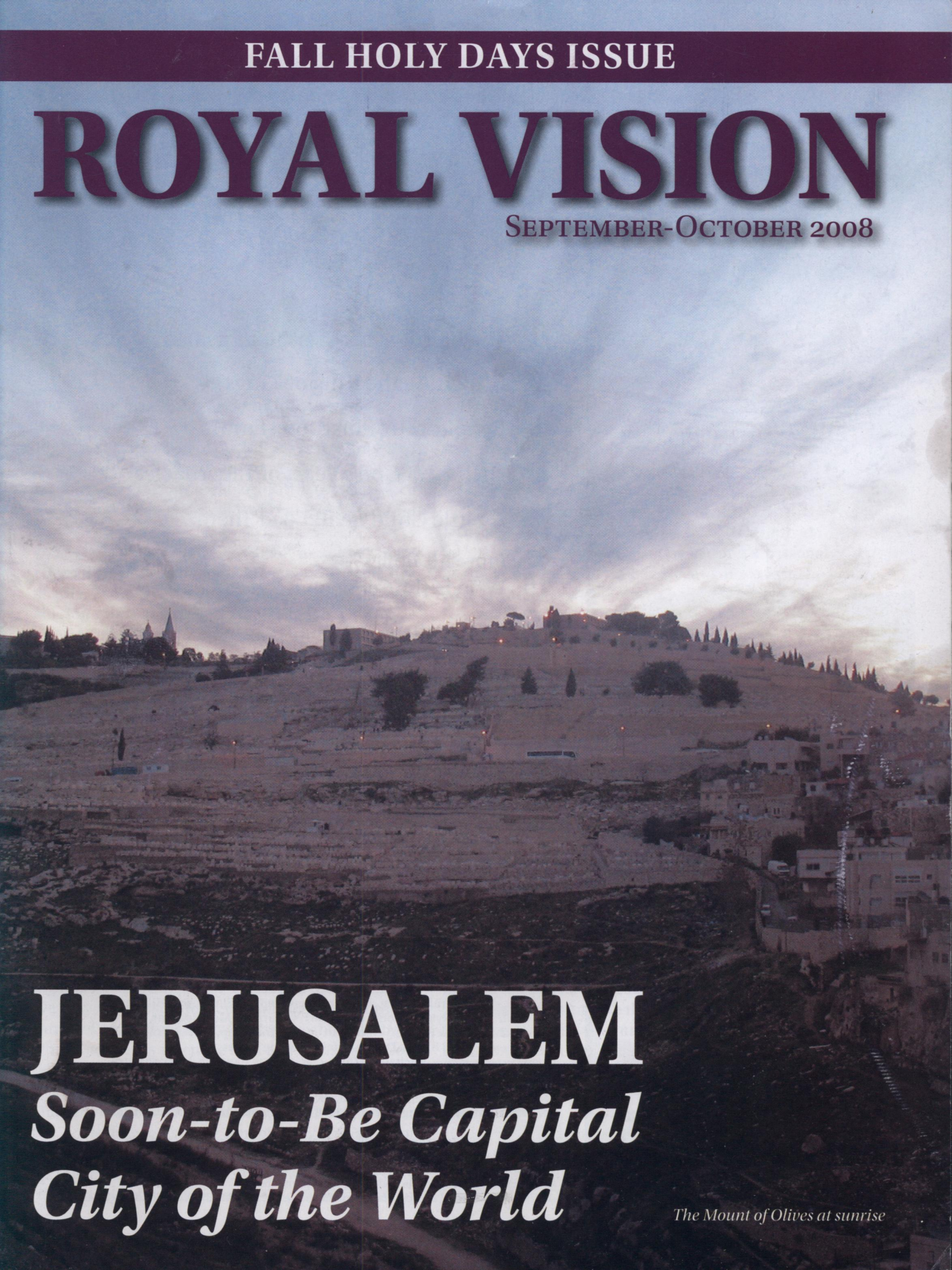


FALL HOLY DAYS ISSUE

# ROYAL VISION

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2008

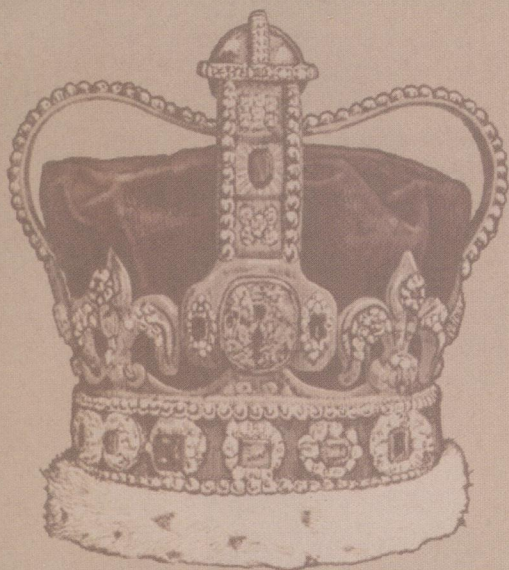


# JERUSALEM

*Soon-to-Be Capital  
City of the World*

*The Mount of Olives at sunrise*





# ROYAL VISION

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2008

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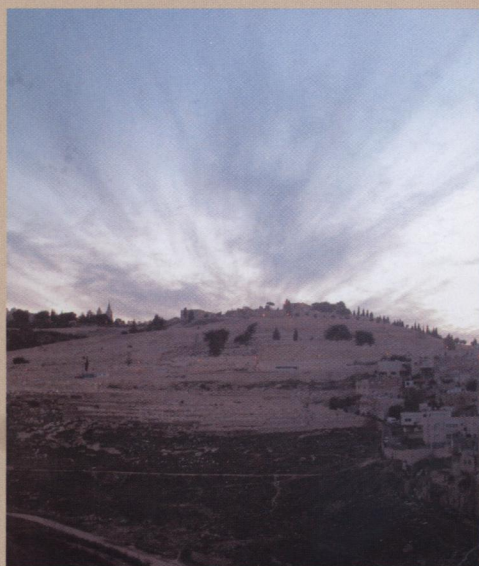
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**ABOUT OUR COVER** At His Second Coming, Jesus Christ's feet will stand on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. (Royal Vision)

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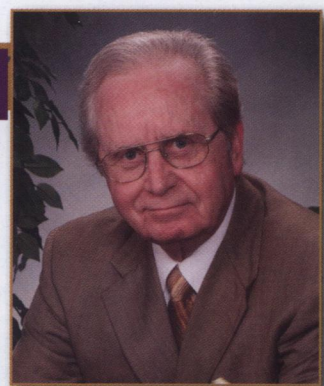
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# The Eternal Has Chosen Jerusalem



**DECEMBER 7 IS A DATE ETCHED INDELIBLY INTO** the memories of many Americans. On that day in 1941, the Pacific Fleet of the U.S. Navy was smashed to smithereens in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. America's response was furious and hard-hitting; its entrance into both theaters of World War II marked a turning point of the war.

But December 7 marks another, exceedingly more important anniversary for God's people. On that day in 1989, Satan the devil launched a violent, history-altering spiritual attack on God's Church. On Dec. 7, 1989, John Amos and I were fired and disfellowshipped from the Worldwide Church of God, and the Work of the Philadelphia Church of God essentially began.

Last December, the PCG celebrated its 18th anniversary of this event. Do we realize how much God has blessed and magnified His Work? We cannot afford to forget the miracle events surrounding the beginning of this Work. God has achieved spectacular accomplishments over these nearly 19 years, *and He wants to achieve many more.*

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 PCG'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*. How much do you and I *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 they face on this Earth, will be gone. There will only be sons of God, who will themselves be God. New Jerusalem

will be on this Earth. So will God the Father.

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.

