! His blood was given to pay for our sins. *Only* God, who is greater than His creation, could pay the penalty for our sins. Sin always exacts a penalty. This was the *only* way that we could be born into God's Family and receive eternal life.

Zechariah is emphasizing the *blood* so we don't forget. This covenant is the crowning glory of mankind. And how could God have given more to make it possible?

WHAT A PRICE HAD TO BE PAID FOR OUR SINS—THE BRUTAL, SAVAGE BEATING AND DEATH OF GOD IN THE FLESH! What love God has for man! Without that sacrifice, man's only choice would be to face the blackness of death forever!

Do you really understand what that means? You need to ponder these words carefully.

Angels were never offered such a priceless opportunity. *Only* men and women can become sons of God.

What a glorious gift! And what a dangerous risk God took to make it all possible. One sin and Christ would have been lost forever—and so would we!

Thankfully, His blood was from a perfect sacrifice. Now we have the unparalleled opportunity to be born into God's Family. We should thank God daily for that intensely brutal and bloody sacrifice for our sins—without it there would be no covenant.

When we were baptized, we covenanted with God that we would be willing to give up our own life—our blood—if it was required (Luke 14:25-26). This is also a small part of the reason it is a covenant of blood. We too must have a *total*

commitment to this majestic covenant with God—even to the point of shedding our blood.

VICTORY THROUGH WARFARE

“Turn you to the strong hold, ye *prisoners of hope*: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee” (Zechariah 9:12). That’s what God’s people are, when He makes this New Covenant with them—“prisoners of hope”! This is a *living* covenant, and as far as God is concerned, it is absolute and sure. What hope that gives us! We never have to worry about God wanting to rewrite the covenant.

The word *turn* in the Hebrew is actually RETURN. God is primarily talking to the Laodiceans—those saints who had His Spirit and still turned away. God is warning them to RETURN to the stronghold. He wants to give them a double reward, along with all the rest of the firstfruits. But to receive that, they must meet the conditions of the covenant. Essentially Christ is saying, *I spilled my blood for this covenant—now what are YOU going to do for it?*

Verse 13 is all about a military war—spiritually. Being a Christian is warfare—the most difficult warfare you could ever fight. The only way we will ever attain victory is through a lot of conflict. This isn’t an easy covenant to be a part of. That is why we lose people from time to time. War always results in casualties.

But victory in this war comes with stupendous rewards. QUALIFYING IN GOD’S TRUE CHURCH TODAY, when only the little flock of God’s firstfruits is called, WILL BRING A DOUBLE REWARD (verse 12)—the greatest honor we could ever receive. “And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the *stones of a crown*, lifted up as an *ensign* upon his land” (verse 16). This is our future: We will be like glittering stones in God’s crown. He will lift us up so the whole world can see us! We will be an ensign, or sign—we will be the standard-bearers. And God will tell everyone to hear our teaching about how to keep the conditions of and enter into the New Covenant. What an honor that will be!

“Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain,

to every one grass in the field” (Zechariah 10:1). Again we are reminded of the rain, or water—a type of God’s Spirit. If we are going to prosper spiritually, we must use God’s Spirit. We must continually look to God for spiritual power to conquer Satan, this world and our own human nature. Otherwise we become prisoners in a waterless pit. We descend into human reasoning. Then we have trouble understanding why we must experience “much tribulation.” In this covenant of *blood*, we must have some fiery trials to qualify for such exalted offices.

Zechariah 10:1 also talks about all the abundance and prosperity, the growth of good crops, that God will give His people—physically and spiritually. God does bless those who obey Him. Today people don’t believe that, and behave as though God is anemic and can’t, or won’t, do anything like that for them.

“Mine anger was kindled against the *shepherds*, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited *his flock the house of Judah*, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle” (verse 3). Two groups are talked about in this verse. First are the shepherds who are actually hard-headed goats—speaking of the Laodicean ministry in God’s own Church. Second are the spiritual Jews whom God has made a goodly horse in battle, or a majestic warhorse. We really are in a war, and God has empowered His covenant people by His Holy Spirit to be a majestic warhorse.

