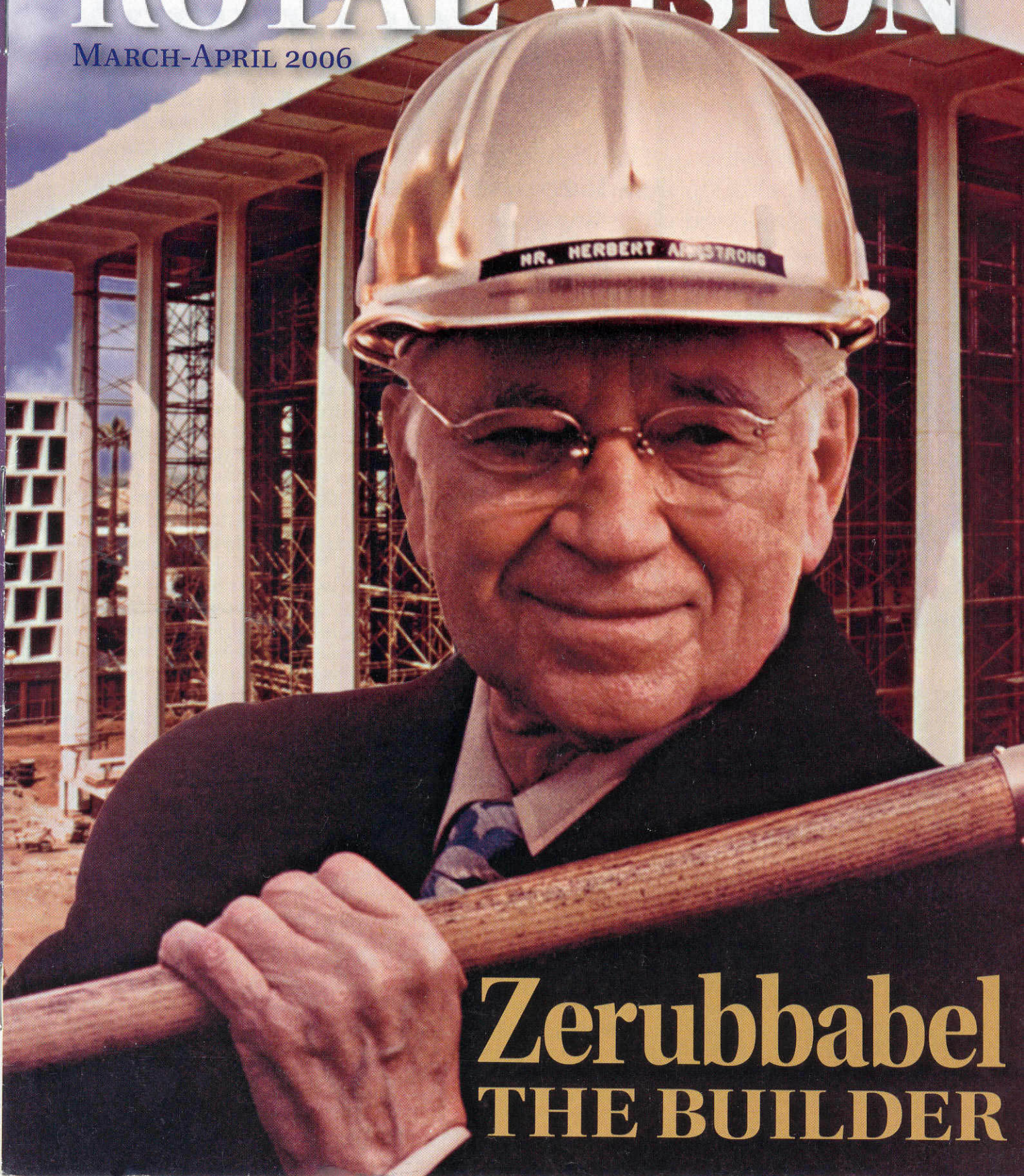


SPRING HOLY DAY ISSUE

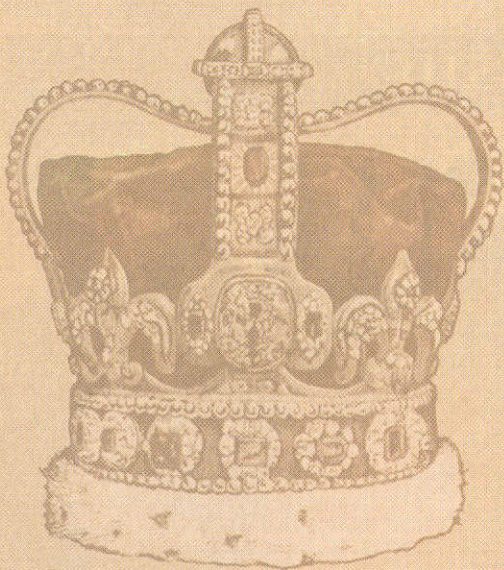
# ROYAL VISION

MARCH-APRIL 2006



## Zerubbabel THE BUILDER





# ROYAL VISION

MARCH-APRIL 2006

## IN THIS ISSUE

### COVER STORY

1 Zerubbabel the Builder

### SPRING HOLY DAYS

8 A Matter of Life and Death

12 What Is Sin?

16 Principles of Spiritual Sin

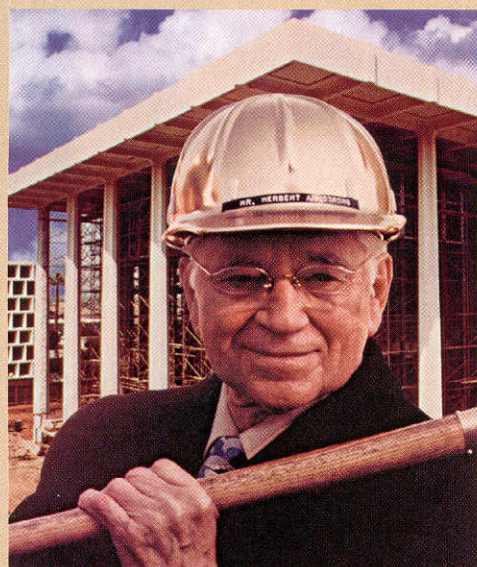
18 A Holy Nation

22 Removing the Veil

28 Rise and Walk

### DEPARTMENTS

29 From Our Readers



COVER STORY | Page 1



Page 18



Page 22

**ABOUT OUR COVER** Herbert W. Armstrong was a *type* of Zerubbabel the builder. Cover illustration by Joel Hilliker.

**EDITOR IN CHIEF** Gerald Flurry **SENIOR EDITORS** Stephen Flurry, Dennis Leap  
**MANAGING EDITOR** Wik Heerma **CONTRIBUTING EDITORS** Fred Dattolo, Joel Hilliker, Mark Jenkins, Ryan Malone, Gary Rethford, Max Rumler **EDITOR** Craig Winters **CONTRIBUTORS** Ron Fraser, Mark Nash **PROOFREADERS** Donna Grieves, Nancy Hancock, Ken Jeffries **PREPRESS PRODUCTION** Michael Dattolo **CIRCULATION MANAGER** Mark Saranga

**ROYAL VISION** (ISSN10979808) is published bimonthly by the Philadelphia Church of God, 14400A South Bryant Avenue, Edmond, OK 73034. Periodicals postage paid at Edmond, Okla., and additional mailing offices.

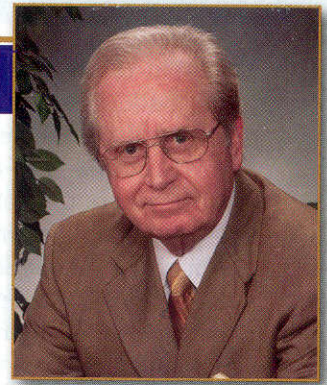
©2006 Philadelphia Church of God. All rights reserved.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** Subscriptions are sent free to all members and co-workers of the Philadelphia Church of God. Address all communications to the Philadelphia Church of God, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73083. **NOTICE** *Royal Vision* cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited articles and photographs.

**U.S. POSTMASTER** Send address changes to *Royal Vision*, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083.



# Zerubbabel the Builder



*Herbert W. Armstrong was a type of Zerubbabel the builder. This is a vital dimension to Mr. Armstrong's work that many of God's people do not understand. It is essential understanding for the people doing God's Work today.*

*By Gerald Flurry*

**W**HEN WE PUBLISHED *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* in 1997, we stepped out on faith. When the Worldwide Church of God sued us, we fought that court case on faith. God made us continue to walk by faith throughout that court battle. But as we did so, He showed us several scriptures proving that we were doing the right thing and that we would win.

Did you know that Herbert W. Armstrong had a similar experience? In the late 1970s, he was locked in a court battle with the state of California, and he later found some scriptures showing that court battle had been prophesied!

