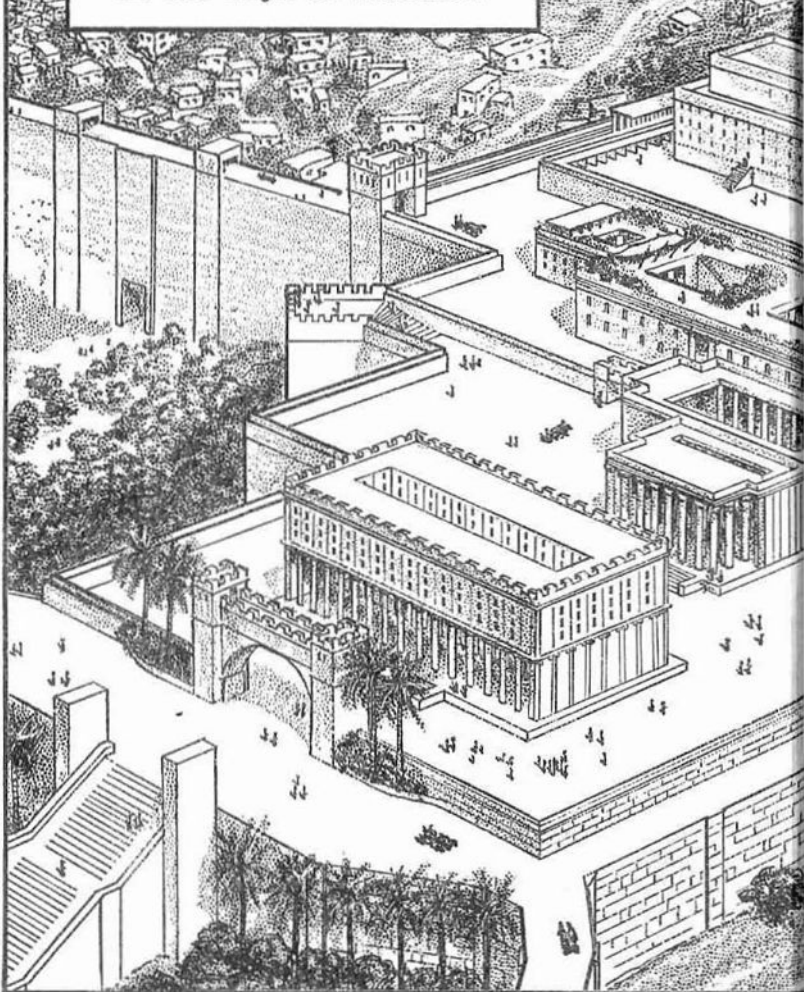


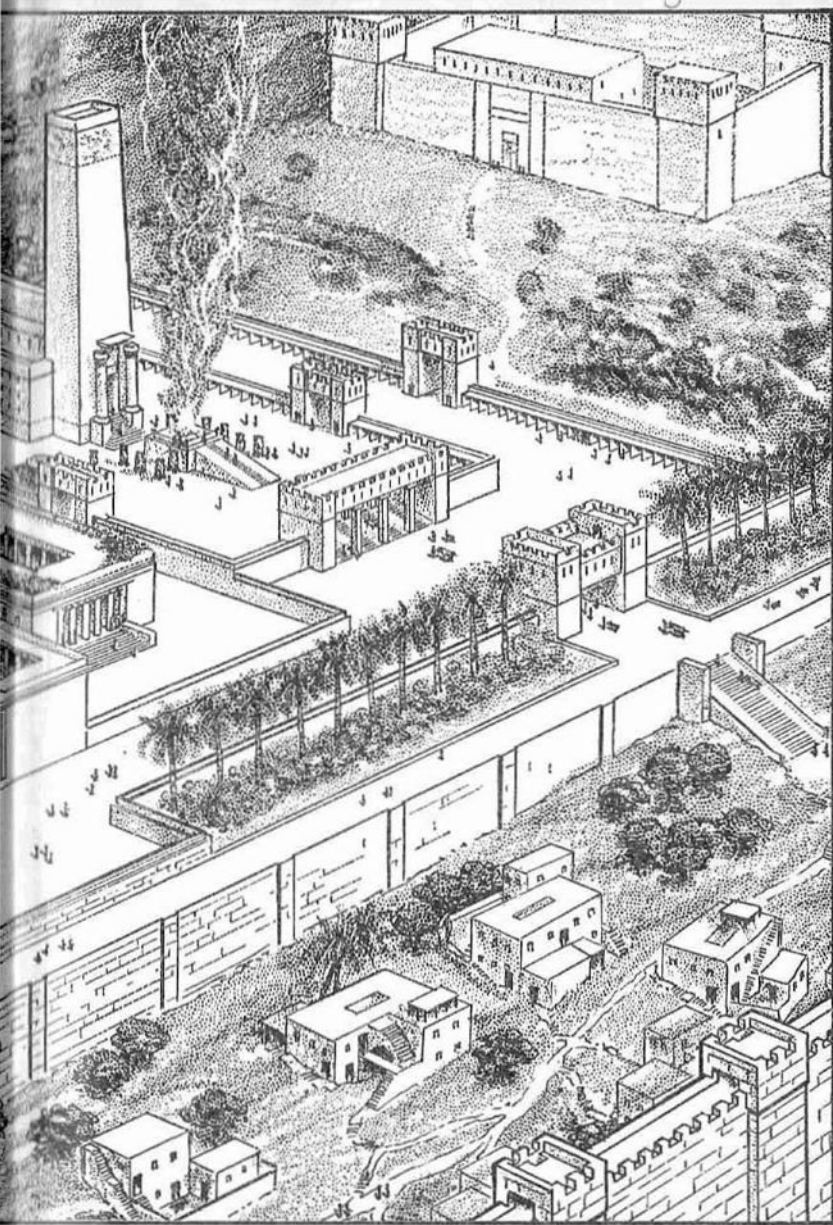
PARADISE RESTORED
TO MANKIND

-By Theocracy!

TEMPLE-PALACE AREA OF JERUSALEM

As it may have appeared
in the days of Solomon





PARADISE RESTORED TO MANKIND *By Theocracy!*

A Look at the Fulfillment of the Restoration Prophecies
of Haggai and Zechariah, as Possible from the
Twentieth-Century Vantage Point

"And the Lord God had planted a paradise of pleasure
from the beginning: wherein he placed man whom he had
formed."—Genesis 2:8, Douay Version.

"You will be with me in paradise."—Luke 23:43,
Jerusalem Version.

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to the Heavenly Theocrat in the
Joyful Hope of His Restoration of
Paradise to Earth as Mankind's
Everlasting Home

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CHAPTER

1

OUR BASIS FOR HOPE IN ITS RESTORATION

PARADISE, the original perfect garden home of mankind, is no myth, no fairy tale. It is unlike the theory of evolution, which was taught in ancient Babylon, later taught by pagan Greek philosophers of the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ and recently revived in these last few centuries.*

² Paradise, where all was beautiful, peaceful, happy, healthful and life-sustaining, was a real parklike residence that was early lost to mankind. For almost six thousand years now mankind has been trying to exist outside and away from that garden home of pleasure and delight. The effects of this are seen in both the condition of the earth and the condition of mankind today. As the world situation of our generation worsens and becomes more threatening, one thing becomes plainer, becomes more certain: If the human family is to survive, Paradise needs to be restored early to this earth. Nothing could be better or more desirable for all mankind.

³ It seems almost too good to be true—that Paradise in all its grandeur will be restored, yes, be made earth wide, and that a numberless crowd of right-hearted persons today living will still be here on earth when this marvelous restoration begins. Why, that would mean entering into an opportunity to live forever on a paradise earth in complete peace, health and happiness! But this hope was held out to us by no one less than

* See *The Watchtower* of November 1, 1950, containing the article "Evolution Contrary to Scientific Fact," page 422, paragraph 2.

1. How does the matter of Paradise differ from the evolution theory?
2. Why does mankind need an early restoration of Paradise?
3. What Paradise hope was held out to us, by what creditable man?

Jesus Christ, the Founder of Christianity, not of Christendom. Paradise is no more a myth or legend than He is. The proof of history is overwhelming that he was on earth as a perfect man nineteen centuries ago. Eyewitnesses and personal companions of His have left us written testimony of what he said and did—his blameless life, his unjust, violent death and his miraculous resurrection from the dead.

⁴ This remarkable man, Jesus Christ, referred to the original Paradise of mankind and also to the one to come. How it came about was like this: It was in the early part of the year 33 of our first century, and Jesus Christ was on the east side of the Jordan River, in the Roman province of Perea. He was approached by men who were acquainted with religious law and was asked whether divorce should be an easy matter between a man and a woman. Lawmakers of today ought to be interested in what Jesus Christ said to those inquirers. According to the record of an eyewitness he said:

⁵ “‘Did you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh’? So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart.’ They said to him: ‘Why, then, did Moses prescribe giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her?’ He said to them: ‘Moses, out of regard for your hardheartedness, made the concession to you of divorcing your wives, but such has not been the case from the beginning. I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery.’”—(Eyewitness) Matthew 19:3-9.

⁶ Jesus Christ asked them: “Did you not read?” Read where? Why, in the first book written by the prophet Moses in the sixteenth century before Jesus Christ. Then Jesus Christ quoted words from the first two chapters of that book, now called Genesis.

4. 5. As involving Paradise, what did Jesus say about the first marriage and divorce?

6. From what book did Jesus there quote, and from what chapters?

⁷ Jesus Christ did not say that the human male and female evolved or ascended from some lower form of earthly life, say, from apes, but he said that they were created to be male and female. As such, they were meant to be married as husband and wife. Where were this first man and wife created? The second chapter of Genesis states that the Creator performed the marriage in the Paradise of Pleasure, the Garden of Eden. It was in that Paradise of Pleasure that their Creator, when marrying them, said the words quoted by Jesus: "That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh."—Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7-24.

⁸ The lives of this first married human couple were not to be without meaning, without purpose, without responsibility to anybody else. Paradise was here before they ever got here on earth. But it was not yet earth wide. They did not first make this Paradise before moving there, any more than mankind has made this whole earth a paradise since the days of that first human married couple. Their own Creator made it, preparing it for them and having it ready when he created them. He himself had a purpose in putting them in the Paradise of Pleasure. So he put purpose also into their lives. This he indicated, when he told them what he had in mind for them, saying: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth."—Genesis 1:26-28.

⁹ Thus he set before humankind the prospect of a Paradise of Pleasure all around this earthly globe, comfortably filled with the perfect offspring of that first human couple, all of them living together as one big family in perfect peace, health and happiness and keeping the whole earth in a Paradise state. This was

7. Where did God marry the first human couple, and what did he say regarding future marriages?

8. Why and how did God put purpose into the lives of that first human married couple?

9. What prospect did God thus set before that human couple?

to continue on forever! Divorce would never have marked that perfect state of things.