SPIRITUAL JEWS

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a [spiritual] Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zechariah 8:23).

What a beautiful picture this is for God’s very elect. Remember, we are spiritual Jews (Revelation 3:9). Think of the awesome demand for *teachers* there will be in a very few years. People will have had enough suffering and misery in this world. They will be hanging on these teachers, asking to be taught about the New Covenant, and about the blood of the covenant. Ten men—10 heads of household, 10

families—will be greatly impacted by coming up to one spiritual Jew.

CAN YOU IMAGINE THE COLOSSAL CRISIS THERE WOULD BE IF GOD HAD NOT PREPARED TEACHERS FOR THOSE PEOPLE? IT WOULD BE LIKE ERECTING GIGANTIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS FOR THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS AND THEN HAVING NO TEACHERS FOR THEM!

We must never forget *why* we are called now. God is offering us the most lofty offices for all eternity!

Consider what this means for us today. When Ezra and Nehemiah built the temple, *they built the altar first*. That symbolizes the fact that GOD BUILDS HIS MINISTRY BEFORE CALLING THE PEOPLE INTO THE TEMPLE. THE FIRSTFRUITS WILL BE GOD'S KING-PRIESTS—HIS ALTAR FOR ALL ETERNITY. So today God is building His altar, before He builds His temple in the World Tomorrow. We need to be getting ready, because many will emerge from the worst suffering this world has ever known, and they will need to be taught. After experiencing nuclear, chemical and biological warfare, they will realize their need for true education. There will need to be spiritual Jews right there to teach them.

This is what Mr. Armstrong at the end of his life was trying to get the Church to understand: that we are here to be TEACHERS. That is the ONLY REASON we are called today—and 95 percent of God's people don't understand their calling!

True, our calling is not easy. But considering how much God is going to give us, could it be otherwise? Was it easy for Christ to offer His bloody sacrifice in order to make it possible to bring mankind into His Family? He endured the hardest thing He ever had to do and probably will ever have to do. And the Father suffered even more as He put His Son through that. They went ALL OUT—and THE BLOOD OF GOD IN THE FLESH WAS SPILLED ON THIS EARTH. After all they have done, can we endure some hardship to fulfill the job God is offering us?

'I WILL SOW THEM'

“And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again” (Zechariah 10:9). God will sow the Laodiceans in far countries during the Tribulation. Half of them will “turn again” to God—realizing what they almost lost.

But what makes this verse so inspiring is the fact that God is in control of the situation. He says, "I will sow them." *Why does a farmer sow seed? So he can have a harvest! God sows the Laodiceans.*

They will quickly realize what they have done and will begin to turn to God and tell everyone about the blood of His covenant! They will say to themselves and others, *Christ died—and if I have to die, I'm ready to die too.* And that is what they will have to do—spill their blood in a far country—because they wouldn't listen to the message of the covenant today.

How much better to repent now! How much better to repent in America and Britain and the other countries of Israel, rather than in Iran and Germany and Egypt during the Tribulation!

God will actually sow them in foreign countries so they can teach the Gentiles. Even as the Gentiles threaten to kill them, they will say, *Go ahead—but I'm telling you what's coming!* GOD'S MESSAGE WILL BE TAUGHT ALL OVER THE WORLD BY THE LAODICEANS! ISN'T THAT AMAZING? GOD SOWS THEM SO HE CAN REAP A HARVEST.

And notice—verse 9 says they will live "*with their children.*" *God extends a special blessing and protection to their children. The repentant Laodiceans' children will live into the Millennium.* They are going to need this inspiring vision in the midst of that captivity. Of course, the tragedy is that they led their children into the Tribulation because they wouldn't listen to God's message today.