## BATTLE IN CALIFORNIA

In a February 7, 1979, member and co-worker letter, Mr. Armstrong wrote this: "The outrageous unconstitutional invasion and captivity of the Church and Work of the living God continues. It is the very beginning of fulfillment of END-TIME Bible prophecies! This monstrous invasion of the state of California will go down in history for the next thousand years!"

"My excommunicated son Garner Ted is now broadcasting over a station in the Los Angeles area and a very few other radio outlets. He and dissidents, excommunicated former ministers, are trying to mislead our people into thinking they are required by the Bible to fully cooperate with the state-appointed receiver in taking over, managing and operating the Work of God!"

"So first of all, let me MAKE PLAIN what has happened, and then what the Bible teaching is.

"A couple weeks ago on a Monday, over 3,000 brethren of God's Church en masse filled the ground floors of the Hall of Administration, the Ambassador Auditorium, and the Student Center. First let me tell you WHY they did this, and what led up to it.

"Six dissident, hostile former members had brought a 'Class Action' lawsuit against God's Church through the Attorney General's Office. Without notification and unknown to us, the state's acting attorney general had obtained a court order appointing ex-Judge Steven Weisman as receiver over God's Church and Work.

"Without notice of any kind, Mr. Weisman, government attorneys, private attorneys, deputized, and with law-enforcement officers, invaded Church headquarters in the administration building, and literally took CAPTIVE the Church and Work of Almighty God!

"It was early Wednesday morning, January 3rd. Mr. Ellis LaRavia was the only minister or department head there at the time. To him, Receiver Weisman said total, absolute power of the Church and Work of the living God had been given to him, including all assets.

"Mr. LaRavia was told, 'We're going to completely reorganize this Church along traditional (worldly) lines, appointing a new board of directors, fire and hire whom we please. Herbert Armstrong is OUT—no longer pastor general, or even in this organization.'

"Later, to my secretary, Receiver Weisman said Herbert W. Armstrong is completely OUT of this organization. Yet both of our people later heard ex-Judge Weisman say in court, under oath, that he had not said he had put me out." This is a man in this world's system of justice. But what kind of justice is that? He lied under oath!

Mr. Armstrong continued, "By court order, on NO EVIDENCE WHATSOEVER but declarations of hostile ex-members, the state of California had taken captive the complete operation and property, assets, and management of the Church of the living God, in utter contempt and defiance of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States! To my knowledge, this was UNPRECEDENTED in the United States!