¹⁰ Jesus Christ, when on earth, knew all that. He had read for himself all that the prophet Moses had written and all the rest of the inspired Scriptures that had been written in Hebrew and Aramaic. He made quotations by memory from the book of Genesis all the way to the book of the prophecy of Malachi. He did so because he knew and believed all those Holy Writings to be the inspired truth of the Creator. That Creator was God, whom Jesus Christ spoke of as the one yoking the first man and woman together in what was to be an indissoluble marriage. (See Mark 10:3-9.) Jesus Christ knew, therefore, that that first man, as a perfect human creature, was a human "son of God," not the son of some evolving apeman.

¹¹ Jesus Christ knew that, as far as his human fleshly body was concerned, he was a descendant from that first man, whom the Holy Scriptures call Adam, a name meaning "earthling man." The fact is, Jesus knew his whole line of descent from that first man Adam. His line of descent was on record in full in the registry of the town where his human mother, Mary the daughter of Heli the son of Matthat, lived. (Luke 3:23-38) There was a reason, therefore, for speaking of himself as "the Son of man," for he had been born into the human family. (Matthew 8:20; 16:13; 24:30; 25:31) He did not go along with the pagan Greek philosophers of ancient times and claim to have the blood of a so-called apeman in him. His human line of descent stopped with "Adam, son of God." (Luke 3:38) He recognized that human life began in the Paradise of Pleasure, and not before that, and by the special creation of God, apart from the creation of any other kind of earthly living creature. He accepted as true what the prophet Moses wrote down in Genesis 2:7-14:

¹² "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of

10. How did Jesus know all that, and whose son did he know Adam to be?

11. Why did Jesus call himself "the Son of man," and what did he believe about human life?

12. What did Jesus believe about man's creation and the locality of it?

the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God had planted a paradise of pleasure from the beginning: wherein he placed man whom he had formed. And the Lord God brought forth of the ground all manner of trees, fair to behold, and pleasant to eat of: the tree of life also in the midst of paradise: and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of the place of pleasure to water paradise, which from thence is divided into four heads. . . . And the name of the third river is Tigris: the same passeth along by the Assyrians. And the fourth river is Euphrates."—Douay Version of the Bible.

¹³ As regards the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, human ancestors of Jesus Christ, namely, Shealtiel and Zerubabel (whose name means "Seed of Babel [or, Babylon]"), had been exiles for many years in the Mesopotamian valley that lies between those two rivers. That was during the years 607 to 537 before our Common Era. (Luke 3:23-27; Matthew 1:1, 12-16) But at that time the original Paradise of Pleasure was not in existence, in that neighborhood of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It had been wiped out completely by that global deluge of which Jesus Christ spoke, saying: "Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be."—Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26, 27; Genesis 6:9 to 9:17.

¹⁴ Jesus Christ was talking here, not about pagan myths and legends, but about hard facts of history. He taught and believed in the onetime existence of mankind's original home, the Paradise of Pleasure,

13. What ancestors of Jesus were exiles between those two rivers, but why was Paradise not then existing in that general area?

14, 15. (a) Was Jesus there reciting a myth or legend about the Flood? (b) In his kingdom, about which he spoke to Pilate, what will Jesus do about Paradise?

and the expulsion of Adam and his wife from it for disobedience to God their Creator, and the destruction of that unexpanded Paradise in the global flood of Noah's day, not in the days of Uta-Napishtim of the pagan epic of the god-man Gilgamesh.* He also looked forward to the restoration of Paradise to mankind, and also expected to have a hand in restoring it. When would he be privileged by God to do so? During the thousand years that he reigns at God's right hand in heaven, as the Messianic king over all mankind, the living and the dead. When, on Passover Day of the year 33 C.E., he was on trial for life before Pontius Pilate and this Roman governor tried to find out whether he would be an earthly king or not, Jesus Christ replied in the negative, saying:

¹⁵ "My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source."—John 18:33-36.

¹⁶ Hours later, when he hung by nails to the execution stake at Mount Calvary outside the walls of Jerusalem, Jesus Christ made it known that he tied in the restoration of Paradise to mankind with his heavenly kingdom. One of the two criminals who hung on stakes alongside him turned sympathetic and said to Jesus: "Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom." This sympathetic man thus revealed that he believed in a resurrection of the dead both for Jesus Christ and for himself. Was he right? Yes! For Jesus said to him: "Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:39-43) By Almighty God's all-performing power Jesus Christ his faithful Son was resurrected from the dead on the third day of his death. Forty days later, in the presence of eleven or more eyewitnesses, he ascended back to heaven to

* See page 71, Larousse's *Encyclopedia of Mythology*, the third impression of 1960.

16. (a) How did Jesus on the execution stake tie in Paradise's restoration with his kingdom? (b) To where did he ascend after his resurrection, and why?

present the value of his perfect human sacrifice to God in behalf of all mankind, including that sympathetic criminal on the stake.—Acts 1:1-11, 21, 22; Luke 24:50-52; Hebrews 9:24-28.

¹⁷ Thus, after his reign of a thousand years begins, the King Jesus Christ can remember that sympathetic evildoer and see to it that he gets into the Paradise restored to this earth, in fulfillment of the promise made to him on that dark day of suffering death by execution. The dead body of that sympathetic evildoer and that of his fellow criminal were buried that same Passover Day, as was also the body of Jesus Christ. But that kindly-disposed criminal was not resurrected on the third day along with Jesus Christ. No, but he still lies sleeping in death in the dust of the earth along with all the rest of mankind, waiting for Jesus to remember him and favor him with a resurrection after Jesus enters upon his thousand-year reign. His resurrection to life on earth will bring him into the Paradise that will by then have been restored to mankind. The King Jesus Christ will extend his interest and attention and dynamic energy to that earthly Paradise, and in that sense he will be with the inhabitants of Paradise, including that sympathetic criminal. What a comforting hope that man had with which to die on that Passover Day of 33 C.E.!—John 11:25, 26.

THE NEED OF GOD RULE (THEOCRACY)

¹⁸ Restoration of Paradise to mankind is assured, is guaranteed! This is no thought to be scoffed at by fanatical believers in the theory of evolution or other unbelievers. Even they themselves will have to admit that something needs to be done before very long if the human family is to survive to the end of this twentieth century and into the twenty-first century of our Common Era. All such doubters and disbelievers will have to agree that this earth needs to undergo a transformation to a Paradise state if what they may

17. How will Jesus see to it that his promise to that sympathetic evildoer is fulfilled?

18. What are scoffers at such a thought obliged to admit about survival of the human race?

call "the human species" is to enjoy existence much longer. If it were left to mankind itself, even in this scientific, nuclear, space age, to bring this about, the case would be hopeless.

¹⁹ Mankind has already gone too far in polluting and ruining his natural environment, and no reversal of the trend is possible, even with the world organization of the United Nations for international cooperation. However, the sorely needed restoration of Paradise to our earth does not rest with deteriorating mankind and disintegrating human society. The guarantee of this lifesaving transformation comes from a loving Creator, God!

²⁰ This is the only alternative. Man's rule of the earth cannot do it! People's rule (democracy) cannot do it! Wealthy persons' rule (plutocracy) cannot do it! Technical experts' rule (technocracy) cannot do it! God's rule (Theocracy) can do it!

²¹ Theocracy will not be defeated in its purpose toward mankind and mankind's earthly residence. Let none of us be fooled any longer by the false philosophies of self-conceited men, but let us all face the fact: Mankind started out under Theocracy! Mankind, at its perfect beginning in Paradise with an unsubdued earthly globe outside, was not absolute ruler of all that it surveyed. Mankind had a ruler higher than whom there is no one. That ruler was mankind's Creator, God, the Maker of heaven and earth and the Planter of Paradise. He is The Theocrat. From the start he was mankind's Theocratic Ruler. He rightly laid down the rule for mankind's living in the Paradise of Pleasure. He set before mankind its tasks. The Theocratic Ruler had a beautiful purpose concerning mankind's realm, the earth. This purpose was conceived within his own Self. It was his moving idea during the six creative days in which he was making the earth ready

19. In this day of disintegrating human society, with whom does restoration of Paradise rest?

20. Whose rule, then, can do it?

21, 22. (a) Under what rulership was mankind from the start? (b) During the six creative days, what was the Creator's moving idea, and in what expressed thought of His was this set out?

for being inhabited by mankind under just the right and perfectly balanced conditions. It is set out in the thought that he expressed, of which we read:

²² "And God got to see that it was good. And God went on to say: 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and the domestic animals and all the earth and every moving animal that is moving upon the earth.' And God proceeded to create the man in his image, in God's image he created him; male and female he created them."—Genesis 1:25-27.

²³ God is unchangeable in his expressed purpose. He is undefeatable in his declared and recorded purpose. When he declared that it was his will for man to have in subjection "all the earth," he meant for that to be fulfilled without fail. He foresaw the Garden of Eden (on soil already subdued) extended all around and over this earthly ball, a delightful thing to look at from the heavens and a praise to the Creator who had made man in his image and according to his likeness. In spite of all that the Great Theocrat has permitted to take place on earth for the past almost six thousand years of human existence, that is still his purpose, his grand objective. This fact should be encouraging to all of us who are sickened at heart at seeing this earth, which has such wonderful possibilities, being ruined by selfish men, even being stained with human blood violently shed, aye, even more than this, being threatened with total depopulation by international nuclear and chemical warfare.

²⁴ When the first woman and then the first man used their free moral agency and broke a simple prohibitory command of their God Ruler, they were rebelling against Theocracy. They were really taking themselves out from under Theocracy and putting themselves under the rule of the demon that brought

23. In these days of sickening conditions, what should be encouraging to us as regards God's purpose?

24. (a) Breaking God's prohibitory command in Paradise was really what? (b) Into subjection to what did the lawbreakers come, and why?

temptation to sin through the instrumentality of one of the serpents in Paradise. The results down to this day show that mankind thus came under demonocracy. (Genesis 3:1-13) The Scriptural question is straight to the point: "Do you not know that if you keep presenting yourselves to anyone as slaves to obey him, you are slaves of him because you obey him, either of sin with death in view or of obedience with righteousness in view?" (Romans 6:16) Yes, we know that. Out of our own experience and observation, we know that the presenting of themselves to sin against Theocracy brought the dying process and eventual death upon the sinners, Adam and his wife Eve. It made them slaves to sin and to the promoter of sin, the Demon Tempter, who is well designated "the original serpent."—Genesis 3:16-19; Revelation 12:9.

²⁵ Adam and Eve could have lived till now, yes, forever in Paradise, if they had not disobeyed the law that was first stated to Adam in Paradise: "Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat: But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death." (Genesis 2:16, 17, *Douay Version*) When sentencing the breakers of this theocratic law to death, but before driving them out of Paradise to the unsubdued ground outside, God said to Adam:

²⁶ "Because you listened to your wife's voice and took to eating from the tree concerning which I gave you this command, 'You must not eat from it,' cursed is the ground on your account. In pain you will eat its produce all the days of your life. And thorns and thistles it will grow for you, and you must eat the vegetation of the field. In the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return."—Genesis 3:17-19.