"I will bring them AGAIN also out of the land of Egypt..." (verse 10). Coming out of Egypt is a type of coming out of this world. Spiritually, God must bring the Laodiceans out of Egypt a second time.

"Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the FIRE MAY DEVOUR THY CEDARS. Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen..." (Zechariah 11:1-2). *Soncino's Commentary* says that SOLOMON'S TEMPLE AND ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE WERE BOTH CONSTRUCTED LARGELY FROM CEDARS OF LEBANON, THE BIBLICAL KING OF TREES. So this verse is also talking about God's temple. In the temple today are some lofty and stately people whom God elevated to the very top—but who have since FALLEN. God is trying to give them a picture: THE LAODICEANS ARE LIKE THESE MAGNIFICENT, BUT FALLEN, CEDARS. GOD'S KINGS AND PRIESTS IN EMBRYO HAVE FALLEN!

Mr. Armstrong had several cedars of Lebanon on the Brickwood and Pasadena campuses of Ambassador College. We have some smaller weeping cedars on our campus. Perhaps God has a message to send us through these trees about who we are and how He views us—as stately cedars! WE ARE KINGS AND PRIESTS OF THE EARTH! AND HOW INTENSELY TRAGIC WHEN A GODLY LEADER—A KING-PRIEST—FALLS!

The “fire” *devours these cedars*. They are going into the fiery Tribulation. Only repenting now can change that outcome.

THREE SHEPHERDS

“And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands [or binders]; and I fed the flock” (Zechariah 11:7).

The commentaries and many Bible scholars are extremely confused about this verse! What is the “flock of slaughter”? The Laodiceans are destined to be slaughtered physically, and 50 percent of them will be lost forever. We’re giving them a message from God today, and they REFUSE TO HEAR IT! It’s not that they *cannot* understand—they simply WILL NOT! Our number-two commission, after warning the world, is to help Christ save the Laodiceans today.

This “flock of slaughter” will have to shed their blood for God as He did for them. They failed to conquer Satan *before* the Tribulation. But during the Tribulation, 50 percent of them will overcome “him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 12:11).

Finally this “flock of slaughter” will understand Christ was the sacrificial Lamb, who had to experience a bloody slaughter so they could be in God’s Family forever. God commands them to get their minds off themselves and material things (Revelation 3:14-17), and on the blood of the New Covenant. Then they will allow Christ to live in them (Philippians 2:5)—again.

God makes the Laodiceans shed their blood because they took Christ’s blood sacrifice casually. In the Tribulation, many of them will repent and thank God for the precious price that was paid for their sins. Then they will take sin much more seriously.

The Scriptures indicate that all of the Laodiceans must give their blood to prove that they really understand the covenant of blood this time.

WHAT A “FLOCK OF SLAUGHTER” THEY WILL BECOME. Let the Laodiceans beware!

We must continually remind ourselves that the blood of God in the flesh was required to pay for our sins! It is a deadly sin to forget that awesome truth.

God warns all of His people to warn the nations of Israel or be guilty of their blood (Ezekiel 33:6-7). The Laodiceans failed and are guilty. They have to pay with their own blood. That is God's justice.

That verse also refers to “two staves”—one of beauty, speaking of God's favor and protection—the other of “bands,” speaking of the unity, or union, we ought to have in God's Family. We are all a part of that blood covenant, and we should be unified. Like the people in Ezra's time, we should be “as one man” (Ezra 3:1). That is the kind of unity God's Family MUST have!

Think about it: In God's Kingdom, as people are seeking to be taught by the spiritual Jews, they are *not* going to have different leaders giving them different versions of God's truth. God's leaders then will be “as one man”! They will all be keeping the conditions of that New Covenant. The New Covenant BINDS us to God, with the Ten Commandments, the government of God, and the spiritual manna.

“Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me” (Zechariah 11:8). These are people who knew God and then were cut off! What a strong, mutual feeling between God and these sinners! Of course, God hates sin and not sinners—but if they don't repent, these men become the EMBODIMENT of sin!