"The receiver had locks on doors of principle campus buildings changed, and except during business hours, locked all employees and Church officials OUT! The state had taken captive, and possession of, GOD'S HEADQUARTERS!

"On a Monday morning, January 22, some 3,000 Church members, en masse, filed into the three main buildings, began a prayer and hymn-singing service, barricaded the doors, keeping ex-Judge Weisman and his staff out. This was repeated Tuesday morning, and by Wednesday morning the number escalated to approximately 5,500, with members coming from as far south as San Diego and as far north as Bakersfield. Women and children and even babies with them."

Picture the scene—5,500 Church members versus six government officials! The numbers didn't look good for the enemies of the Church.

"There's an old saying that 'possession is nine-tenths of the law,'" Mr. Armstrong continued. "God's people had retaken possession!

"Our brethren were quiet, orderly, and neatly dressed. On Wednesday a battery of deputy sheriffs were assembled a short distance from the campus, ready to break down the doors and use force against our people, who were willing to submit to arrest. This en masse action of 5,500 brethren was an answer to the 'class-action suit' brought by six embittered, hostile, ex-members seeking to DESTROY God's Church and Work. Yet our people politely carried a hot lunch over to the assembled deputy sheriffs."

You can see the contrast between these people and the dissidents. What an attitude they had. What an example they set.

"This made news headlines around the world. To break in and take women, children and babies to jail would have made bigger headlines. The receiver apparently realized this. He raised, in effect, a white flag of truce, asking our attorneys if they could not make some compromise. Our attorneys said 'No COMPROMISE! You have acted in defiance of the Constitution of the United States.'"

Mr. Armstrong answered this attack by California with a blazing counterattack. He ran full-page ads in the *Wall Street Journal* to draw attention to the egregious abuse of authority by the state.

Think about this: If the governments of this world are going to fight against Christ when He returns, isn't it logical Satan would stir them up to fight against the man who was *announcing* Christ's return?

The Philadelphia Church of God today is giving the world its last warning in preparation for Jesus Christ, whom those armies are going to fight. Don't you think Satan would rally whatever resources he could to try to stop this message in the end time? Of course he would.

In that co-worker letter, Mr. Armstrong wrote, "Now turn to some significant prophecies about THIS VERY WORK, and even THIS VERY ATTACK BY THE STATE, in Old Testament prophecies."

Yes—Mr. Armstrong was convinced that what happened in that court battle was PROPHESED in the Holy Bible! We must not forget these very specific, mind-staggering prophecies.

Let's look at one of the prophecies Mr. Armstrong was talking about.

## ZERUBBABEL'S RETURN TO JERUSALEM

During the reign of Cyrus of Persia, God stirred the spirit of this king to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, about 515 B.C. (Ezra 1:1-2). Cyrus actually rebuilt all of Jerusalem, but the book of Ezra focuses on the house of God.

The central personality in rebuilding the second temple was *Zerubbabel*. That was his commission: He was a *type* of an end-time Zerubbabel who was the leading person in building God's spiritual temple. Both of these men were descendants of David.

Accompanying Zerubbabel anciently in this monumental job were Joshua, Haggai and Zechariah. All of these men were *types* of prophecy fulfilled in this end time.

The experience of returning from captivity to Jerusalem must have been very emotional for these men. They knew Israel's history and what had happened to the temple. In many ways, their lives revolved around the temple. As they entered Jerusalem, they saw David's palace reduced to a heap of ashes; they gazed upon the defiled sepulchers; they walked the empty streets. They must have pondered the times when David had celebrated and danced before God in the Holy City. They must have considered the period of Solomon's magnificent reign, when Israel's majesty was peerless, and all the surrounding nations were petty by comparison.

Surveying this devastation must have been a little humiliating for Zerubbabel. His mind would have been filled with mighty memories—yet here he was returning with a little remnant of Jewish slaves to rebuild the temple of God.

Zerubbabel's rebuilding of the temple was a type of what Mr. Armstrong did with God's Church in the end time. HIS EXAMPLE IS PROPHECY FOR OUR DAY.

God's message emanates from His temple, or Church. Mr. Armstrong was a builder. Like Zerubbabel, he used a plumb line to *measure precisely* in his building—though spiritually, he was far more exact in his construction than the most meticulous physical builder.

Mr. Armstrong built a temple—he restored all things—he created a system within the Church whereby God's message could be disseminated throughout



the entire Earth! He engineered a vast temple structure that serviced a mighty Work of God, empowered by the prayers, treasure and labor of God's people.

## REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

Mr. Armstrong wrote this in a March 19, 1981, member and co-worker letter: "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."

Did Mr. Armstrong think one man would and did fulfill this prophecy? Absolutely! In this same co-worker letter, he speaks of "one," "a human messenger," "a voice," "a one-man leadership"—and then ends by asking, "HAS ANYONE ELSE DONE IT?"

Mr. Armstrong carries the prophetic biblical title of *Zerubbabel*.

In another way, however, the Work of the Philadelphia Church of God parallels Zerubbabel's work.

JUDAH WAS TOTALLY DESTROYED AND HAD BECOME A WASTELAND. THE DEVASTATION IN JERUSALEM THAT ZERUBBABEL ENCOUNTERED IS AKIN TO THE SPIRITUAL DEVASTATION IN GOD'S CHURCH IN THE LAODICEAN ERA. AFTER THE LAODICEANS HAVE COMPLETELY TRASHED THE TEMPLE AND STOPPED GOD'S WORK, WE MUST RAISE UP THE RUINS.