²⁷ As yet childless, Adam and Eve were driven out of their perfect home to work out the sentence of

25, 26. (a) How long could Adam and Eve have lived, and where?
 (b) With what words did God pronounce sentence upon Adam?
 27. Where were Adam and Eve to work out their death sentence, and for what reason there?

death. As we read concerning this action of God: "And he said: Behold Adam is become as one of us, knowing good and evil: now, therefore, lest perhaps he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever. And the Lord God sent him out of the paradise of pleasure, to till the earth from which he was taken. And he cast out Adam; and placed before the paradise of pleasure Cherubims, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Genesis 3:22-24, *Douay Version*.

²⁸ Instead of being a Paradise keeper or gardener, Adam now had to become a farmer. God said to him: "Cursed is the ground on your account." This did not mean that all the ground outside the Paradise of Pleasure was to continue cursed forever, preventing any restoration of Paradise. Because Adam had been created in perfection and had just begun to mar it, he had tremendous physical stamina, and despite his hard work he lived to be nine hundred and thirty years of age, fathering many sons and daughters. (Genesis 4:1 to 5:5) During all that time the ground continued cursed on his account. He and his many offspring could not convert it into anything like a paradise. It appears that that cursed state of the ground outside the Paradise continued down through seven hundred and twenty-six years more to the global deluge of Noah's day, Noah being the tenth man in line of descent from Adam.

²⁹ Then that earth-engulfing flood wiped out the unextended Paradise, and there was no longer a distinction between it and the rest of the earth. Noah, his wife, their three sons and the three women who had become their wives, eight persons in all, rode out that astounding cataclysm in a huge ark constructed according to God's orders and design. When these eight human survivors let out all the animals and birds from the ark and themselves stepped out on the cleansed ground, God spoke as the Theocratic Ruler

28. Did that curse on the ground debar forever restoration of Paradise, and how long did the curse last?

29. Was the curse renewed after the Flood, and to what state has swarming mankind been unable till now to bring the whole earth?

of mankind. He stated his theocratic laws for mankind. He caused the rainbow to appear and used it as a sign of his covenant or solemn promise never again to bring on a global deluge. But he made no mention of renewing his curse upon the ground. Yet, despite the absence of a curse upon all the ground, mankind that has swarmed over all the earth has been unable to bring it up to a Paradise state everywhere. According to our twentieth-century scientists known as ecologists, mankind is ruining its natural environment and endangering all human life.—Genesis 6:9 to 9:19.

³⁰ There is no need, however, for discouragement on the part of us who do not look to sin-enslaved, dying men to make this earth a place fit to live in forever. Rather, how glad we can be that Almighty God, the Theocratic Owner of the whole earth, is unchanging in his purpose to have a Paradise on this earth, not just over there in the neighborhood of the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, but in all four quarters of the earth! If it is his purpose to have this beautification of the whole earth accomplished by the end of his seventh creative day—Scripturally a period of seven thousand years, then the time is near at hand for the ruining of the earth by exploiters to be stopped by theocratic power and for the blessed transformation to a delightful garden to begin. Already, nearly six thousand years of man's existence from the close of the sixth creative day have run their dreary course. We must be approaching the threshold of that thousand-year-long reign of Jesus Christ, which must be accompanied by Paradise according to what Jesus promised the sympathetic evildoer on the stake there at Mount Calvary.—Revelation 20:4, 6.

³¹ Beauty just impossible for us to paint in mere words will then adorn the whole earth. Natural beauty will be attended by physical, mental and spiritual

30. Why can we, after nearly six thousand years of human existence on earth, be encouraged regarding God's unchanged purpose?
31-34. (a) As an illustration of what he can do about restoring Paradise, what land did God use to paint a prophetic picture? (b) Telling of the astonishing transformation, what did he say by his prophet Isaiah?

health for those who dwell amid such Paradise glory. The loving Theocratic Restorer of the garden home of perfect man and woman gives us prophetic word pictures of what he can actually do for the eternal happiness of mankind when reconciled to Him. He uses as a sample illustration a small land not too distant from the original Paradise, a land that had lain desolate for seventy years during the exile of His disobedient people to Babylonia in the Mesopotamian valley. From that pagan land of false idolatrous worship he redeemed them, released them, to return to their long-desolate homeland and its holy Mount Zion. Telling them of the astonishing transformation that was to be brought about there under his blessing, the Great Theocrat said by his prophet Isaiah:

³² "The wilderness and the waterless region will exult, and the desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron. Without fail it will blossom, and it will really be joyful with joyousness and with glad crying out. The glory of Lebanon itself must be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and of Sharon. There will be those who will see the glory of Jehovah, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, you people, and make the knees that are wobbling firm. Say to those who are anxious at heart: 'Be strong. Do not be afraid! Look! Your own God will come with vengeance itself, God even with a repayment. He himself will come and save you people.'

³³ "At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness. For in the wilderness waters will have burst out, and torrents in the desert plain. And the heat-parched ground will have become as a reedy pool, and the thirsty ground as springs of water. In the abiding place of jackals, a resting-place for them, there will be green grass with reeds and papyrus plants.

³⁴ "And there will certainly come to be a highway there, even a way; and the Way of Holiness it will be

called. The unclean one will not pass over it. And it will be for the one walking on the way, and no foolish ones will wander about on it. No lion will prove to be there, and the rapacious sort of wild beasts will not come up on it. None will be found there; and the repurchased ones must walk there. And the very ones redeemed by Jehovah will return and certainly come to Zion with a joyful cry; and rejoicing to time indefinite will be upon their head. To exultation and rejoicing they will attain, and grief and sighing must flee away.”—Isaiah 35:1-10; written in the eighth century before our Common Era.

³⁵ As a further encouragement to the ones repurchased and ransomed from exile and captivity in idolatrous Babylon to go forth and return to their homeland with the prospect of making it something like the Garden of Eden, the Creator of heaven and earth went on to say through the same prophet: “So my word that goes forth from my mouth will prove to be. It will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it. For with rejoicing you people will go forth, and with peace you will be brought in. The mountains and the hills themselves will become cheerful before you with a joyful outcry, and the very trees of the field will all clap their hands. Instead of the thicket of thorns the juniper tree will come up. Instead of the stinging nettle the myrtle tree will come up. And it must become for Jehovah something famous, a sign to time indefinite that will not be cut off.”—Isaiah 55:11-13.

³⁶ Lovely prophecies those, and Oh how they do emphasize one vital fact! In all our hopes for Paradise to be restored to our earth we cannot leave out of consideration earth's Creator. We must also take into account another important thing. What? The worship that we owe to this wonderful Creator. This is something that people generally overlook. Oh, yes, they

35. As a further encouragement to the exiles released from Babylon to repair their homeland, what did Jehovah also say by Isaiah?

36. In all our hopes of a Paradise restored, whom can we not leave out of consideration, nor leave what out of account?

would like to have "heaven right here on earth," but they do not care to worship the Only One who can make it like that, by restoring Paradise to earth.

³⁷ It is obvious that man cannot create his own paradise. Why, look at all his efforts over millenniums of time. Look at all the scientific means he has at hand today. And yet man has proved to be unable to bring this earth up to a Paradise state free from drought, blight, plant pests, famine, deadly undernourishment and starvation. Something has been wrong. This has to do with man's worship. He has obscured the true worship. He has failed to worship the Creator of all lovely things, the divine Planter of the original earthly Paradise, yes, the Great Theocrat who drove out the first man and woman from that Paradise because they broke off their unselfish worship of Him. Paradise is for worshipers of him.

³⁸ Without the blessing of this worshipful Creator there can be no return of mankind to a Paradise home. Ancient history provides us with a real-life illustration of the truth of that principle. This historical example was furnished through the very people whom the Owner of all things repurchased from exile and slavery in ancient Babylon, in 537 B.C.E. They were reinstated in their beloved homeland, the desolate state of which was to be restored to its natural beauty according to the glowing prophecies of the Creator's prophets. More than sixteen years of opportunity passed, but why did that favored people not prosper? Something must have been wrong. Something had been overlooked. Something had been pushed into the background. What was it? The Repurchaser and Theocratic Ruler of that liberated people knew. To point out what was the matter, he raised up his prophet named Haggai. What Haggai pointed out then is of serious concern to us now. Let us see.

37. In man's failure to create his own paradise, how has the matter of worship been the vital factor?

38. Whose blessing is needed for man's return to Paradise, and in the ancient illustration of this, whom did the Creator raise up to point out what was wrong?

CHAPTER 2

WHY HIGHEST HOPES WERE DISAPPOINTED

WE ALL live off the land. We are all dependent on what grows out of the ground. Suppose, now, all of us were gardeners or farmers. What if you sowed a lot of seed, and you looked for much, but you got very little from it? You pruned your grapevines and cultivated them, but you collected little fruit. You planted your flax and took good care of it, but there was little that you brought in with which to have linen made for clothing. Your olive trees were given all due attention, but there were few olives to send to the press to make oil. You came to your storehouse and wanted to collect twenty measures of grain, but, look! there proved to be only ten measures there actually. You came to your winepress vat after crushing all the available grapes, and in order to entertain or to sell you needed to carry away fifty measures, and, see there! all you could draw off was twenty measures. Suppose this kept up for year after year! What would you think?

² Oh, you might blame it upon the continual dry seasons—the drought. In the rainless season there was not even the fall of dew to moisten things up to save the growth from the ground. The earth became scorched. Besides, the grains were blasted with mildew. Not only that, there was the hail that beat down fruit from the trees and smashed the vegetation to the earth. Then, too, if you tried to get a job off the land and earn some extra money to make ends meet, there were no jobs available, or what was paid for services was very small. On top of that, social conditions were very

1. Off what do all of us live, but what disappointing situation might develop with regard to this?

2. What other bad agricultural conditions might there be, and social conditions, and where should we look to place the blame?

disturbed, and there was no peace for anyone going out or coming in. Yes, it would seem reasonable to look at matters from a natural, materialistic viewpoint and blame it on the weather and the lack of security. Weather, yes! But what is behind the weather? Who is responsible for the weather? Might the real reason for crop failure lie there? If so, why?

³ Seemingly, we are here just imagining a disastrous case for an agricultural community. But really we are presenting the features of an actual historical case. It was specially recorded in the sacred history to serve as a useful, practical lesson to us today who have come into a far worse state of affairs than existed back there in the illustrative case. (Haggai 1:6, 9-11; 2:15-17; Zechariah 8:9, 10, 13) The lesson is not out of date for us who live in these "advanced times," just because the historical case presented itself about two thousand five hundred years ago. Principles, that is, rules of operation with respect to the affairs of nations and with respect to cause and effect, do not change.

⁴ More than that, although those people involved away back there are now long off the world stage, the Immortal Theocrat, the Creator who is behind the weather, is still on hand to reckon with as the Restorer of Paradise to mankind. He does not change as to his manner of dealing with his human creatures. We cannot afford to ignore him without unpleasant consequences for ourselves. Wisely, then, in a teachable frame of mind, let us examine this actual case history and apply the beneficial lesson of it to ourselves.