The Philadelphians will be stationed in the Jerusalem headquarters forever. "*He [each individual] shall go no more out.*" God is making it personal for each one of us. The Laodiceans have lost this part of their reward already, because they lost the Jerusalem vision. Then Satan got to them, and what an eternal price they must pay—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 (verse 21). He overcame the devil. The Laodiceans fail to do so before the Tribulation.

Before Satan can get to us, something terrifying happens—we lose the Jerusalem vision.

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 giving us the job of building His house.* We need to think deeply about this; *God's house and new Jerusalem are connected in a very special way.* The new Jerusalem vision will reverberate within the walls of that most royal house.

Here's something else that is wonderful: IT WAS ON DEC. 7, 2007, WHEN GOD REVEALED TO ME WHERE THE BIBLE WAS PROPHESED THAT THE PCG WOULD BUILD GOD'S HOUSE! Such an inspiring miracle on that day helps us remember what a miraculous day Dec. 7, 1989, really was and what a marvelous, wondrous vision the Philadelphians have.

## A VERSE REVEALED

On Thursday, Dec. 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 soon. 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. It was early, and I was disappointed because I hadn't gotten much rest, but 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 depression from my mind.

I was reading from the book of Zechariah. 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 showed 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 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 too 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 God Family 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





Last Great Day, 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*.

### HOW TO CONQUER DISCOURAGEMENT

*The Eternal has chosen Jerusalem* is the deep understanding needed to conquer Satan and remain Philadelphian. What does it mean to us that we can understand the vision of new Jerusalem? Is new Jerusalem 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, David's throne and the key of David.

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.

Isn't it interesting that God gave me this understanding precisely on the day of the 18th anniversary of the PCG? 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. And 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

Notice Galatians 4:25-26 "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 scriptures 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!

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

Also read Hebrews 12:22-23: "But ye are come unto mount Zion, 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 Ezekiel booklet 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. Even our project in Jerusalem today is directly connected to the vision of new Jerusalem. This is spectacular knowledge, and when we understand it like we need to, we will be even more thrilled about our projects in Jerusalem.

Why do we bother sending students to Jerusalem to dig in the dirt? BECAUSE THE ETERNAL HAS CHOSEN JERUSALEM! We are preparing for Christ's return to Jerusalem, where He will rule with His Bride. Then we will prepare 1,000 years for the Father's coming to Jerusalem, to rule His Family from there forever.

### THE SEVEN CHURCH ERAS

Notice Zechariah 3:9: "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." The seven eyes are the seven

Church eras, beginning with Ephesus in the first century down to Laodicea in the last.

God is emphasizing *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.

Notice verse 2. "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." These seven lamps are 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 thunderings 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. And the PCG work will shine far more brightly when the house of God is completed!

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 in heaven. Then we let it shine for the whole world, whether they realize it or not. What is shining up in heaven is also a light for all humanity. They are without excuse.

We must always remember that it is God's Holy Spirit fueling these lamps. The more of God's Spirit we have, the brighter this Work, individually and collectively, 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! It must always



be burning. It takes oil to make our lamp burn. Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that empowers us.

How brightly is your lamp burning? How much light do you shed? WE NEED TO BE LAMPS THAT REFLECT 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.

Zechariah 4:12-14 speak of "two olive branches," or "two anointed ones" that deliver golden oil. The two olive branches are two men in two eras. God's golden oil, or His Holy Spirit, flows through these two men when they deliver revelation to the Church. 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's all God's doing, but He uses a man to lead His Work in each of the last two eras.

### **GOD'S HOUSE PROPHESED**

Zechariah 5 is an important chapter we must understand. I have written before about the "flying roll," or scroll, Zechariah saw in a vision. That scroll had the same dimensions as the cherubim in the holy of holies, whose wings stretched out over the ark of the covenant. In that ark were the Ten Commandments (God's law), Aaron's rod (a symbol of God's government), and manna (spiritual food 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 us in the Church that God is sending us that manna. We also have been given a great deal of precious new truth from God.