Zerubbabel led his group to rebuild the temple. These workers did all they could, using the finest materials they could find, to rebuild it after the pattern of Solomon's temple. They gathered cedar trees from Lebanon just as Solomon had done. They restored the altar in the exact place Solomon had built it. Today, we have worked to build a strong altar. You can't raise up the ruins without a dedicated ministry.

They re-established the courses of the priests and

Levites. Their goal was to establish God's glory—again!

In the same way, we build as close as possible to the way Mr. Armstrong did, following the blueprint he left for us. We take a certain amount of the right kind of pride in building as he built.

Zerubbabel had a marvelous opportunity in his rebuilding project: Cyrus provided him the vessels from the temple that Nebuchadnezzar had taken, and Zerubbabel was able to bring them back to put into God's temple.

We plan to build a house for God on the Herbert W. Armstrong College campus, and we have purchased some items from the Ambassador Auditorium in order to put in it. To adorn God's house, Mr. Armstrong bought two magnificent candelabras that were commissioned by the Shah of Iran to celebrate 2,500 years of the Persian Empire, focusing on the reign of King Cyrus. We have since purchased those candelabras, and we plan to put them in our auditorium. We also purchased a Steinway concert grand piano from Hamburg, Germany, that was used in the house of God.

The Iranians were celebrating Persia's greatest king, who served God. Satan was enraged and quickly led the overthrow of Iran's shah. He was replaced by a madman!

We need to know all about the history of Zerubbabel's building—in order to understand what we must do ourselves.

## ENEMIES OF THE WORK

As Zerubbabel was building, enemies of God came and pretended to want to help. Zerubbabel and some of his leading assistants perceived their hypocrisy and refused to have anything to do with them (Ezra 4:1-3). This too is a type of what happened in the end time to Mr. Armstrong.

"Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building" (verse 4). God's enemies have always sought to stop His Work. The Hebrew word translated *weaken* means relax or lose courage. That is what happened to 95 percent of God's people. This is what Satan is always trying to get us to do. He gets us to focus on our problems, or to relax, or to become weary in well-doing. We will always encounter difficulties when we set our minds on troubles rather than on the great God who is building through us.

"And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (verse 5). In today's terminology, counselors are *lawyers*. Lawyers are known to frustrate people—even to *lie* while they try to convince people they are telling the truth.

California came at Mr. Armstrong with its judges (maybe the most evil ones) and lawyers, and began



to attack God's Church because of what *six dissenters said*—six evil, embittered men who were backed by Satan.

They “legally” violated the U.S. Constitution.

Zerubbabel's enemies wrote an accusation against the temple project to King Artaxerxes. “This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations” (verses 11-12). Later the same message went to King Darius.

Look how God's enemies can frustrate the Work with such things! The king ended up responding, “Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me” (verse 21). By this order, these people were able to stop the work for 15 years!

Thankfully, the state of California wasn't able to stop God's Work that long! But its attack had a dramatic effect, nonetheless.

## PROPHETS CORRECT

The prophets of God came on the scene to rectify the problem. They corrected the people for having let the work stop, and told them to get busy and resume building! (Ezra 5:1-2).

Jeremiah had prophesied that the people would rebuild the temple after 70 years (Jeremiah 29:10). Surely these Jews knew about those prophecies, and that must have excited them. They knew God was working in their lives, and that God would use them to help bring the whole world, including the Gentiles, to Jerusalem for God to teach them. They might have even realized that they were a forerunner of something to occur in the end time, just before the return of the Messiah!

Haggai and Zechariah must have given some powerful messages. Their messages in the Bible are strong, so their sermons must have been something to behold!

It was that 15-year work stoppage that caused Haggai to write his prophecy—after the foundation had been laid.

The people had gotten their minds on building their own homes, ahead of finishing God's house. That probably explains the massive, 15-year work stoppage!

It takes the power of God to do His Work. God does His Work through His people. If they let up, then Satan is going to attack and cause serious trouble.

The ancient Jews had to be shown where they were sinning; they needed to rekindle their spirits and to make big changes in their lives.

The same thing has happened in this end time.

The synagogue of Satan stopped the Work twice—first in the 1970s, then after Mr. Armstrong died. God's Church had some serious problems to address.

Everything we know about these prophets is for our time today! These prophecies were written for us today, in the time just before Christ returns. We are exceedingly close to that event!

## HAGGAI CORRECTS GOD'S PEOPLE

*Haggai* means festival. So the biblical book of Haggai carries a Feast of Tabernacles theme.

The book of Haggai mentions Zerubbabel's name seven times—the number of completion.

After that 15-year delay in the building project, Haggai came to Zerubbabel and to Joshua with this message: “Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built” (Haggai 1:1-2).

Anciently, some of the critics were saying Jeremiah's prophesied 70 years had not yet come to pass. They loved hearing such a message, so they could concentrate on their own homes. Satan exploited that lack of faith.

Today, the Laodiceans say, “My Lord has delayed His coming” to justify their becoming “rich and increased with goods.”

Most of God's people in this end time have turned away from God, just as Haggai said. This prophecy shows how it happened—and how some repented.

“Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled [luxurious] houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways” (verses 3-5). God calls them “this people,” not “my people.” He can get upset with us when we don't do His Work!

“Consider” is a strong word. God is telling us, *SET YOUR HEART on God's ways*. He repeats it in verse 7. It is not wrong to be prosperous, but if that material wealth gets in the way of your setting your heart on God's Work, God is going to correct you for that!

“Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and *build the house*; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD” (verse 8). We are here for one purpose: *TO GLORIFY GOD*! God wants the whole world to see what He is doing!