Who are these shepherds? The commentaries don't know. I believe this must be the same “three shepherds”—a mother church and two larger breakaway Laodicean churches—that I wrote about in the Hosea booklet (request your free copy). Hosea dealt with a whorish mother and two illegitimate children (read Hosea 1:1-9; only the first of the three children was Hosea's—a type of the very elect today; the other two were illegitimate). God says in Zechariah that He will simply cut these three off in a month.

It is interesting that about “one month” passed between my getting fired from the WCG and our sending out the first copies of *Malachi’s Message*. There were a number of ministers discussing what to do about the changes in the Church at that time; two other major groups were about to form. God says that when His revelation got out to the Church, He cut them off! They knew about *Malachi’s Message*—they were there. But they scorned it, and God cut them off. Revelation 11:1-2 say that He *cast out* those who would not be measured—those three shepherds and their followers. And they will be cast into the Tribulation.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOD GIVES REVELATION? EITHER YOU FOLLOW IT, OR YOU ARE CUT OFF. Look at the Laodiceans! They are *not* being fed, as they were when Mr. Armstrong was on the scene. They have been cut off!

“Then said I, I WILL NOT FEED YOU: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another” (Zechariah 11:9). The Laodiceans aren’t being fed. There isn’t any reason why people should leave God and break the conditions of the New Covenant, unless they’re in a rebellious mode of thinking. God can’t feed someone who is violating the terms of that covenant!

BREAKING THE COVENANT

“And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people” (verse 10). God **BROKE THE COVENANT**, because the people rebelled!

The *Anchor Bible* renders the last word in verse 10 “peoples,” calling it “the unexpected plural.” Commentaries can’t see why God uses the plural there. The reason is, God has peoples all over the Earth in the true Church today—many ethnic and racial variations who are spiritual Jews. Race or ethnicity make no difference to God—only that we all become spiritual Jews! Jesus Christ died for the world (John 3:16). He is no respecter of persons.

Remember, the flying scroll in Zechariah 5 points us back to the cherubim in the holy of holies. Their wings were outstretched over the ark of the covenant, as if to say they are protecting and guarding the covenant people—those who keep the Ten Commandments and submit to God’s government and

are fed spiritual manna. We are truly taken care of, as long as we uphold our end of the covenant.

“And it [the covenant] was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the LORD” (Zechariah 11:11). This verse is talking about the faithful Philadelphian remnant—the poor, humble people who wait on God. Many people scorn them as nobodies, almost as if they had leprosy! But they are the only ones keeping the conditions of the covenant! AT THIS POINT THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES WILLING TO SHED THEIR BLOOD FOR THE COVENANT. THEY WAIT ON GOD NO MATTER WHAT THE COST.

Can we wait on God? Can we humble ourselves enough to realize that we are nobody, and just wait on God? He is giving us everything!

THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER

Notice carefully this next passage.

“And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver” (Zechariah 11:12). That is the same amount Judas Iscariot was paid for betraying Christ (Matthew 26:15; 27:3).

“And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them” (Zechariah 11:13). Notice what is happening here! Christ is taking this personally. He was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver!

“... And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD. Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands [binders], that I might break the brotherhood between Judah [the spiritual Jews] and Israel [the Laodiceans—spiritual Israel]. And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces” (verses 13-16).

Who could these verses be about? Who is the “foolish shepherd”? This is talking about one man, and the damage he caused God’s Church in this end time—and the DESTRUCTION awaiting him for that! He sold out for 30 pieces of silver

like Judas, and then he ripped apart and shredded God's own Church. Does this remind you of 2 Thessalonians 2, where a second "son of perdition" is mentioned? (verse 3)—a man who is DESTROYING God's Church? He is the son of destruction! Like Judas, the first son of perdition, he betrayed Christ! He is not a shepherd who neglected the flock—he is a shepherd who DESTROYED the flock and suppressed God's truth. (That evil spirit was demonstrated in our court battle with the Worldwide Church of God. Request our free booklet on Habakkuk for more information.) Still, the Laodicean groups don't understand this evil work because they are *blind*.