BACK TO THE YEAR 520/519 BEFORE OUR COMMON ERA

⁵ Time of our historical setting is back in the sixth century before our Common Era. For more than eighty years the destruction of the internationally known city of Jerusalem by the powerful armies of Babylon is in

3. Is the case just presented imaginative, and why can we today learn a lesson from the distant past?

4. Though the people in that case are now long gone, who remains, and so what should we endeavor to learn and apply?

5. When and by whom had ancient Babylon been put down, and how did Jerusalem come to be reoccupied?

the past. As a well-deserved retribution Babylon itself has had the humiliation of bowing to a conqueror, Cyrus, and ceasing to be the Third World Power of Bible history. That was in the world-shaking year of 539 B.C.E. The Persian Empire is now the dominant world power, the fourth in succession in Bible history. However, Greece is beginning to assert itself strongly and threatening in due time to seize the dominant world position. Some years before this it was even predicted to become the next succeeding world power. (Daniel, chapters 7, 8, 11; Zechariah 9:13) Never did the city of Jerusalem become a world power, but it proved to be the city where the most important events of all human history took place. It began to be rebuilt and reoccupied by the exiles whom the Persian conqueror, Cyrus the Great, released from captivity in Babylon in the year 537 B.C.E.—Ezra 1:1 to 3:2.

⁶ Thus the sacred city of Jerusalem was reestablished and the province of Judah was formed as one of the many jurisdictional districts of the expanding Persian Empire. An ancestor of Jesus Christ, namely, Zerubabel the son of Shealtiel, was the governor of the province, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak the son of Seraiah was the high priest of the national religion. Shortly after the returned exiles got settled in the land and tried to fulfill the real purpose of their return, they ran into difficulties with their pagan neighbors on their borders. Their major project came to a standstill and was finally banned by the central Persian government. The prosperity of the province of Judah ceased. The highest hopes of the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, with which they had left Babylon, were disappointed. Time wore on for about seventeen years of this. Then the Main One involved in this situation, which appeared to be a cursed one, decided that there had been enough of this. That One was the Great Theocrat, the invisible God Ruler of the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

6. How were the highest hopes of the returned exiles from Babylon disappointed, and when was it decided that there had been enough of this, and by whom?

⁷ The year of theocratic intervention in the affairs of Judah and Jerusalem is definitely dated. It is the year that the Great Theocrat raised up his visible human spokesman, the prophet named Haggai. He was one of the exiles that had returned from Babylon, if not in the year 537 B.C.E., then in a later year. His name means "Festive, or, Festal"; or, if the final "i" of his name is an abbreviation for "Yah," then his name means "Festival [*Hhag*] of Yah," this "Yah" being the abbreviation for Jehovah. He is traditionally thought to have been an old man by this time. To make for historical accuracy, he dates his prophecies. His book of prophecies bearing his name Haggai is the third last book of the Twelve Minor Prophets, or the third last book of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures as listed in the Authorized Version of the Bible. In the opening verse of his dated book he writes:

⁸ "In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of Jehovah occurred by means of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, saying."—Haggai 1:1.

⁹ This Darius the king is different from "Darius the Mede," who was associated with King Cyrus the Persian in the overthrow of Babylon in the year 539 B.C.E., he being then sixty-two years old. (Daniel 5:30, 31; 6:1-28) After Darius the Mede the throne of the fallen Babylon was taken over solely by King Cyrus the Persian. He was succeeded by his son Cambyses. After him a reputed usurper, the Magian Gaumata, seized the throne of the Persian Empire. He was overthrown by Darius the Persian, who thus became the Persian Darius I. He is generally given the surname Hystaspis. As the regnal year of the Persian kings began in the spring of the year, the second year of this Persian Darius the king would continue to the following spring, and so it would correspond with 520/519 B.C.E., ac-

7, 8. What was the year of this theocratic intervention, and by the raising up of what mouthpiece of Jehovah was it marked?

9. (a) How do we differentiate between this Darius the king of Persia and "Darius the Mede"? (b) So, when did Haggai begin to prophesy?

cording to our dating. The sixth month of that year would be reckoned from the spring of 520 B.C.E., and would be Haggai's lunar month known as Elul. (Nehemiah 6:15) That lunar month would correspond with our August-September. Since the day on which the word of Jehovah occurred to the prophet Haggai was the first day of that lunar month, it was the day of the new moon.

¹⁰ According to the theocratic law given through the prophet Moses, that day of the new moon was a day for blowing the sacred trumpets over sacrifices offered to Jehovah God on that day. (Numbers 10:10) Also, special offerings by fire were made to Jehovah. (Numbers 28:11-15) The custom also arose of making religious visits on that day to where Jehovah's altar was located. (2 Kings 4:23) This would draw many devout persons to Jerusalem. Hence the prophet Haggai should have had a larger crowd than usual to which to address the "word of Jehovah" on that day of Elul 1, 520 B.C.E. Haggai was doubtless at Jerusalem on that day, for his prophetic word was addressed to Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua who officiated at Jerusalem. Haggai's message affected the whole nation and deserved to be heard.

THE NATIONAL HOUSE OF WORSHIP INVOLVED

¹¹ What, now, did the word that occurred by means of the prophet Haggai say? Haggai 1:2 tells us: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'As regards this people, they have said: "The time has not come, the time of the house of Jehovah, for it to be built."'" The people whom Haggai addressed had to admit this fact.

¹² Who, though, told "Jehovah of armies" what "this people" had been saying? Why, Jehovah of armies himself had heard it with his marvelous means of hearing from heaven. It was a striking way in which he

10. Why was that day of Elul 1, 520 B.C.E., a time for Haggai to reach with his message a larger crowd of Jews than usual?

11. That word of Jehovah by Haggai opened up by saying what?

12. With what designation did God refer to himself, and of what value should this have been to those Jews?

referred to himself, namely, as "Jehovah of armies" (*Yehowah' Ts'eba-oth'*, in Hebrew). Throughout the inspired Hebrew Scriptures, from Genesis to Malachi, this designation "Jehovah of armies" occurs 281 times, the prophet Samuel being the first to use it in writing. (1 Samuel 1:3) Even the inspired Christian writers, Paul and James, used it. (Romans 9:29; James 5:4) Was this reminder of Jehovah as being a Commander in Chief of heavenly armies a consolation to the then inhabitants of Jerusalem and the province of Judah?

¹³ It should have been. At that time they had no standing army, such as the mightily armed nations of the world have today. When they left the Babylonish land of exile to return to their homeland, they had no army to accompany them for protection against marauders along the way. Even in the year 468 B.C.E., the scribe-priest Ezra refused to have a military force and horsemen from King Artaxerxes of Persia to accompany him to Jerusalem.—Ezra 8:22, 23.

¹⁴ Now, what was it that this unarmed "people," the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of Judah, had been saying that excited Jehovah of armies so greatly? This personal opinion of theirs: "The time has not come, the time of the house of Jehovah, for it to be built." Such a "house" would be a building for the worship of Jehovah of armies at Jerusalem, where the high priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak could officiate along with all the other priests of the ancient family of Aaron. It would be a temple. Properly, such a house of worship or temple would be of interest to Jehovah of armies. "This people" of Jerusalem and Judah were worshipers of Jehovah. Why, then, were they saying, "The time has not come, the time of the house of Jehovah, for it to be built"? What was objectionable about that? At least, it showed a lack of interest in the fullest worship of their God. It also betrayed a lack of faith in the unconquerable "Jehovah of armies." Consequently, "this

13. Why should this have been of encouragement to the Jews under the circumstances of that time?

14. What expressed personal opinion of those unarmed Jews excited Jehovah so greatly, and what was objectionable about it?

people" was missing out on its prime purpose in being back there in Jerusalem and Judah. What was that?

DELINQUENCY TOWARD THE HOUSE OF DIVINE WORSHIP

¹⁵ Seventeen years before this, in the spring of the year of 537 B.C.E., these now residents of Jerusalem and Judah had been released from exile in Babylon. It was really Jehovah of armies who was repurchasing them and ransoming them that they might come over the Way of Holiness and return to Zion, as Jerusalem is also called. (Isaiah 35:8-10) Was the repurchasing of "this people" just to give these exiles a place to live away from idolatrous Babylon, preferably the beloved land of their forefathers? Or what really was the principal purpose of returning to this land that had lain desolate without man or domestic beast for seventy years, from the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. onward? (2 Chronicles 36:17-21) This is plainly stated in the imperial decree issued in 537 B.C.E. by Cyrus the Great, the Persian conqueror of Babylon on the Euphrates River. (2 Chronicles 36:22, 23) This decree is fully set out by the scribe-priest Ezra, in these words:

"And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, that Jehovah's word from the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah roused the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia so that he caused a cry to pass through all his realm, and also in writing, saying: 'This is what Cyrus the king of Persia has said, "All the kingdoms of the earth Jehovah the God of the heavens has given me, and he himself has commissioned me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God prove to be with him. So let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of Jehovah the God of Israel—he is the true God—which was in Jerusalem. As for anyone that is left from all the places where he is residing as an alien, let the men of his place assist him with silver and with gold and with goods and with domestic animals along with the voluntary offering for the house of the true God, which was in Jerusalem." ...

"Also, King Cyrus himself brought forth the utensils

15. (a) When were the Jewish exiles released from Babylon, and how?
(b) What was the real purpose of releasing them to go back to their homeland?

of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought out from Jerusalem and then put in the house of his god. And Cyrus the king of Persia proceeded to bring them forth under the control of Mithredath the treasurer and to number them out to Sheshbazzar the chieftain of Judah. . . . All the utensils of gold and of silver were five thousand four hundred. Everything Sheshbazzar brought up, along with the bringing up of the exiled people out of Babylon to Jerusalem."—Ezra 1:1-11.

¹⁶ This "Sheshbazzar the chieftain of Judah" is apparently the same one as Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel the governor of Judah. (Ezra 2:1, 2; 5:1, 2, 14-16; Haggai 1:1, 14; 2:2, 21) Zerubbabel the governor of Judah and the rest of the returned exiles realized that their main mission in returning to their homeland was to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem for Jehovah's worship. This is shown by a historical fact: At the end of the seventy years of desolation of Jerusalem and of Judah these repurchased exiles built an altar to Jehovah on the same location as that of the former temple altar, and later laid the foundation for building a new temple. We read:

"When the seventh month [Tishri] arrived the sons of Israel were in their cities. And the people began to gather themselves as one man to Jerusalem. And Jeshua the son of Jehozadak and his brothers the priests and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers proceeded to rise up and build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer up burnt sacrifices upon it, according to what is written in the law of Moses the man of the true God. So they established the altar firmly upon its own site, for fright came upon them because of the peoples of the lands, and they began offering up burnt sacrifices to Jehovah upon it, the burnt sacrifices of the morning and of the evening. Then they held the festival of booths [Tishri 15-22] according to what is written, with the burnt sacrifices day by day in number according to the rule of what was due each day. . . . From the first day of the seventh month [Tishri] on they started to offer up burnt sacrifices to Jehovah, when the foundation of Jehovah's temple itself had not yet been laid. . . .