God is very concerned about His house: “Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house” (verse 9). God does want us to prosper—but we must never put our focus there. It must never come before God's Work, or we simply *will not* prosper! That is the trap the people fell into during the time of the original Zerubbabel.



If we put our personal prosperity ahead of God's, then ultimately everything we do will come to nothing (see also verses 10-11).

### **A COMMAND TO BUILD GOD'S HOUSE**

Mr. Armstrong used the authority of Haggai's prophecy to build a house for God in Pasadena.

In a letter written to WCG members dated January 20, 1964, this is what he wrote: "During the conference, God revealed something IMPORTANT to me, which came sharp and clear like a bolt of lightning. One night—or early morning before going to the conference, I don't remember which, I was reviewing once again the book of Haggai and the 4th chapter of Zechariah. ...

"Zerubbabel was chosen by GOD to BUILD GOD'S HOUSE—that is, to be the human leader in it. Now this whole two-chapter book of Haggai is a PROPHECY. It applies to US, today. Near its end, it is recorded that God said to Haggai, 'Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will [future—a prophecy] shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; ... IN THAT DAY, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant... and will make thee a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.' Thus ends the prophecy.

"Plainly, this refers to the very present, just before the soon-coming DAY OF THE LORD, and the Second Coming of Christ, and beginning of the WORLD TOMORROW!

"In such prophecies, the physical nation—Israel or Judah—is the type of the SPIRITUAL Israel, or God's CHURCH, of today. [We mention this more frequently today than Mr. Armstrong did. That is because God is revealing so much prophecy to us.] ...

"Now let me tell you how this flashed a message to me in startling manner. Today, God's headquarters on Earth is NOT JERUSALEM. Jerusalem is still being trodden down by the Gentiles—UNTIL their 'times' be ended. God will YET take His headquarters back to Jerusalem—WHEN CHRIST RETURNS. Today the Jews have built a city ADJOINING the original Jerusalem, and they call it by that name—but all of the original Jerusalem is in the hands of Gentile Jordan. [This was written before 1967, when the Jews captured what is known as East Jerusalem.]

"Today the headquarters of GOD'S WORK, and of GOD'S CHURCH, on Earth, is Pasadena, California. ...

"But when I read, once again, Haggai's message from God—it came like a bolt of lightning as a message of God TO HIS CHURCH TODAY!

"It struck me as a loud message straight from God that we have been planning to build, FIRST, buildings for college use. But here we are AT GOD'S HEADQUARTERS on Earth. And WE WERE PLANNING TO DELAY THE BUILDING OF GOD'S HOUSE, FOR HIM (in spirit) TO DWELL IN!

"Brethren, I went straight to the council of God's ministers, assembled in our outgrown former assembly hall, and announced to them that GOD'S HOUSE—the new auditorium—the meeting place for the headquarters church—MUST COME NEXT on the priority list. We are already engaged in the construction of a new dining hall, and a gymnasium. But NEXT, ahead of everything else, must come the HOUSE OF GOD, at God's earthly HEADQUARTERS!

"This is a commandment direct from GOD! It is not for us to question. The LIVING CHRIST is HEAD of God's Church. He leads—He directs His Church. And, as Zerubbabel was OBEDIENT to the command, and with the enthusiastic and generous help of all the people, started building GOD'S HOUSE, so must we. ...

"WE MUST FINANCE MOST OF THIS BUILDING OPERATION BY PAYING CASH AS WE GO!

"BRETHREN, THIS MESSAGE FROM GOD TO BUILD THE HOUSE FOR HIM TO DWELL IN is His command to YOU as much as to me!"

If we are to build a house of God, we're going to have to have more faith than we have now. We must have the faith that Zerubbabel, Zechariah, Haggai and Joshua had.

It's not just about giving financially—*faith* is what God will bless most of all!

### **RECOGNIZING GOD'S MIRACLES**

Ezra 5:1-2 show Zerubbabel and Haggai getting the building project started again.

It wasn't long, however, before some fairly important leaders came around, asking by what authority the men were building, and applying pressure on them to stop (verses 3-4). They were trying to confuse and intimidate God's people. We can all face such pressure—and if we succumb to it, that will prevent us from doing God's Work!

**The people had gotten their minds on building their own homes, ahead of finishing God's house. That probably explains the massive, 15-year work stoppage.**



Zerubbabel was not to be deterred. Those leaders would not be able to officially stop them unless they took their case before King Darius. That was bad news for the enemy, and God's people realized it (verse 5).

The stirring way these men of God answered the matter is spelled out entirely in verses 11-16. They detailed all the wonderful miracles God had worked to enable their building project, including Cyrus' decree, and his deliverance of all the temple vessels to Zerubbabel for their use in Jerusalem (called "Sheshbazzar" in verse 14). They were acutely aware of all that God had done, and the fulfilled prophecies they were a part of. These things truly inspired them!

Their *strong faith* was the reason Satan couldn't stop God's Work this time.

### THE GLORY OF GOD'S HOUSE

"In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" (Haggai 2:1-3). The people were comparing the second temple with Solomon's temple. The second temple was "*nothing*" compared to its "*first glory*," which depressed people. In many ways, our Work doesn't compare with what Mr. Armstrong did.

But as God says in the Zerubbabel inset (Zechariah 4:6-10), we must not despise the day of small things! No matter how small something is, if God is behind it, it will grow and accomplish the job as God wants it done! We all need more faith to recognize what God is doing!

Haggai continued with what was, in some ways, God's gentle rebuke: "Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt [a type of this world], so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not" (verses 4-5). We have God's Spirit and power! We have nothing to be afraid of! But we can't focus on the problems—we must focus on the fact that God is with His people!