They betrayed Christ for *money* and *things*. They betrayed Christ, who GAVE HIS BLOOD SO WE COULD ENTER THIS NEW COVENANT! Like Judas, they act very religious! Judas had the GALL to actually KISS CHRIST! Acting religious will earn us nothing but damnation if we are BETRAYING CHRIST at the same time.

One final note on this passage. Look again at Zechariah 11:14, about breaking the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. Of course, that is spiritual, in the context of the Church. But I believe it may also apply on a physical level to America and the nation called Israel, or biblical Judah today.

A survey taken in the Arab world said that the number-one reason the people hate America is because it supports Israel. Our will is deteriorating rapidly. Is it possible that America will begin to think, *Why are we making ourselves such a target over that little country?* This could be a prophecy of a rift between these two countries—one that would leave Judah very alone, just before half of Jerusalem is taken over by the Arabs.

END-TIME JEWISH NATION PROPHESED

Hitler tried to exterminate the Jews in Europe. Six million of them were killed during World War II. This helped the Jews to gain some sympathy with the United Nations, which led to their country being established in 1948. But it ignited a short war with the Arabs, which the Jews won. This war sealed the establishing of their nation.

Let's look at an amazing prophecy.

"In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a

sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem” (Zechariah 12:6). “In that day” always refers to the end time, which we are living in today. All of Jerusalem was inhabited *again* by the conquering Jews after the 1967 war with the Arabs. The Jews became a “fire among the wood and like a torch of fire in a sheaf” in the Middle East! THAT MEANS GOD WAS GIVING THEM THEIR VICTORIES.

Most of the Jews have forgotten that God gave them their nation and their military victories. It was prophesied!

They have since given themselves over to abominable sins and deserted God (Daniel 9:13-14; Leviticus 26:19-20).

Now they are retreating in ignominy and being humiliated. It will end with the Jews being conquered, but not by the Arabs. (Request our free booklet *The King of the South*.) That defeat is to last only for a short 3½ years. Then the Messiah is coming to free them. Jerusalem will once again become “like a torch of fire in a sheaf.” This time it will last forever!

“*In that day* will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah. In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them” (Zechariah 12:6-8). The world will then be ruled by the Messiah. Jerusalem will be the capital of the world.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem” (verse 9). God will destroy all the enemies of Jerusalem and Israel until there are none left! Then the world will be filled with peace, joy and abundance.

Chapter 8

Jerusalem

Violence Triggers Christ's Return!

“**B**EHOLD, THE DAY OF THE LORD COMETH, AND THY SPOIL SHALL be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city” (Zechariah 14:1-2). This prophecy revolves around the DAY OF THE LORD.

Christ prophesied that He would “gather all nations” to battle Him in Jerusalem. Then He makes what might appear to be a STRANGE STATEMENT. One half of Jerusalem is to be taken captive. THAT CRISIS TRIGGERS A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT LEADS TO THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST! ONE HALF OF JERUSALEM BEING TAKEN CAPTIVE IS LIKE THE FIRST DOMINO TO FALL, leading to Christ’s return and the battle against all nations in Jerusalem! It all begins and ends in Jerusalem. But what a glorious end!

Let’s take a look at the crisis to follow the capture of one half of Jerusalem.

JEW’S POSSESSION OF JERUSALEM PROPHESED

ISRAEL WAS ESTABLISHED AS A NATION IN 1948. THIS WAS A POWERFUL FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY. THE JEWS ARE PROPHESED TO LOSE JERUSALEM AND THE REST OF THEIR LAND IN THE LATTER DAYS. How could this happen if they weren’t first given that land from the great God? Any Bible scholar should be able to see that.