"And in the second year [536 B.C.E.] of their coming to the house of the true God at Jerusalem, in the second month [Ziv, or Iyyar; April/May], Zerubbabel the son

16. (a) Who was "Sheshbazzar the chieftain of Judah"? (b) That the restored exiles realized what the real mission of their return to their homeland was is shown by what historical fact?

of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jehozadak and the rest of their brothers, the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem started; and they now put in positions the Levites from twenty years of age upward to act as supervisors over the work of the house of Jehovah. . . . When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, then the priests in official clothing, with the trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph, with the cymbals, stood up to praise Jehovah according to the direction of David the king of Israel. And they began to respond by praising and giving thanks to Jehovah, 'for he is good, for his loving-kindness toward Israel is to time indefinite.' As for all the people, they shouted with a loud shout in praising Jehovah over the laying of the foundation of the house of Jehovah.

"And many of the priests and the Levites and the heads of the paternal houses, the old men that had seen the former house, were weeping with a loud voice at the laying of the foundation of this house before their eyes, while many others were raising the voice in shouting for joy. Hence the people were not distinguishing the sound of the shout of rejoicing from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people were shouting with a loud shout, and the sound itself was heard even to a great distance."—Ezra 3:1-13.

¹⁷ At that time those repatriated Israelites were not saying: "The time has not come, the time of the house of Jehovah, for it to be built." (Haggai 1:2) But soon there came opposition from the outside to those "sons of the Exile." This was because the religiously purified Israelites would not let the outside pretending worshipers of Jehovah join with them in building the temple to the God of Israel. So these resentful rebuffed neighbors became adversaries and kept interfering with the temple rebuilding during all the rest of the reign of King Cyrus and the reigns of the succeeding kings of the Persian Empire down into the reign of King Darius Hystaspis the Persian. Before the reign of this Persian Darius I, those Palestinian adversaries succeeded in having the imperial ruler ban the work of building the temple of Jehovah by accusing the repatriated "sons of the Exile" of being seditionists. —Ezra 4:1-22.

17, 18. When and why did the building activities on the temple stop?

¹⁸ The Bible calls the Persian emperor who issued the ban by the name of Artaxerxes, and says: "Now after the copy of the official document of Artaxerxes the king had been read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they went in a hurry to Jerusalem to the Jews and stopped them by force of arms. It was then that the work on the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, stopped; and it continued stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius the king of Persia."—Ezra 4:23, 24.

¹⁹ The second year of the reign of King Darius I coincided with 520/519 B.C.E., and this meant that the stoppage of the work of building a new temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem lasted for about sixteen years, from the time that the foundation of this temple had been laid by Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua (or, Jeshua; Jesus, in the Greek *Septuagint Version*). This ban imposed by the Persian emperor, Artaxerxes, must have left the Jews in Jerusalem and Judah quite confused, in a quandary. They may have wondered how the ban of this later emperor could countermand the decree of King Cyrus the Great that was issued in 537 B.C.E. as part of the "law of the Medes and the Persians, which is not annulled." (Daniel 6:8, 12) They did not think to put the matter to a test in the law courts of the Persian Empire, carrying the case even to the Supreme Court of the empire, to the court of last instance, which was with the emperor himself. The coming in of a new emperor, a successor to Artaxerxes, would allow for that. But who, now, would push the case? No one else but "Jehovah of armies" Himself.

²⁰ Two centuries previously, by means of his prophet Isaiah, the Great Theocrat Jehovah had spoken of himself as "the One saying of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and all that I delight in he will completely carry out'; even in my saying of Jerusalem, 'She will be rebuilt,' and of the temple, 'You will have your foundation

19. (a) About how many years did the temple work continue stopped?
(b) Why did the ban put the temple builders in a quandary, but who finally pushed the case in the right direction?

20. Because of what previous prophecy by Isaiah was Jehovah unwilling to have the building decree by King Cyrus annulled?

laid.' This is what Jehovah has said to his anointed one, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of, to subdue before him nations." (Isaiah 44:28-45:1) Consequently, it was not the will of Jehovah of armies that the decree of Cyrus concerning the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem should be annulled. Jehovah is not the kind of God that has the foundation of a building laid and then finds himself unable to complete the building, so that all the onlookers should "start to ridicule him, saying, 'This [God] started to build but was not able to finish.'" (Luke 14:29, 30) No, Jehovah completes what he begins; his word never returns to him unfulfilled, "without results." —Isaiah 55:11.

POPULAR OPINION AND IMPERIAL BAN CHALLENGED

²¹ So now the time had come for Jehovah of armies to correct the long-expressed misimpression of the Jews in Jerusalem and Judah that the time had not yet come for the house of Jehovah to be rebuilt. What, then, did he do? He raised up prophets who were not afraid to speak out contrary to popular opinion. Ezra 5:1 tells us who these prophets were, saying: "And Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo the prophet prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and in Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them." The opening verses of the recorded prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah give us the year when they started prophesying, namely, "in the second year of Darius the king" of Persia. But Haggai started off before Zechariah by having the word of Jehovah occur by means of him on the first day of the lunar month Elul, the day of the new moon when Jerusalem might have many pilgrims from the cities of Judah outside.

²² First of all, the prophet Haggai notified the people there at Jerusalem that Jehovah of armies knows what they are saying about the time for building His house of worship, the building of which was authorized by

21. How and in what year did Jehovah begin to correct the long-expressed misimpression of the Jews about temple building?

22. Of what did Haggai at the start need to notify the people, and as a challenge to popular opinion, what did they need to be shown?

the Persian emperor, Cyrus the Great. Divine patience had been exercised long enough with the Jews who were of that frame of mind. Now, when the situation seemed to be at its worst, when the steady opposition of the pagan religious adversaries had been reinforced by an imperial ban, even now was the time for the popular opinion of this repurchased people to be challenged. They needed to be shown what they were guilty of and the reason why things had been going so badly with them.

²³ Now comes the challenge! "And the word of Jehovah continued to come by means of Haggai the prophet, saying: 'Is it the time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house is waste? And now this is what Jehovah of armies has said, "Set your heart upon your ways. You have sown much seed, but there is a bringing of little in. There is an eating, but it is not to satisfaction. There is a drinking, but not to the point of getting intoxicated. There is a putting on of clothes, but it is not with anyone's getting warm; and he that is hiring himself out is hiring himself out for a bag having holes [and the wage-earner earning into a pocket with a hole in it]."'—Haggai 1:3-6, NW; *By*.

²⁴ There was a vital reason for their faring so poorly in a material way. Those repatriated Jews were saying that it was not the time for them to build the temple of Jehovah, and so "this house" of divine worship was lying "waste," with just a foundation laid back in 536 B.C.E., but with no superstructure thereon. At the same time they themselves were living in their well-roofed houses with a ceiling and with their walls nicely paneled with fine woods. What a marked contrast there was between their private homes for fleshly comforts and the sacred house of Jehovah for the spiritual interests of the whole nation! Was this not an unbalanced state of affairs? Did this not betray that they were putting more emphasis on material things, comforts of their

23. How did the challenge presented show a connection between the condition of Jehovah's house then and their economic condition?

24. What unbalanced state of affairs was there between their personal houses and Jehovah's house, and what questions did this raise?

own flesh, than on their spiritual needs and their obligations to the Great Theocrat, Jehovah? Was this without consequences to them, not only to them in a spiritual way but also in a material way? Were they hurting themselves, not only religiously, but also economically? Yes!

²⁵ Why also economically, in a material way? Because theirs was a God-given land. Jehovah had also repurchased them from Babylon and brought them back as his ransomed people to that land. "So," as He had long ago told their forefathers, "the land should not be sold in perpetuity, because the land is mine. For you are alien residents and settlers from my standpoint." (Leviticus 25:23) As the land was His, he could make the land prosper and he could hold back his blessing from the land. He thus became responsible for its productivity. If he was displeased with his ransomed people, would he not logically withhold his blessing? And through his prophet Haggai did He not indicate divine displeasure because his house, the most important house in the whole land of Judah, was lying waste, and that for so many years?

²⁶ Under the circumstances, there must have been some connection between the "waste" condition of Jehovah's house of worship and the fact that these ransomed Jews were sowing much seed on the God-given land and yet they were bringing in little in the way of crops. They were reaping something to eat, indeed, but it was not enough to satisfy their desires or needs. They were drinking wine made from the juice of their vineyards, but they did not have a large enough vintage so as to make sufficient wine that they could go as far as getting themselves intoxicated thereon. They were able to manufacture something to put on the outside of their bodies, but not enough, or not of such quality, as to keep them warm during cold weather. And if any needy ones hired themselves out to earn a living or to help in meeting expenses, it seemed as

25. What was the vital reason for it that they hurt themselves, not just religiously, but economically, in a material way?

26. The connection between Jehovah's house being waste and their bad economic condition was due to what things?

if the money they earned was put into a money bag full of holes to let the coins drop out and be lost with no benefit to the wage earners. In view of the relationship of these occupants of the land to the heavenly Owner of the land and their religious obligations to Him, there must have been some vital connection between his "waste" house and their economic depression.

²⁷ This connection must have been real in view of what Jehovah their God had promised by means of his prophet Ezekiel shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolating of the land of Judah more than seventy years ago: "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said, 'In the day of my cleansing you from all your errors I will also cause the cities to be inhabited, and the devastated places must be rebuilt. And the desolated land itself will be cultivated, whereas it had become a desolate waste before the eyes of every passerby. And people will certainly say: "That land yonder which was laid desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the cities that were a waste and that were laid desolate and that were torn down are fortified; they have become inhabited." And the nations that will be left remaining round about you will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have built the things torn down, I have planted what has been laid desolate. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken and I have done it.'"
—Ezekiel 36:33-36.

²⁸ When the ransomed remnant of God-fearing Jews returned to the desolated land in 537 B.C.E., they had the highest hopes of having such a glowing prophecy fulfilled. But now, by the year 520 B.C.E., their highest hopes had been disappointed. Why? Yes, why were not the pagan peoples round about saying: "That land yonder which was laid desolate has become like the garden of Eden"? The reason why is obvious: The ransomed remnant of Jews were neglecting the worship of the One who had made such a grand promise through

27. How did Jehovah's earlier prophecy at Ezekiel 36:33-36 indicate that there was such a connection?

28. Why was it that by the year 520 B.C.E. that prophecy through Ezekiel had not been fulfilled upon the Jews, and why should we today apply the point of this to ourselves?

the prophet Ezekiel. Is there not a point in this that we today, who hope in the transformation of the whole earth into a Paradise, should take to heart? Yes. But what was the remedy that needed to be applied back there? It should be an advisory example for us now.

CHAPTER 3

THE REMEDY FOR THOSE WITH DISAPPOINTED HOPES

IT IS still Elul 1, or the first day of the sixth lunar month, in the second year of the reign of Darius I, the king of the Persian Empire. That would be about the middle of the month of August of the year 520 B.C.E., according to our calendar of today. (Haggai 1:1) By means of his prophet Haggai, Jehovah was calling attention to the ways of his repurchased people whom he had restored to their homeland after it had lain desolate for seventy years. (2 Chronicles 36:17-21) Jehovah was urging them to give heartfelt consideration to the unusual ways in which things were happening to them. Then they would be able to see the connection between their having all their hard work on the land prove to be so unrewarding and their letting the house of Jehovah's worship lie waste, although they were taking good care of themselves as to housing conditions.—Haggai 1:2-6.