"For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts" (verses 6-7). The elements and the nations are about to be shaken! The trouble we see today is only the *beginning* of sorrows! God starts with Israel, but

He is about to shake the whole world as it has never been shaken.

The expression "once, it is a little while" has been translated awkwardly. The Hebrew reads more like "one little while." The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* states that this verse means "a single brief span of time." The emphasis is on a single or little space of time. The setting for these verses is the end time. Jesus Christ, "the desire of all nations," is about to return.

What is God telling us here? He is showing that *after Mr. Armstrong passes from the scene and just before Jesus Christ returns*, THERE IS ONLY GOING TO BE A SINGLE, BRIEF SPACE OF TIME. Then God is going to shake the heavens, the Earth, the sea and the dry land. In other words, the PCG only has a brief space of time to complete its Work.

God *emphasizes* the "one little while" to remind us just how short the time is to do God's Work. Our Work before the Great Tribulation will be over in a flash! WE MUST THINK MOSTLY ABOUT ALL THE HORRENDOUS TRIALS THAT ARE COMING UPON ISRAEL AND THE WORLD—NOT OUR OWN TRIALS. Otherwise the Work will be over before we even get committed.

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts" (verse 9).

This is an end-time prophecy. The "former" house was just a physical place. But the latter house talked about here is God's Church, composed of His Spirit-begotten children! That spiritual temple is *far more glorious* than Solomon's temple! It is infinitely more important—and more glorious—because it has *eternal consequences*! Unless we see that, we won't put our hearts into this Work! We must recognize what God is doing before we will be motivated to give our all to Him!

### THE AUDITORIUM

Notice, God says "in this place"—and the meaning in Hebrew defines it as a *physical* place. "In this place," God says, "will I give peace." That means God gives His Holy Spirit and all of the peace it brings. The focus of that peace is in "this place"—one *single* place on Earth. This verse is also a prophecy that God would build a physical house of God through an end-time Zerubbabel. Mr. Armstrong filled that role in these latter days.

This prophecy has been revealed during the Laodicean era, when God's *peace* was being destroyed in His house. That is the emphasis of Haggai 2.

Look at the "peace"—the spiritual gifts—that flowed so abundantly from that house! Think of all the glorious books and booklets God inspired through Mr. Armstrong. That is what the prophecy in



Haggai 2:9 is all about.

There was also a prophecy that the Laodiceans would get control of God's house. Only God's people keep God's law. "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law ..." (verse 11). God is concerned about how the Laodicean ministers keep God's law. If we are ever going to be king priests for God, we must understand and love God's law. That is where the Laodicean ministers are failing.

"Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean" (verse 14). What these ministers offer in God's house today is unclean—it's not according to God's law!

God prophesied that He would give *peace*—"in this place." But how does that peace come? "Great peace have they which *love thy law*: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalms 119:165). God gives great peace to those saints who are great law-keepers.

God is judging us today by how well we keep His law. Only those saints will have His physical and spiritual blessings and wonderful rewards in the future.

If God builds a physical house, He blesses it, as it glorifies Him. But when the people rebel, God curses the house, if they don't repent!

We can now see more clearly why we must "raise up [the] ruins" (Amos 9:11). Only God's law-keepers have the spiritual power to do that job.

Why didn't God reveal this prophecy about God's physical house to Mr. Armstrong? He probably didn't do that for two reasons: First, it would be more condemning to the Laodiceans today, and secondly, this revelation would inspire us to build as Elijah did—to "raise up [the] ruins." That is very hard work.

Mr. Armstrong had many structures built. But not one came close to the physical glory of the auditorium.

It took a great deal of faith for Mr. Armstrong to build that structure. I am certain it will require a lot of faith for us to build an auditorium as well. It's going to take miracles like we have never seen before. But if God okays a project, we need to go for it!

God's Work didn't bog down with Mr. Armstrong. *California attacked—Mr. Armstrong counterattacked*—and the state of California ended up being condemned by many people! That episode had a wonderful outcome because Mr. Armstrong trusted in God, and he was supported by others who trusted in

God! It took true courage for God's people to go inside the Hall of Administration and lock the doors—but they did so because of their trust in God. They were prepared to go to jail because of God's Work!

That history should inspire us in our temple-building.

We have repeatedly reminded people about Ambassador Auditorium being God's house. Would anyone even know where God's only house on earth was if not for us? No one else even mentions it! That auditorium was God's house, built by God's people who knew God was behind it!

All the peace God put in that house is going to condemn many Laodiceans! Satan has taken it over from people who don't believe God and who won't repent of their sins! All that property is a towering monument of their failure!

If we're not walking with God, we will be overwhelmed by our troubles. But if we are walking with God, we will accomplish great things!

### UNCLEAN OFFERINGS

You can see that verses 21 and 23 of Haggai 2 are still addressing Zerubbabel. So, looking at the chronology, you can see that verse 11 must have happened while Zerubbabel was still alive. Though Joshua is referred to at the beginning of the chapter, he isn't mentioned again from verse 11 on. That was undoubtedly an ominous omission.

Prophetically, then, these verses indicate this occurred while Mr. Armstrong was still on the scene: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean" (Haggai 2:11-13).

This happened anciently, but also in this end time—spiritually.

"Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean" (verse 14). The people were offering something unclean while Mr.

*continued on page 26 ►*

**We must think mostly about all the horrendous trials  
that are coming upon Israel and the world—  
not our own trials.**



Armstrong was still around!

That is a serious indictment of those ministers during Mr. Armstrong's time.