Zechariah also discusses two women. It is imperative that we understand who these two women are: One represents the inner court of God's Church today; the other represents the outer court. One stands for a deceived people that have rejected God's government. The other represents an obedient and faithful remnant that loves God's government.

Now carefully read verses 9-10: "Then lifted I up



*We are building a spectacular structure that will point people toward new Jerusalem and show the world that the Eternal has chosen Jerusalem!*

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?"

These two women picture the PCG and the Laodiceans in this end time. But notice, one of these women carries an ephah. Any Bible dictionary will show that an ephah is a measur-

ing device. Whom has God called to measure His people today?

Revelation 11:1 says: "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." That prophet and his followers discussed in Revelation 11 are told to rise and measure the temple. 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 18 years, God has shown us that the PCG uses His revealed truth to measure the Laodiceans. On Dec. 7, 2007, God told us that WE NEED TO BUILD A HOUSE for the ephah, or measuring device, in the hands of that prophet. Notice this prophecy.

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: "And he said unto me, To

*continued on page 20 ►*



# History of God's Feast of Tabernacles

By Gerald Flurry

**WE OFTEN TREAT HISTORICAL EVENTS AS BEING** important, if they are colossal. But in God's Work, the history of great events usually begins very small. That causes many people to judge them to be unimportant.

Herbert W. Armstrong and his wife kept the Feast of Tabernacles alone for seven years. Then, in the Philadelphia era, they kept the holy days 12 more years still not knowing *the meaning*. They just obeyed God's Word.

In 1945, Mr. Armstrong realized that the Feast pictured the Millennium.

Only 19 people kept the Feast in 1934. In 1951, only 150 attended. This was 18 years after God's great end-time Work began! The 1953 Feast in Big Sandy, Texas, was attended by 750 Worldwide Church of God members. Then 4,500 came in 1958; 7,500 in 1959; and 10,000 in 1961. The attendance jumped to 70,000 in 1970. It topped 100,000 by 1983.

Early on, many people looked upon God's Work as small and meaningless. But they weren't thinking like God. When Mr. Armstrong died, he had completed a great Work of God. He had preached the true gospel around the world! (Matthew 24:14).

## THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS

"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. For who hath despised the day of small things [or *small beginnings*]?" (Zechariah 4:9).

Zechariah 3 and 4 are about the Laodicean and Philadelphia churches today. The Laodiceans despise the day of small beginnings. They have contempt for the small beginnings of Herbert Armstrong and of the Philadelphia Church of God today. They 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.

The Philadelphians CAN SEE CHRIST IN A SMALL FEAST OF TABERNACLES, AND IN A SMALL PCG WORK, and in a "little book" like *Malachi's Message!* The Laodiceans cannot. That's the big difference between the Philadelphians and the Laodiceans!

The Laodiceans follow MEN and THINGS; the Philadelphians follow Christ!

If people in this world would only look closely at God's Feast of Tabernacles, they would see their fabulous future. But most people cannot see *history* as being truly important when it is comprised of only 6,000 people! Still, this Work is THEIR ONLY HOPE.

For years, Mr. Armstrong pointed out that we spend almost half of our tithes on the Feast of Tabernacles. That reveals how important it is to God and the firstfruits. We need to look at the HISTORY of the Feast to see just why this time is so vital for us.

## THE BEGINNING

Most people fail to realize where the Feast of Tabernacles statute really began. The *origin* of this Feast is far more important than the event itself!

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Here we have the God Family. "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and *for seasons*, and for days, and years" (verse 14). One of the meanings of the word *seasons* is "A FESTIVAL TIME." It is just a reminder that, before the creation of man, God already had the Feast in mind! The world looks at the physical creation; God looks at the spiritual creation.

Before He created the world, Christ knew He would have to die for us (1 Peter 1:19-20; Revelation 13:8). Christ knew that the creation of man would precipitate His death! The good news is, His death means we can receive eternal life!