² Was the reason for the Jews to fare so badly after being back on their homeland for seventeen years

1. It was still what date, and Jehovah raised up Haggai to help the Jews to see the connection between what two things?

2. Basically, what kind of issue was it for those Jews, and so who could prescribe the right remedy, and how did the prescription begin?

basically a religious one? If it was, then Jehovah was the One who could unerringly point out to them that reason and also prescribe the remedy. He was not pleased at their being so concerned about their material welfare and their neglecting his house of worship. So, after putting up with this unbalanced attitude of theirs for so long a time, he said to them by means of the prophet Haggai: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Set your hearts upon your ways.' 'Go up to the mountain, and you must bring in lumber. And build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and I may be glorified,' Jehovah has said." Then to point out what was really responsible for their disappointing results from such hard work, he had Haggai prophesy further:

³ " 'There was a looking for much, but here there was just a little; and you have brought it into the house, and I blew upon it—for what reason?' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies. 'By reason of my house that is waste, while you are on the run, each one in behalf of his own house. Therefore over you the heavens kept back their dew, and the earth itself kept back its yield. And I kept calling for dryness upon the earth, and upon the mountains, and upon the grain, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon what the ground would bring forth, and upon earthling man, and upon domestic animal, and upon all the toil of the hands.' "—Haggai 1:7-11.

⁴ When those foregoing words were declared, the unconstitutional ban that was laid by the late King Artaxerxes of Persia upon the building of Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem was still in effect. Yet Jehovah of armies, speaking through Haggai, told the hard-faring Jews to get materials and "build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and I may be glorified." (Haggai 1:8) The question at issue now became, Which is to be obeyed—Jehovah's will or the imperial ban, the will of a now dead misinformed man? Whose order is to be

3. Who claimed to be responsible for their bad economic plight?

4. Despite the imperial ban, what action did Jehovah prescribe for the Jews to take, and what decisive question did this pose for the Jews?

carried out—that of the living Most High God, the Great Theocrat, or that of a dead Persian emperor? If they did as the later Christian apostles did, “obey God as ruler rather than men,” they would arouse the objections and opposition of those who favored the ban, but they would gain the approval of God. (Acts 5:29) They were already pleasing those pagan oppositionists but were displeasing God. So, now, were they willing to stir up the displeasure of their pagan adversaries and thereby win the good pleasure of Jehovah of armies?

⁵ Those pagan adversaries could not control the weather of the land of Judah. Not even the whole Persian Empire could do so. They could not cause the heavens to produce the needed dew in the dry season of the year. They could not cause the earth to render its yield, so that the Jewish tillers of the soil not only sowed much and looked for much but also brought in much. Or, conversely, those imperial Persians and the neighboring adversaries of the Jews could not remove, during the ordinarily wet season, the dryness that came upon the earth, upon the grain, upon the new wine, upon the oil, upon all other produce of the ground, nor the dryness that came upon man, domestic animal and what men toiled for with their hands. But Jehovah of armies could do so, for those adverse things were from him in expression of his displeasure.

⁶ Unlike those Israelites referred to in Jeremiah 5:24, the repatriated Jews should not fear the wrath of the Persian Empire but should say: “Let us, now, fear Jehovah our God, the One who is giving the downpour and the autumn rain and the spring rain in its season, the One who guards even the prescribed weeks of the harvest for us.” (Jeremiah 10:10-13) Such fear of Jehovah they could not show by merely running to their own private houses so as to get as quickly as possible into their own cozy homes while at the same time letting the house of worship of their God lie waste.

5. What could the adversaries and opposers not control, and what could they not remove in behalf of the Jews?

6. For that reason, whom should the Jews fear, but how were they not showing that fear?

The house of so great a Personage as Jehovah of armies, the Great Theocrat, ought to be put first. Fear of man ought not to deter them from building it, that he might take pleasure in it and be glorified.

⁷ That was the remedy for their having such disappointing conditions in a material and spiritual sense—namely, obey God as ruler rather than man and go ahead and build God's house of worship. Let them go up to the forest-clad mountain and fell trees and bring in lumber for building the all-important house. Not that God's temple was to be built all of wood. But the stones of the former demolished temple were lying there at the site, and wood for paneling and other needs was the material most required to be prepared. Not as though Jehovah of armies needed an earthly material house as a home in which to dwell among the well-housed Jews. He already had his dwelling place not made with human hands, in the holy heavens, and this stone and wood temple on Mount Moriah at Jerusalem was just a representation of a future spiritual temple, a true house of worship of the Most High God. It was just as Solomon the temple builder said:

⁸ "But will God truly dwell upon the earth? Look! The heavens, yes, the heaven of the heavens, themselves cannot contain you; how much less, then, this house that I have built!"—1 Kings 8:27.

⁹ Hence God would dwell in the rebuilt temple at Jerusalem, not personally, but only by his spirit, his holy invisible active force, and by turning his face or attention to that temple. He would sanctify it or make it a holy house, and it would be the center of religious worship for the whole nation. There sacrifices for individuals or for the whole nation would be offered on the one authorized altar, and it would be the place to which the nation would assemble during its three annual festivals and on the Day of Atonement

7, 8. (a) Why did Jehovah tell the Jews to bring in lumber for the house? (b) Why was such a material house not necessary, and yet fitting, for Jehovah?

9. (a) Hence, how would God reside in that house? (b) By worshipping at such a temple, what would the Jews renew, with what results to themselves?

for the whole nation. There the high priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak and all the underpriests could officiate in behalf of the people. Thus the nation of Israel could maintain renewed relationship with their Theocratic Ruler, Jehovah, and keep in good condition spiritually. Jehovah would be glorified by the rebuilding of the temple upon which His name would be placed, and he would make his good pleasure known by pouring down blessings upon them, blessings spiritual and material.

OBEYING GOD AS RULER? OR MAN?

¹⁰ The prophet Haggai's opening message was directed specially "to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest." (Haggai 1:1) This made it obligatory upon them to take the lead and set the right example for the whole nation. However, those two men, the governor and the high priest, knew what to expect from the adversaries if they resumed the building of the temple at Jerusalem. What does history show that they did—obey Jehovah of armies as Ruler or man? They put spiritual interests first and obeyed God. Haggai reports:

¹¹ "And Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, and all the remaining ones of the people began to listen to the voice of Jehovah their God, and to the words of Haggai the prophet, as Jehovah their God had sent him; and the people began to fear because of Jehovah."—Haggai 1:12.

¹² By the message that the prophet proclaimed to them on that day of the sixth new moon of the year, the people knew where this courageous Haggai stood on the issue of obeying God or man. They realized that Jehovah had sent Haggai, and that is why they listened to him as the conveyor of Jehovah's message of the hour. Openheartedly they considered what he had to

10, 11. To whom was Haggai's opening prophecy addressed, and the action that followed showed that what decision had been made?

12. The people appreciated the sender of Haggai to be whom, and what fear did they overcome?

say, although it was in the nature of a reproof. They got the point of God's line of reasoning with them. They appreciated their failure, their delinquency. They had good cause for fearing before Jehovah. It was the Commander in Chief of heavenly armies who was speaking through his prophet Haggai, and their fear of this Jehovah of armies overwhelmed any fear of men or even of the Persian Empire. Still they need encouragement, and Haggai was now used to give it to them:

¹³ "And Haggai the messenger of Jehovah went on to say to the people according to the messenger's commission from Jehovah, saying: 'I am with you people,' is the utterance of Jehovah."—Haggai 1:13.

¹⁴ What more encouraging message could those God-fearing Jews get than that? The neighboring adversaries might have the whole Persian Empire on their side, but the repurchased Israelites, by a course of obedience, had Jehovah of armies on their side. Jehovah was not going to be displeased by their going ahead and rebuilding his temple. To paraphrase the rule laid down by Jesus Christ more than five hundred and fifty years later, the things belonging to Caesar (or the emperor) needed to be rendered to Caesar, but the things belonging to God must likewise be paid to God, and His things come first. (Matthew 22:21) For acting according to that rule, they would have Jehovah with them. That guaranteed success in building the temple.

¹⁵ Confident now in their Almighty God, the nation addressed itself to the main project for which they had taken the long trek back from Babylon to their sacred homeland. Three weeks and more passed, not because of any fearful postponing of operations, but for the sake of organizing matters for a proper start. They were all strongly stirred with God's spirit or in-

13. What encouraging message did Haggai then give the people?

14. In view of all the adversaries, what did this message mean to the temple builders, and what rule stated later by Jesus Christ would they be following by proceeding to build?

15. Why did more than three weeks now pass before the people entered in and did work in Jehovah's house?

visible active force, and it acted as a driving force inside them. Came the twenty-fourth day of that lunar month of Elul, and what? Haggai, you were there; tell us. "And Jehovah proceeded to rouse up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, and the spirit of all the remaining ones of the people; and they began to enter in and to do the work in the house of Jehovah of armies their God. It was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king."—Haggai 1:14, 15.

¹⁶ Before Haggai's prophecy on the first day of the sixth month that year, Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua and the repatriated remnant of the Jewish people had lost the urge, the inclination, the sense of urgency, the zeal and enthusiasm for rebuilding Jehovah's temple. They had succumbed to the opposition and interference of their adversaries and were saying to themselves: "The time has not come, the time of the house of Jehovah, for it to be built." (Haggai 1:2) But now, due to Haggai's message from their God, they began to see matters differently. So the Commander in Chief, Jehovah of armies, stirred up the spirit of them all. After necessary organizing and preparing, they got down to their most important work in the land of Judah, doing the preliminaries to all the actual construction work on the temple of their God. The time is dated: it was on Elul 24 of the second year of Darius I, the king of Persia. This was toward the middle of September of the year 520 B.C.E. It was the time of the year for the dew to begin forming on the vegetation after the midsummer dry season.

¹⁷ Doubtless Jehovah of armies was pleased to see this advance work launched. There was lumber to be cut and sawed for beams and paneling; there must have been some quarrying of stone. And debris would have to be cleared off the historical location of the temple that had long ago been purchased by King

16. Before Haggai began prophesying, into what attitude had the Jews slumped, but now what were they stirred up to do?

17. What did such preliminary work include, and why did the Jews not care whether the adversaries noticed their work?

David in the eleventh century before our Common Era. (2 Samuel 24:18-25; 1 Chronicles 21:18 to 22:19; 2 Chronicles 3:1) Such debris may have been the accumulation of years. Whether the neighboring pagan adversaries of the Jews took note of this preliminary activity, we do not know. But even if they did, the busy Jews did not care. They knew that they had the approval of their God and that they were doing his work, and that the invincible Jehovah of armies was on their side. Nevertheless, heavy opposition was bound to arise from the enemy quarter. How successful would it be this time? We shall see.