At that time, the Jews only controlled half of Jerusalem. The Arabs controlled East Jerusalem. But in 1967, war broke out between the Arabs and the Jews. The Jews were victorious and gained control of all Jerusalem.

BIBLE PROPHECY SHOWS US THAT THE JEWS HAD TO CONQUER EAST JERUSALEM SO THEY COULD THEN LOSE IT AS PROPHESED IN ZECHARIAH 14! EVEN THE JEWS' CONQUERING OF EAST JERUSALEM WAS AN ASTOUNDING FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY! The Zechariah 14:2 prophecy clearly shows that the Jews had to get control of all Jerusalem between 1948 and Christ's Second Coming!

So the prophecy in Zechariah 14:1-2, which has not yet been fulfilled, has to happen between 1967 and the Great Tribulation. Jerusalem is going to be *totally* captured in the Tribulation. Many prophecies tell us that (e.g. Revelation 11:1-3).

Today the Arabs live in roughly one half of Jerusalem. They just don't control it—*yet*.

When such a crisis occurs, the Jews couldn't effectively drop bombs, especially nuclear bombs, on one half of their own city.

God gave all Jerusalem to the Jews, and because of their sins He is going to give their country over to the enemy. How many fulfilled prophecies and miracles do they have to see before they turn to God?

The Jews are looking to men—not God—to bring them peace. That reality is vividly explained in our free booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy*.

Can you and I believe God and all of these spectacular prophecies? CHRIST GAVE ALL JERUSALEM TO THE JEWS SO PROPHECY COULD BE FULFILLED. SO JUST A LITTLE FAITH TELLS US THAT THE PROPHECY ABOUT THE JEWS LOSING HALF OF JERUSALEM WILL ALSO BE FULFILLED.

God's prophetic Word is 100 percent reliable. His reputation is on the line. His Word never fails.

Note the big *overview* Zechariah gives us. There are three phases to this crisis. Zechariah starts at the Second Coming of Christ, the third phase, and works his way backward chronologically.

The verse starts with Christ conquering the European and Asian powers that are gathered together for battle. Then there is a *semicolon*, which means all these events in verse 2 are *linked and closely associated*.

The first semicolon introduces the second phase of this violent time. The city shall be taken, houses rifled and women ravished. This is when the king of the north (Europe) conquers the whole city of Jerusalem (also America and Britain), shortly *after* he conquers the king of the south (Daniel 11:40-41).

Then there is another semicolon. This is the first phase, when half of Jerusalem goes *into captivity*—suggesting some violence in the process. (This sequence of events is explained in our booklet *History and Prophecy of the Middle East*.) THIS FIRST PHASE COULD HAPPEN AT ANY TIME. The Palestinians, backed by Iran, will almost certainly do this violent deed.

SO WHY ARE THESE THREE EVENTS *so closely linked*? I BELIEVE THERE IS ONLY ONE LOGICAL ANSWER: THE FALL OF HALF OF JERUSALEM TRIGGERS A VIOLENT AND MASSIVE CHAIN REACTION THAT LEADS TO CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

“Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (verses 3-4). One half of Jerusalem being captured is connected to other events that lead directly to the spectacular return of Jesus Christ!

JERUSALEM IN CRISIS

In verse 2, God says, “I will gather all nations against Jerusalem.” The next statement is about the capture of half the city. So *God begins to gather all nations, beginning with half of Jerusalem falling to the Arabs*. THAT EVENT TRIGGERS A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT LEAD TO CHRIST'S BATTLE IN JERUSALEM!

Christianity, Judaism and Islam all have an intense interest in Jerusalem. That city is the second-holiest site to Muslims. It is the most holy city for the Jews. So-called Christians consider it their first or second holiest city. In the end, it will bring disaster to all three religions. “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be CUT IN PIECES, though all the

people of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:3). Even today the United Nations is burdened down with Jerusalem. Those nations that burden themselves with that city are going to be "CUT IN PIECES." Instead of trusting God for a solution, they trust men.