Imagine the origin of the Feast of Tabernacles. Before Adam and Eve, or any human being ever





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breathed or laughed or cried, God already had the Feast plan. It was very much alive in His mind.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26). *Image* refers to the character of God. *Likeness* means form and shape.

Notice which is listed **FIRST!** *Image*, or *character*, is mentioned first, because **THIS IS GOD'S ULTIMATE GOAL!** He first created man physically. That creation is of no real value, however, if we don't build godly character and enter into God's Family.

So we go to the Feast to work on God's **SPIRITUAL CREATION**—becoming members of His Family. Physically, we could eat only bread and water, and still have a marvelous *spiritual* Feast!

### **GOD'S MASTER PLAN**

If you are to build a church or a nation, you must first have a master plan, and God has the very best. "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house" (Exodus 12:1-3). Then it was the "congregation of Israel." Today it is the **CONGREGATION OF GOD!** We are members of God's Family. The very first time *congregation* is

mentioned in the Bible, it is mentioned in connection with the Passover and the holy days.

Israel had just come out of Egypt, and God was beginning a great nation. The first thing God did was establish His holy day plan. That is because no nation or church will ever survive without this master plan!

God first challenged Mr. Armstrong on the weekly Sabbath and then on the holy days. That is how the Philadelphia era began! It started with one family!

The Feast of Tabernacles is called the "feast of ingathering" in Exodus 23 because it pictures the gathering in of the whole world! We are the firstfruits harvest today, but that is only the small, first harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the great fall harvest, which we must not forget. God wants us to include **THE WHOLE WORLD** in our thinking. Our job is to help Christ give the Feast to the world!

If we attend the Feast with our minds on ourselves, then it will be a failure. God wants us to attend with a *world view*. And that means a world view that includes every human being who ever lived!

Over 25,000 people die daily from malnutrition and starvation. That means close to 200,000 of them will die while we keep the Feast. What does the Feast have to do with them? Everything! The Millennium will destroy the curse of starvation forever!

Remember, these feast days are the **FEASTS OF GOD**—not man. And the Feast of Tabernacles is called a "solemn assembly." It is not a vacation. We are involved in very serious, world-shaking events. We will have fun, but that won't be our top priority. We must take the Feast very seriously.



## ISRAEL RETURNS FROM CAPTIVITY

Moses was a great leader in Israel. When he died, he was succeeded by another great leader—Joshua (Joshua 1:1-5). Joshua followed in Moses's footsteps exactly, and the nation prospered. He lived to be 110 (Judges 2:8) and died around 1421 B.C. Then real trouble began.

"And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and *there arose another generation* after them, *which knew not the LORD*, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth" (verses 10-13). Serving Ashtaroth meant they were getting into Easter and other pagan customs. After the great leaders Moses and Joshua died, **THEY LOST GOD'S FEAST IN ONE GENERATION!** Only one generation!

The festivals of God were not kept at all during the book of Judges—not once! And these were the *early* followers of Joshua.

Over 100 years after Israel had been taken captive, the Jews were taken into captivity by Babylon. Then God sent a group back to build the temple. When the people kept the Feast and had the LAW read to them, they cried. Why were they talking about the LAW at the Feast?

"This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him" (Ezra 7:6). Ezra was a great student of God's law.

"For Ezra had *prepared his heart to seek the law* of the LORD, and to DO it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (verse 10). We have to prepare our hearts to seek the law. The first thing Ezra did was establish the law. **THE PEOPLE MUST HAVE A RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD'S LAW BEFORE ANYTHING GODLY CAN BE ESTABLISHED!** They really desired "TO SEEK THE LAW OF THE LORD, AND TO DO IT." Then God's leaders can go on to the statutes (which include the holy days) and the judgments and teach them to a righteous people.

So before God can restore the Feast of Tabernacles, He must restore the LAW.