This was the synagogue of Satan that became the Laodicean era (Revelation 3:9, 14-19).

If you don't think Mr. Armstrong was a great man, just think about what he accomplished while the people around him were making unclean offerings! He described them as *vultures waiting for him to die*. They didn't agree with what he taught, and fought against him when they knew they could get away with it. Those six dissidents were just the tip of the iceberg: The iceberg was in the Church! That is what wrecks the ship! How would you like to work in such a nightmarish environment? Yet Mr. Armstrong remained strong and kept building. Look what he accomplished during his last seven years, when they were fighting him most of all!

He said that he did more in those seven years than all the preceding years in his ministry.

Mr. Armstrong tried with all his might to get the Church back on track during those years. God blessed those efforts magnificently. Clearly, however, many of the problems remained.

Who led these unclean ministers? It appears from this passage that it was Joshua. From this point on, there is no talk of Joshua. And Zechariah contains his fiery prophecy in chapter 3 showing that Joshua possessed the turban of authority—the government in the Church.

This is also a prophecy that lawless people would get control of God's Church. That is why their offerings are unclean. These verses show that Mr. Armstrong was being betrayed by these top leaders before he died. They refused to follow his example and build as he did. They rejected God's law and the man who implemented it in God's true Church.

"And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD" (Haggai 2:15). Mr. Armstrong built God's work stone by stone, doctrine by doctrine. Those men know it! Haggai is telling us that if we don't follow Zerubbabel's example, we won't know how to build in our personal life! Mr. Armstrong spelled it out in detail! Go back, study his life, and see what Christ built through him, stone by stone! Those men ignored the fact that Christ was behind Mr. Armstrong because they were concentrating on their own homes and careers, apart from God. They wanted to do it their own way, and terrible things happened in their lives.

God tells His priests, His people, His entire nation that, if they truly want to solve this horrendous end-time Church crisis, they are going to have to consider their *beginning*—before there even was a temple stone laid upon another.

Mr. Armstrong was the one who built God's temple—His Church. If the Laodiceans understand what his conversion was all about, they'll know how to get back on track. And they will also know where God's Elijah work is today.

## GOD'S SIGNET

Haggai 2:23 becomes more interesting and profound every time I study it: "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." In this verse, God provides a solution for Joshua and his fellows who rebelled.

What does God mean by saying, "Will I take you"? The Interlinear Bible reads, "I will take you, Zerubbabel." This has the same meaning as 2 Thessalonians 2:7, which says that Mr. Armstrong would be "taken out of the way." God says He would take him! The people should not be alarmed by that—but neither should they follow Joshua and the unclean ministers! God prophesied He would take Zerubbabel and then *leave a signet!*

It is critical that we know Zerubbabel the builder!

*Unger's Bible Dictionary* defines *signet*, "an impression made that had the same legal validity as an actual signature." With a signet, someone could stamp something with the king's signature. It represents law—government—authority! God said, *I'll still leave authority—and the main authority is Zerubbabel's signature! Remember how he built! Understand about the Ten Commandments, which he established in the Church, and the stone of government. THE LAW AND GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED THROUGH MR. ARMSTRONG IS LIKE GOD'S SIGNATURE!*

The *Anchor Bible Commentary* says of *signet*, "The use of such a seal was the way of carrying out the authority of the person to whom the seal belonged." The PCG possesses that signet today—the seal of his authority. Why a "signet"? This is a test. We must learn deeply not to look to any *man*. The only reason a signet is required is if the person isn't there! But we recognize what was *behind* Mr. Armstrong, so we retain Mr. Armstrong's authority, government and law. We know it is our responsibility to maintain what he built!

HAGGAI 2:23 IS ONE OF THE MOST REVEALING VERSES IN THE BIBLE.

It says volumes about what God did through Mr. Armstrong and how important that work truly was. By clinging to that signet, we have GOD'S SIGNATURE *through Zerubbabel!*

Having a *signet* presupposes that there is a man there to stamp it! Without government in the Church today, you would have only confusion!

*Why would God put this prophecy here if He didn't*



*know there was a great apostasy coming?* He wants to know if His people learned to build the way Zerubbabel built—if they learned what God taught them—or if, on the other hand, they are going to foolishly follow a man with a position that means nothing if he doesn't have the signature!

You must look to the *signature*—the gold stamp of God's authority!

HOW WOULD WE KNOW HOW TO RAISE UP THE RUINS (AMOS 9:11) IF WE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MR. ARMSTRONG'S WORK? We are not trying to be original—we are just raising up the ruins, building the same way he did!

### PROPHETS DON'T LIVE FOREVER

Mr. Armstrong came on the scene and died. "Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" (Zechariah 1:5).

Prophets die—apostles die. We are all going to die. But God is getting at something important here: *If you live at the same time as a prophet or apostle, you're going to be held accountable!* The prophet won't live forever—BUT GOD DOES! God sends those men and teaches us through them—or restores all things—or builds a temple! But then that man dies, AND WE MUST CLING TO WHAT GOD TAUGHT.

"But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and 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). In one sense, the man is irrelevant! It is GOD'S commandments and achievements that we must be concerned about.

When a great man of God comes along, we must ask, how did he live so successfully? We must study his example in detail and *learn from that!*

Herbert Armstrong is dead and gone. Many believe that the words he spoke and wrote should have died with him. BUT THEY ARE GOD'S WORDS!

This passage is leading up to the prophecy about Joshua, a man who didn't learn that lesson.

### JOSHUA

"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).

Joshua is pictured as being in bonds to the devil! After all the wonderful words by Zerubbabel, Haggai and Zechariah, Joshua still ended up enslaved by the devil!