HISTORICAL PARALLEL

¹⁸ Is there any historical parallel of this in modern times that lifts this ancient event out of the realm of purely dead history? We have reason to believe that there is. A Jewish writer of the first century of our Common Era, a Pharisee of the tribe of Benjamin and named Saul of Tarsus in Asia Minor, took a look back at the ancient history of his people and then wrote down his observations. To whom did he write? He sent his letter to imperial Rome in Italy, but not to any so-called "Bishop of Rome, Successor to the Prince of the Apostles, Vicar of Christ." Not at all. At that time Christendom with such a religious dignitary had not yet got started, but had to wait for Emperor Constantine the Great of the fourth century to start it. Saul of Tarsus, who had now become an apostle of Jesus Christ and was called Paul, wrote his letter to the congregation of primitive Christians in Rome and discussed much of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures.

¹⁹ In what is now listed as Romans, chapter fifteen, verse four, Paul wrote: "For all the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 1:1-7) Those Scriptures included Haggai.

18. Has there been a modern-day parallel of that, and to whose writings do we here resort?

19. What Paul wrote in Romans 15:4 includes what prophetic book?

²⁰ The apostle Paul also wrote a couple of letters to the Christian congregation in Corinth in the Roman province of Achaia, and in his first letter, chapter ten, he tells about events in ancient Jewish life and says: "Now these things became our examples [types, *Greek*], for us not to be persons desiring injurious things, even as they desired them. . . . Now these things went on befalling them as examples [typically, *Greek*], and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived." (1 Corinthians 10:6-11) It is reasonable to expect, then, that the events related by the prophet Haggai are also of a typical or exemplary value. In fact, in an inspired letter to the Hebrews the apostle Paul quotes from Haggai and makes an application of it, not to the unchristianized Hebrews, but to the natural circumcised Hebrews who had accepted Jesus Christ as the long-promised Messiah. (Haggai 2:6; Hebrews 12:25-29) So we today may look for typical values in the record of Haggai.

A SPIRITUAL ISRAEL BECOMES INVOLVED

²¹ Haggai was used in connection with the rebuilding of the typical temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem in the days of Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua (Jesus, *Greek*). The last surviving Christian apostle, John the son of Zebedee of Galilee, was exiled by the Roman Empire to the penal Isle of Patmos and had a series of inspired visions there. In one of these visions he saw a typical temple, concerning which he writes: "And a reed like a rod was given me as he said: 'Get up and measure the temple sanctuary of God and the altar and those worshiping in it. But as for the courtyard that is outside the temple sanctuary, cast it clear out and do not measure it, because it has been given to the nations, and they will trample the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. And I will cause my two witnesses to prophesy a thousand two hundred

20. According to 1 Corinthians 10:6-11, why may we look for typical value in the record of Haggai?

21. In Revelation 11:1-4, how does the apostle John describe a typical temple revealed to him?

and sixty days dressed in sackcloth.'"—Revelation 11:1-4.

²² In this case these symbolic "two witnesses" of the God of the temple would be Christian witnesses of the Most High God, for the apostle John was being shown things that were yet to come to pass, not things of past Jewish history. (Revelation 1:1-6) The apostle John classed himself as one of the Christian witnesses. (Revelation 1:9; 19:9, 10) At the time of this Revelation to John, the rebuilt temple at Jerusalem in the Roman province of Judea had been destroyed along with the holy city back in the year 70 of our Common Era, just as the Messiah, Jesus Christ, had predicted. (Matthew 24:1-22; Mark 13:1-20; Luke 21:5-24) Because of becoming a disciple of the Messiah, whom the Jewish nation had rejected, John had parted company with the unbelieving natural Israelites. He no longer depended on his being an Israelite by birth as a basis for relationship with Jehovah of armies. He depended on his being a spiritual Israelite, one begotten by the spirit of God, for having relationship with Jehovah of armies. John was now a 'Jew on the inside.' His circumcision was "that of the heart by spirit."—Romans 2:29.

²³ Spiritually, therefore, the apostle John was a "new creation." (2 Corinthians 5:17) This is the thing that counts with God, according to what the apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 6:14-16, saying: "Never may it occur that I should boast, except in the torture stake of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been impaled to me and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything nor is uncircumcision, but a new creation is something. And all those who will walk orderly by this rule of conduct, upon them be peace and mercy, even upon the Israel of God." The apostle John was one of that spiritual "Israel of God." As such, he did not need to have a temple of stone and wood at Jerusalem in order to worship Jehovah of

22. (a) What kind of witnesses were those "two witnesses"? (b) Upon what was John relying now for relationship with Jehovah?

23. To what "Israel" did John now belong, and at what temple did he worship Jehovah?

armies. As a spiritual Israelite, he worshiped Jehovah God at His great spiritual temple, the one that had been typified by the material, earthly temple that had stood in Jerusalem. (Hebrews 9:23-26; 8:1, 2) Just think if we had to have a material temple at Jerusalem in which to worship Jehovah God. Where would we be? But we can worship at the spiritual temple where John did.

²⁴ So, in the Revelation to John, those who are spoken of by God as "my two witnesses" are spiritual Israelites, dedicated, baptized followers of the Messiah whom John followed, namely, Jesus Christ. As worshipers of Jehovah of armies, as it were, in the courtyard of his spiritual temple, they were trampled underfoot by the Gentile nations "for forty-two months." This was during World War I of the years 1914-1918. During that time these symbolic "two witnesses" prophesied in sackcloth, in the sense that the message they publicly proclaimed was a mournful one. It foretold the coming destruction, the violent death, of all the Gentile nations now that the "times of the Gentiles" had ended in early fall of the year 1914. (Luke 21:24) Like gloomy-looking prophets, dressed in the mournful garb of sackcloth, they prophesied for one thousand two hundred and sixty days during the first world war. (Revelation 11:1-3) What happened to them then, as foreseen by the apostle John?

²⁵ "And when they have finished their witnessing, the wild beast that ascends out of the abyss will make war with them and conquer them and kill them. And their corpses will be on the broad way of the great city which is in a spiritual sense called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also impaled." —Revelation 11:7, 8.

²⁶ That wild beast out of the abyss is later shown to symbolize the world organization of politics now millenniums old. In the spring of the year 1918, before

24. So, who were those symbolic "two witnesses," when were they trampled upon by the nations, and how did they prophesy in sackcloth?

25. According to John's vision, what happened to them after they had finished their testifying?

26. How was that prophetic picture fulfilled during World War I?

World War I was over, this beastly political organization took advantage of war conditions to ban literature on the Bible as used by the "two witnesses" class and imprisoned dedicated Christians who were foremost in publishing it. Thus the free public work of the symbolic "two witnesses" was killed; and as far as public witnessing for Jehovah's theocratic government is concerned, they were like dead bodies lying in the streets of Christendom, exposed to shame and religious persecution.

²⁷ At that time those dedicated, baptized Christian worshipers at the spiritual temple of Jehovah of armies were like those natural Israelites exiled in Babylon from 607 to 537 B.C.E. But the prophetic vision in Revelation forevisioned that that condition would not last long with these symbolic "two witnesses"—as it were, only "for three and a half days." What then? Were their corpses buried? No! They were revived. "And after the three and a half days spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon those beholding them." (Revelation 11:9-11) So, too, these persecuted Christian "prophets" concerning God's newborn Messianic kingdom were not buried forever in Christendom nor in all the rest of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. In the spring of the year 1919 "spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet," making a reappearance publicly as the commissioned witnesses for God's kingdom of His Messiah. Like the Israelite remnant of Haggai's day, who were brought back from Babylon to Jerusalem and Judah, they reoccupied their right spiritual estate.

²⁸ At that time, although officers and headquarters members of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society were released from prison, bans were still on literature published by this Society and formerly distributed internationally by the dedicated, baptized Christian Bible students. However, as in the ancient case of the Israel-

27. At that time they were like the Israelites in what condition, but why did this not last long for these "witnesses"?

28. Like the repatriated Jews in Haggai's day, what was it now the time for these liberated "witnesses" to do?

ites repatriated to their homeland, the public worship of Jehovah of armies at his spiritual temple needed to be revived, built up. Service at his spiritual temple needed to be given first place in their liberated spiritual estate. Materialistic opportunities of the postwar period were not to be given priority ahead of God's worship and Kingdom service. Fear of men had to be dispelled and complete trust and confidence to be reposed in the Great Theocrat, Jehovah of armies. Time of mourning over previous wartime persecutions, hardships and captivity was now past. In their restored spiritual estate of right relationship with Jehovah of armies, they had entered into a festival time for spiritual rejoicing and of praise and thanksgiving to their great Liberator, Jehovah.

²⁹ It was the time for a modern-day Haggai, inasmuch as the name Haggai means "Festive; Festal," or, if Haggai is just the shortened form for Haggiah, it means "Festival [*Hhag*] of Yah," that is to say, "Festival of Jehovah." At this appropriate time a voice like that of Haggai, "the messenger of Jehovah," began to be heard. Let us note this message that was published on page 150 of the May 15, 1919, issue of *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*. This message was in column 2 and under the subheading entitled "Seasons of Refreshing." It read:

All the Lord's apostles pointed to the second coming of the Lord and mark it as a day of blessing for mankind. St. Paul referring to that time said: "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) The Apostle Peter describes it as a time of refreshing, when restitution blessings should be offered to all mankind, which blessings God foretold through the mouth of all his holy prophets. All the prophets from Samuel to Malachi foretold the coming of that day and St. Paul distinctly informs us that all these things were written aforetime for the benefit of those who are living in the very time in which we now find ourselves. (Romans 15:4) Jesus, in his great prophecy, foretold the falling away of the clergy and the teaching of false doctrines. He foretold the troublesome

29. It was the time for whom in a modern-day style, and how did the voice of such one begin to be heard, as in the *Watch Tower* issue of May 15, 1919?

condition we now see upon the earth, and then showed that his kingdom alone would bring the desired blessings to the people. The prophet said: "He will shake all nations and [then] the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai 2:7) The shaking process is on now. War, revolution, etc., constitute the shaking. "Then [at that time] Michael will stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people."—Daniel 12:1.

What a wonderful opportunity the clergy are missing by not heeding the Word of the Lord and telling the people now how they can have their desire—peace, happiness, plenty, liberty and life everlasting. Instead of doing that, many of them engage in the persecution of humbler Christians who once were members of their flock and who are striving in their feeble way to announce the incoming of Messiah's kingdom. Jesus foretold that such would be another evidence of the setting up of the new order.—Luke 21:12, 13.

A MODERN-DAY HAGGAI

³⁰ The religious clergy of Christendom failed to give such a stimulating message like that of ancient Haggai. But thousands of dedicated, baptized Christian readers of the *Watch Tower* magazine did respond, now that they had survived the trialsome period of World War I and had been reinstated in their rightful spiritual estate on earth by Jehovah of armies. They were helped to realize something very consequential. What? That, if they engrossed themselves in the opportunities that the postwar period opened up for them to attain material prosperity, they would suffer spiritually. They would bring upon themselves Jehovah's disfavor. They began to appreciate that they had not been preserved through the trials and persecutions of the world war period just to enter into the material comforts of life and settle down with the world under the protection of the proposed League of Nations for world peace and security. To the contrary, Jehovah had mercifully spared them that they might give first attention to His worship and service at his spiritual temple. He meant for them to bear witness to the Messianic kingdom as mankind's only hope, and not to the League of Nations.