Today, the Laodiceans "stumble at the law" (Malachi 2:8) and have a miserable spiritual Feast because of that character flaw. If we are going to have the greatest Feast ever, **WE MUST PREPARE OUR HEARTS TO SEEK AND DO THE LAW!**

"And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the

people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law" (Nehemiah 8:9). When they heard the law at the Feast, they cried. They had prepared their hearts to keep and do the law. That's why their Feast was so great.

"Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength" (verse 10). Those who had plenty helped those who didn't have much income for the Feast. They were commanded to keep the law, and to DO it. At this point, they were thrilled to apply God's law of love in their lives. They knew this was how to make their Feast the best ever.

The people enthusiastically applied the Bible's instructions on Feast keeping (verses 15-16). They had a marvelous Feast as a result: "... for *since the days of Jeshua* the son of Nun unto that day *had not the children of Israel done so*. And there was very great gladness" (verse 17). Since the days of Joshua, about 1400 B.C., to their present, about 500 B.C., they had not kept such a spiritual Feast! It had been almost 900 years since Israel had kept **SUCH A WONDERFUL FEAST.**

God plunged the miserable and rebellious Israelites into a captivity filled with terror. During that period, they couldn't keep the Feast. Then they were given their freedom to build the temple and keep the Feast. What a change in attitude! They were so happy, they cried.

This is a PROPHECY of what is to happen to the Laodiceans who repent in the Tribulation. Then they will weep and cry and say, "Let's keep the Feast the way Mr. Armstrong taught us!"

Today, the Laodiceans have lost much of their love for God's truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). That means they don't love God's Feast of Tabernacles as they should! History and prophecy say that those who love the Feast are the ones who rejoice with exuberance. God wants us to rejoice at His Feast now so we can escape the coming captivity in this end time and then teach the world how to keep the Feast.

## THE LAODICEAN FEAST TODAY

The Jews kept the Feast in Christ's time, but it wasn't God's Feast. "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the *Jews'* feast of tabernacles was at hand" (John 7:1-2). It was called the "Jews' feast" because they had added human customs to what Moses taught them.

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (verse 37). This was the



Last Great Day of God's Feast, the day picturing the resurrection of all people who never knew God's truth. Then, anyone who thirsts for God's truth can learn it.

The good news is that those called now are in the firstfruits harvest. If we deeply understand that, we can keep our minds on the great fall harvest pictured by the Feast. The firstfruits harvest has already begun. We must prepare ourselves for the great fall harvest. We must not lose that vision.

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy [Spirit] was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (John 7:38-39). History says if you go to the Feast with a healthy thirst, **YOU SHALL BE FILLED!** If we have no thirst, then we won't be filled. It all depends on how spiritually prepared we are for the Feast. If we are filled, then out of our lives will flow rivers of living water. **THAT MEANS RIVERS OF LOVE, JOY, PEACE, FAITH AND OTHER FRUITS OF GOD'S SPIRIT WILL FLOW FROM US.**

The collective success of the Feast of Tabernacles depends on you and your efforts!

### KEEP SATAN OUT OF THE FEAST

The New Testament Church established by Christ only kept the Feast for about 400 years. Then it was almost totally lost.

Augustine, one of the so-called church fathers, along with Justinian, the Roman political ruler, in a council, declared the Feast of Tabernacles anathema. People were punished severely if they kept the Feast. During these tumultuous times, Paul cut short a trip to Ephesus in order to keep the Feast. "When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; But bade them farewell, saying, *I must by all means keep this feast* that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus" (verses 20-21). Paul said, "I must **BY ALL MEANS** keep this feast." That feast was the Feast of Tabernacles. Paul **URGENTLY** said he must "by all means" keep God's Feast.