That certainly happened in this end time, and I'm sure it occurred anciently as well—Zechariah probably got this information from what he *saw*.

Joshua was clothed with filthy garments. These were taken from him, and a "fair mitre" set on his head and new garments given him (verses 3-5). The mitre, or turban, is a symbol of authority. When Joseph Tkach worked with Mr. Armstrong for the last seven years, he fulfilled the Joshua role. He was the leader of that church after Mr. Armstrong died. This verse indicates that Joshua had authority and abused it—and then there was a great falling away in God's Church.

What happened after Zerubbabel died anciently? Joshua was probably put in charge, and things went bad. Forty to fifty years later, Malachi had to rebuke the temple priests. God's temple tends to degenerate—and we have to watch that very carefully!

We are carrying that same message to the Laodiceans today—but we also take a message *to the world* that Malachi didn't. We take his message and a lot more to the *whole world*.

### THE ZERUBBABEL INSET

Zechariah 4:6-9 and two thirds of verse 10 are the Zerubbabel inset. 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 put 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. The story flow of Zechariah 3 and 4 is about Joshua and the two witnesses who prophesy in the Great Tribulation, and is concluded by Christ's return (Zechariah 3:8). That is the time setting. The two olive trees (Zechariah 4:11-12) are the two witnesses (Revelation 11:1-4). Zerubbabel is not an active part of this story flow—the flow is better if you skip the inset.

Joshua and "his fellows" repeated the sins of the 1970s. They relied 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

It is critical that we know Zerubbabel the builder.  
The law and government established through  
Mr. Armstrong is like God's signature.



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!

Sometimes you have to fast longer, or pray longer, to make sure you are doing what you are doing by God's Spirit!

THE PHILADELPHIA CHURCH OF GOD IS NOT LEAVING GOD'S PHILADELPHIA STANDARD. The Laodicean leaders today are doing the leaving! They are taking a Laodicean turn away from Christ—because they ignore what CHRIST ESTABLISHED through Zerubbabel (Mr. Armstrong).

Joseph Tkach said he wouldn't let Mr. Armstrong rule from the grave. But we must—if those rulings are from God!

"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" (verse 10).

Mr. Armstrong wrote this in his member and co-worker letter dated February 7, 1979: "Brethren in Christ, we need to REALIZE WHAT WE ARE INTO! This is really a war between Satan and Christ—and Christ SHALL WIN, and God's work shall be FINISHED! It is crystal clear now to me—and I hope to you—why God raised me up from the dead a year and a half ago! But, as the people with Zerubbabel had to pitch in and work with their might, how much MORE must we! Christ has promised that He will NEVER LEAVE US NOR FORSAKE US! This is now His battle more than ours. The invisible Satan inspired it and deceived disloyal ex-members into taking their rebellious grudge to the state attorney's office, and unknown of course to the men involved, Satan put it into their minds to start this unconstitutional lawsuit, to take possession and operation of the VERY WORK OF GOD WHICH JESUS CHRIST IS DIRECTING THROUGH HIS PEOPLE!...

"Remember, any tithes or offerings sent to the Pasadena address will go to the ex-judge receiver. Most of our mail processing department has been moved here to Tucson, Arizona.

"Before closing let me again say THANK YOU! THANK YOU for your dedicated loyalty, your sacrifice and quick response! All departments are now operating again in Pasadena, except most of the mail processing department, which has been temporarily moved here in Tucson. YOUR RESPONSE IN THIS TIME OF WAR TO KEEP GOD'S CHURCH AND WORK ALIVE HAS BEEN JUST AS SUPERB AS THOSE BRETHREN IN THE PASADENA AREA IN RE-TAKING POSSESSION OF GOD'S PROPERTY—ALL DEEDED IN GOD'S NAME—AT PASADENA! Your part in God's Work is just as necessary as mine." □

# Rise and Walk

By Michael Dattolo

**TWO MEN CLOTHED IN TUNICS AND SANDALS** walked purposefully toward the temple at Jerusalem. It was 2:55 p.m.—approaching the Jews' hour of prayer at the temple. Many Jews were heading in the same direction.

Those who saw them might have recognized the two men as being disciples of the recently crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ—Peter and John.

As the two apostles walked, the words Christ had spoken to them just before returning to heaven echoed through Peter's mind: *These signs shall follow them that believe, He had said. In my name shall they cast out demons... they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.* It was an unshakable promise from Christ. Peter had faith, knowing that what God promises, He will bring to pass.

The hour inched closer to 3 p.m. As Peter and John approached the temple, they came among a large crowd of Jews arriving for public prayer. In the midst of the crowd, several men were carrying a man who had been born a cripple. They brought him to the temple gate called Beautiful and set him down, where he began to beg for money.

By this time, Peter and John had reached the outer court, the court of the Gentiles. Around them towered a 60-foot stone wall. Ahead, within sight, stood the temple, covered with marble and gold. The two apostles approached Beautiful—a magnificent gate, 75 feet tall and 60 feet wide, plated with Corinthian brass that shone like gold.

Peter's eyes fixed upon the crippled man lying pitifully in front of the gate.

The cripple raised his eyes to meet Peter's intent gaze, hoping for money.

*They shall lay hands upon the sick...*

The words echoed in Peter's mind.

Receiving nothing, the crippled man shifted his gaze away from Peter and John.

"Look on us," Peter said, firmly, but softly.

The man looked back up to see both apostles' eyes firmly fixed on him, with focused attention. Again he waited expectantly for money.

*...and they shall recover...*

"Silver and gold I have none," Peter said. And then, with strong confidence in his voice that caused heads