Because of its past and future, Christ has more interest in that city than any other city on Earth. Christ died there. He and His Father are going to rule the Earth and the universe from there.

Many leaders today are asking for Jerusalem to be made into an international city. Even more leaders are discussing that subject now because of the present crises. (Request a free copy of our booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy*.)

Are the Jews about to invite a peace-keeping force in? Could that be their deadliest mistake of all? Again, they will be trusting men and not God.

ARMIES IN JERUSALEM

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over" (Daniel 11:40). The king of the south, led by Iran, is going to push at the king of the north. (This is explained in our free booklet *The King of the South*.)

Will that "push" be over Jerusalem? It could involve oil, since Europe is very dependent on Middle East oil. But the clash appears to be over Jerusalem. Could the battle be over an international peace-keeping force for Jerusalem?

"He shall ENTER also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" (verse 41). After the king of the north (a European army) wins, the army "ENTERS" the glorious land, Jerusalem.

The Hebrew word for "enters" indicates a peaceful entry, not a forced, military entrance. This European force apparently enters to keep peace in Jerusalem at the Jews' request. It leads to perhaps the biggest double cross in history, detailed in Ezekiel 23.

These developments will TRIGGER another chain of violent events. It looks like the world is about to have peace. SUDDENLY, IN A MOMENT, the Great Tribulation begins—the worst time of suffering ever on Earth. Judea, America and Britain all fall together (Hosea 5:5).

God's very elect will escape all this violence. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto" (Luke 21:20-21). This army is the king of the north, or the abomination that makes desolate—not an Arab army.

Why is this European army surrounding Jerusalem? This army has just conquered the king of the south and is probably there to keep "peace" in Jerusalem—to make it an international city. But God's people understand Bible prophecy and what is really going to occur. They recognize this as a SIGN to flee. So they flee to a place of safety (Revelation 12:14). They remain there during the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.

The king of the north conquering so much of the Earth greatly disturbs the Asiatic millions in Russia, China and probably Japan. GREAT DESTRUCTION IS ABOUT TO LEAD TO GREATER DESTRUCTION.

"He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. . . . BUT TIDINGS OUT OF THE EAST AND OUT OF THE NORTH SHALL TROUBLE HIM: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many" (Daniel 11:41, 44). Tidings out of the northeast trouble the king of the north, who then decides to attack first.

The religious head then moves to Jerusalem. "And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (verse 45). This move may be done for protection. But it is also probably done for religious reasons.

Nothing is going to stop the Asiatic army of 200,000,000—that's 200 million soldiers! (Revelation 9:16). Only Russia and China could amass such a gigantic army.

God is going to dry up the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. Massive armies shall flow into the Middle East and Europe—heading toward Jerusalem.

That will make it very difficult for the European army to use nuclear power. It doesn't make much sense to bomb yourselves.

“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Revelation 16:16). God will GATHER them into the plain of Megiddo. Armageddon means *armed Megiddo*.

There will only be two real military powers left at that time—the king of the north and the Russia-China axis. They will meet and prepare to clash in the plain of Megiddo, located today in northern Judah (or the nation called Israel), where there is a huge air base and a gigantic area to assemble armies.

Great military strategists will think they are making all these plans. They are wrong. THE SUPREME MILITARY STRATEGIST BEHIND ALL THIS IS GOD!

FIGHTING CHRIST

This event in Megiddo leads to another chain reaction. These armies from Europe and Asia will, in fact, gather there to fight. But then they will receive the shock of their lives! THEY WILL SEE SOMETHING THAT CHANGES THEIR ENTIRE GOAL IN THIS WAR: JESUS CHRIST RETURNING TO JERUSALEM. Then these two massive armies, which are about to fight each other, actually join forces and go to Jerusalem to fight Christ!

“For, behold, in those days, and in that time ... I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem” (Joel 3:1). By this point, the Jews in the Middle East will have been conquered.