We, too, must keep God's Feast with **URGENCY**. Times are even more urgent today than when Paul lived! **WE NEED A GREAT THIRST AND A STRONG URGENCY AT THE FEAST.** "I must by all means keep this feast" is omitted in many translations. Most versions leave it out. That's because Satan hates God's Feast! It pictures a time when Satan has been banished from society. He bitterly hates anyone who keeps God's Feast. He makes every effort to destroy God's master plan in the minds of men. Satan attacks godly institutions and individual saints. **BEWARE OF WHAT HE CAN DO TO YOUR FEAST.**

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days" (Colossians 2:16). We shouldn't let men judge us because of a holy day or a new moon. There is only one holy day on the new moon. That is the Feast of Trumpets, which is on the first day of Tishri.

The word "sabbath days" should read "sabbaths," which means all of God's holy days—including the weekly Sabbath.

Herbert Armstrong was first challenged on the weekly Sabbath. He proved it was God's true Sabbath day and that it still is binding on us today.

Then he studied the word "sabbaths" in Colossians 2:16. He quickly saw that all of God's holy days are binding.

The feast days are all a shadow of things to come (verse 17). For example, the Feast of Tabernacles pictures the Millennium. A tree casts a shadow. The Feast of Tabernacles is like that shadow. If you follow that shadow it leads you to the Millennium. And if you see God, or the great Light who casts that shadow, **THEN THE FEAST BECOMES PURE JOY, FILLED WITH MEANING.**

### WHOLE WORLD TO KEEP FEAST

We have the distinct honor to introduce the Feast of Tabernacles to the world—to every person on this planet!

"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16-18). What a responsibility the PCG has!

Can you imagine the book of Acts (an incomplete history) leaving out the PCG history in the Laodicean era? We will be included. I tell you, the PCG is making **BIBLE HISTORY!** Jesus Christ is leading us into a **GREAT HISTORICAL MOMENT!**

This is the greatest opportunity ever offered to any Christian! This is the greatest moment there could ever be for God's saints.

There is only one Millennium. We must not fail to be there ruling with Christ. There will **NEVER** be another opportunity like this **FOR ALL ETERNITY!**

God's headquarters temple awaits us. God wants us to be His jewels and pillars in His eternal government. **LET'S MAKE OUR CHURCH HISTORY ONE WE CAN LOOK BACK ON JOYFULLY—FOR ALL ETERNITY!** ■



# Jerusalem from page 5

*build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base."*

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). Zechariah 5:11 is a prophecy about a woman, or Church, that will BUILD A HOUSE for the ephah (God's truth, which is used to measure all of us) in the time *before* Christ's return.

Notice what *Gesenius' Lexicon* says about the word *house* this verse: "It could be spiritual or physical. In this case it is both. It could be a royal house, or the palace of David. It could be that house of God or the temple. It could be the temple of God in Jerusalem." Zechariah 5:11 is talking about both a physical *and* a spiritual house of God.

This is a prophecy about the PCG, God's *spiritual* house, building a *physical* house for God!

We have multiple buildings on our land in Edmond, Oklahoma, and God's truth, in a manner of speaking, emanates from them all. But 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 PEOPLE THE JOB OF CONSTRUCTING A BUILDING SPECIFICALLY INTENDED AS A HOUSE FOR HIS TRUTH. GOD'S HOUSE IS A HOUSE FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD THAT IS BEING USED TO MEASURE THE PHILADELPHIANS CURRENTLY, BUT ULTIMATELY THE WORLD. God's truth, the ephah, will emanate from the house of God in Edmond, and point 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 will flow out from that house. God the Father and His Son will be there in Spirit. They will 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 have been given the job of building a house for God that will 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 is going to live in this house!

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 ten 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 will be permanently housed in the auditorium on the PCG's land. It will be the most splendid building of grandeur on this campus by far.

We must grasp the magnitude and depth of this revelation! We have been commissioned to build a house for God's truth. God is going to fellowship 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. 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 has chosen Jerusalem*" before Dec. 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 are building a spectacular structure that will point people toward new Jerusalem and show the world that *the Eternal has chosen Jerusalem!* The Eternal has eternal goals. We must also have eternal goals!

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 will have 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! ■