Why does the Prophet Joel discuss “Judah and Jerusalem”? *Judah* is only one tribe of Israel. Joel was also referring primarily to two other nations of Israel. That is why he included Jerusalem—a type of the powerful nations of Israel in this end time, specifically America and Britain. By the time this prophecy is fulfilled, those two formerly great nations will be in captivity!

“I WILL ALSO GATHER ALL NATIONS, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land” (verse 2). God

says, "I WILL . . . GATHER all nations." THIS IS THE SAME LANGUAGE USED IN ZECHARIAH 14:2. IT ALL *STARTED* WITH ONE HALF OF JERUSALEM BEING CAPTURED!

The battle involving "all nations" will take place in the valley of Jehoshaphat! This deep valley, or ravine, borders Jerusalem on the east, between the city and the Mount of Olives. Today it is more commonly known as the Kidron Valley.

Jehoshaphat means "judgment of the Eternal." The rebellious and unrepentant nations of this world will be judged there by God for their disobedience!

The world's armies will converge on Jerusalem to fight Jesus Christ. He will not go north to Armageddon to fight them; they will march south to engage Him!

The ensuing confrontation is called "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Revelation 16:14). It is not the "battle of Armageddon" as many assume. That is because it will *not* take place at Armageddon!

Zechariah 14:12-13 graphically describe this supernatural confrontation at Jerusalem with the world's armies. They will turn against each other in mistrust and fear as their very flesh decomposes and their eyes cease to see!

THE BLOOD WILL FLOW UP TO THE HORSES' BRIDLES. "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs" (Revelation 14:19-20). The length of 1,600 furlongs is about 200 miles. The Valley of Jehoshaphat is GOING TO BECOME A RIVER OF BLOOD, ROUGHLY 4 FEET DEEP AND 200 MILES LONG! That is almost too much blood to even imagine. However, the Asiatic armies alone have 200 million soldiers.

THIS IS HOW GOD WILL "PLEAD WITH THEM"—IN THE ONLY LANGUAGE THEY UNDERSTAND!

Just the mention of these prophecies ought to frighten men into repentance. But men have no idea of how hard and rebellious they are!

If you and I don't hear His words today, we have a bloody future also. But God promises to protect us if we back and support His Work.

Men work to have peace and always get war. Only God knows the way of peace. You can always trust Him. That is the lesson all this bloody violence is going to teach mankind!

Armies have fought to gain control of Jerusalem for thousands of years. But they never rule that city for long. God has chosen Jerusalem. He did *not* choose London, New York City, Paris or Moscow. He chose Jerusalem.

That is the city from which Christ will soon rule the Earth. AND THAT IS THE CITY FROM WHICH THE FATHER WILL RULE THE UNIVERSE WITH HIS FAMILY. JERUSALEM IS GOING TO BECOME THE CAPITAL OF THE UNIVERSE. No city in the universe will ever be close to it in beauty and importance!

Satan knows the future of Jerusalem. That is why he has made it the bloodiest city on Earth. He hates to even think about the fabulous future of Jerusalem. Why? Because he has no part in it!

It is time that mankind learns about Jerusalem, the majestic city God has chosen.

“And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem” (Isaiah 31:9). CHRIST’S FIERY FURNACE IS IN JERUSALEM! This is where God is going to refine His created Family.

Christ will establish His government there. Global peace *will* break out!

What looks so gloomy and dark in Jerusalem is almost ready to start this chain reaction. It leads to the greatest event ever to occur in the history not just of this Earth, but the greatest event ever in the history of the universe—THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST! Thank God that glorious event is about to explode on this planet!

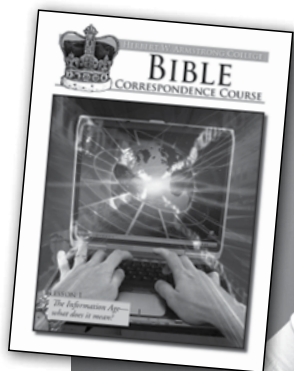
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