30. In the postwar period, who did give an encouraging message like that of Haggai, and why had God spared them through the experiences of World War I?

³¹ As in the days of the prophet Haggai during the second year of the Persian king Darius I, there may have been some uncertainty and timidity about going ahead in Jehovah's public service. Then in the *Watch Tower* issue of August 1, 1919, there appeared the first part of the leading article "Blessed Are the Fearless." This article had as its theme text Luke 12:32 (*Authorized Version*), which reads: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." What made the matter all the more electrifying was the appearance in that same magazine issue of the full-page article entitled "General Convention: Cedar Point, Lake Erie." It was to be a week-long assembly. Among other things this announcement on page 235 said:

³² "It has been the custom of the Society [the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society] to hold one general convention each year. Last year [1918] we missed this, because of conditions prevailing at that time. Notwithstanding the local conventions held during the present year, it is seemingly pleasing to the Lord that the International Bible Students Association have one general convention, affording opportunity for the friends to attend from all parts of the United States and Canada. . . . It is expected that this will be the largest and most helpful general convention that has been held for many years. It will afford opportunity for discussion and preparation for the future great work that is before us."

³³ In the next following magazine issue (that of August 15, 1919) came Part II of the article "Blessed Are the Fearless." The second last paragraph of this said:

This little band of Christians are fighting the greatest fight of all times. There will never be another like it. The great God of the universe has arranged it; the great Redeemer, the King of kings and Lord of lords, is the Captain and Leader of this little band. We know that

31, 32. (a) How may there have been some uncertainty and timidity, as in Haggai's day, as indicated in the *Watch Tower* issue of August 1, 1919? (b) But what special encouragement was also given therein? 33. What further encouraging message was given in the next following issue of *The Watch Tower*?

he is absolutely certain of victory, and we therefore know that after being called and chosen to run in this race, if we continue faithful, fearless, prompted by love in our actions, serving him at every possible opportunity loyally to the end, we shall ultimately stand victors with him and hear the approval of the Father, "Well done, good and faithful servants." Let us then *fear not*, for "the eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms."

⁸⁴ This had the same heartening, stirring effect as if the prophet Haggai were saying to this dedicated, baptized remnant of spiritual Israelites: "'I am with you people,' is the utterance of Jehovah." (Haggai 1:13) Cedar Point, Ohio, on Lake Erie, being near the border between Canada and the United States, about 6,000 of the remnant from both countries flocked to the eight-day-long convention at that recreation resort on the lake. They rejoiced together as at a "festival of Jehovah." They eagerly listened to the many Bible talks given by able speakers. They learned of the special feature of the work ahead of them and responded to this information joyfully. On Saturday afternoon, September 6, after a baptismal talk over 200 symbolized their dedication of themselves to Jehovah God by immersion in Lake Erie. On Sunday afternoon about 7,000 heard the public lecture, "The Hope for Distressed Humanity," as delivered by the Watch Tower Society's president who had been released from unjust imprisonment the previous March 26, 1919. God's Messianic kingdom was that hope, not the League of Nations.

⁸⁵ The effect of that first postwar general convention was felt around the earth by the dedicated, baptized, anointed remnant of Jehovah God. Fearless of man, they zealously addressed themselves to the spiritual work that the Great Theocrat had set before them. It was like on that twenty-fourth day of the sixth month (Elul) of the second year of Darius I of Persia, when

34. (a) What effect did that message have upon the anointed remnant?
(b) How was the eight-day convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, like a "festival of Jehovah"?

35. How far-reaching was the effect of that first postwar general convention, and this was like what in Haggai's day?

Jehovah roused up the spirit of Governor Zerubbabel, High Priest Joshua, and the remnant of the Jewish people there in Judah. Putting earthly material interests in a secondary place, the remnant of anointed Christians applied themselves to the service of Jehovah of armies at his temple. Of course, this was all under the invisible direction of the Greater Zerubbabel and the Greater High Priest Joshua, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ who had entered upon his Messianic reign as King-Priest like the ancient Priest Melchizedek, king of Salem. (Psalm 110:1-4; Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 5:5, 6; 7:1-22; Haggai 1:14, 15) The enemies were bound to observe this activity of the remnant.

³⁶ It was just as in the case of the symbolic "two witnesses" of Jehovah, who were revived after lying dead three and a half days on the broad way of the "great city." After those "two witnesses" stood upon their feet, to the great dismay of their enemies, what followed? "And they heard a loud voice out of heaven say to them: 'Come on up here.' And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them." (Revelation 11:7-12)* Those symbolic "two witnesses" thus became heavenly witnesses of Jehovah God the Almighty. True to that vision, the faithful remnant of the anointed witnesses of Jehovah responded to his call, back there in 1919 C.E., and entered fearlessly upon his temple service. This separated them from war-guilty Christendom and her League of Nations, and elevated them heaven-high above their religious enemies so that the level of their spiritual ministry is far higher than that of Christendom's clergy. They are ministers and witnesses of the Most High God.

* See Chapter 19, entitled "Death and Resurrection of the 'Two Witnesses,'" on pages 259-282, of the book *"Then Is Finished the Mystery of God,"* published in 1969.

36. How did this correspond with the experience of the "two witnesses" after they stood up alive again on their feet, and so what took place with the modern-day "two witnesses"?

CHAPTER

4

NOT QUITE a lunar month had passed since the Jews had acted on Haggai's preceding prophecy, namely, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month (Elul) of the second year of the reign of Darius I (Hystaspis), king of Persia, or 520 B.C.E. The seven-day Festival of Booths (or, Tabernacles) had begun on the fifteenth day of the following month, the seventh month, Tishri, and had reached the seventh day, which was the twenty-first day of Tishri. On the following day, Tishri 22, there was to be a solemn assembly of all the celebrators at Jerusalem. All twenty-four divisions (or, courses) of the Aaronic priesthood were expected to be present at this Festival of Booths in the capital city. Interestingly, it was during the celebration of the Festival of Booths that King Solomon the son of David inaugurated the temple of Jehovah's worship that he had finished building.—1 Kings 8:62-66; 6:37, 38; 2 Chronicles 7:7-10.

² This festival of the seventh month, five days after the Day of Atonement, was also called the Festival of Ingathering. In view of the ingathering of the agricultural products of the ground the Israelites were commanded: "You must rejoice before Jehovah your God seven days. And you must celebrate it as a festival to Jehovah seven days in the year. As a statute to time indefinite during your generations, you should celebrate it in the seventh month. It is in the booths you should dwell seven days. All the natives in Israel should dwell in the booths, in order that your generations may know

1. How long was it now after the Jews had acted on Haggai's preceding prophecy, and what festival was being completed at Jerusalem?
2. What else was the Festival of the Booths called, and what were to be the features of it?

THE TEMPLE TO REMAIN AS NATIONS ARE ROCKED

that it was in the booths that I made the sons of Israel to dwell when I was bringing them out of the land of Egypt. I am Jehovah your God.”—Leviticus 23:33-43; Numbers 29:12-38; Deuteronomy 16:13-17.

³ That the repatriated Israelites had much of an ingathering in 520 B.C.E., we have little reason to believe, in view of what the prophet Haggai said in his first prophecy. (Haggai 1:5, 6, 9-11; 2:16, 17) But what they did gather into their garners was because of Jehovah’s mercy and forbearance. On this account they had good cause to rejoice in Jehovah their God for the seven days of the Festival of Ingathering. And, dwelling in the temporary booths as they did during the festival, in and around Jerusalem, they did not then have paneled, well-roofed houses for themselves any more than Jehovah then had a house for his worship at Jerusalem. They had by now done much of the preliminary work toward getting at the rebuilding of the temple again. They needed further encouragement. Tishri 21 being still a festival day, Jerusalem would be thronging with worshipers of Jehovah, including the governor of Judah and all the priesthood, and it would be a fine time for an inspired message to be given to them. Jehovah saw to it that it was given, as we now read:

⁴ “In the seventh month [Tishri or Ethanim], on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of Jehovah occurred by means of Haggai the prophet, saying: ‘Say, please, to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, and to the remaining ones of the people, saying, “Who is there among you that is remaining over who saw this house in its former glory? And how are you people seeing it now? Is it not, in comparison with that, as nothing in your eyes?” ’”—Haggai 2:1-3.

⁵ All that those thus questioned could see, at most,

3, 4. (a) Over what could those Jews rejoice during that Festival of Ingathering, and how did their dwellings compare with that of Jehovah? (b) Why was it the appropriate occasion for an encouraging message from Jehovah, and how did this message begin?

5. (a) Jehovah’s form of questioning indicated what concerning those present on this occasion? (b) In view of the comparison made, what was really the big question?

was the groundwork of the temple, the foundation that had been laid sixteen years previously, back in 536 B.C.E. (Ezra 3:8-13) The form of questioning indicates that there were some very old persons there who had been deported to Babylon and who had seen the temple built by Solomon before it was destroyed by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E., more than eighty-seven years previously. They could recall how gorgeous that divinely designed temple of Solomon had looked. They alone were able to make a full comparison of it with what they now saw. What now lay before their eyes on the former temple location was as nothing in comparison. What, then, could be expected with regard to a temple that would have such a humble, lowly start? So, would it be worth while for those God-fearing Israelites to carry forward the rebuilding of the temple? But, since the temple was to be Jehovah's house, the big question was, Could Jehovah of armies make something impressive, something suitable, out of nothing?

⁶ The matter really rested with the God who was to be worshiped at the proposed house. Was it His will that the house be rebuilt for his glory and the promoting of the spiritual interests of the nation of Israel? Since it was His will, then the builders would be doing His will and His work. They would therefore have his approval and his backing and support, no matter who and how many were against them. He, in fact, would be building the house through the Israelite builders as his instrumentalities. This was all-important, just as it is stated by Solomon in Psalm 127:1, where he remarks: "Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it. Unless Jehovah himself guards the city, it is to no avail that the guard has kept awake."

⁷ As the matter concerned the pure worship of the one living and true God, Jehovah himself was involved

6. The matter of rebuilding the temple actually rested with whom, and who therefore would really be building it, and how?

7. (a) Who was most concerned with the rebuilding of that house, and why? (b) That they might not be fearful because of the enemies, what did Jehovah now say through Haggai?

as being that God. He was the One who would do the building. In view of that they did not need to be weakened through fear of the overwhelming numbers of the enemies. That is why he inspired his prophet Haggai to say: " 'But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and be strong, O Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest.' 'And be strong, all you people of the land,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and work.' 'For I am with you people,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies. 'Remember the thing that I concluded with you people when you came forth from Egypt, and when my spirit was standing in among you. Do not be afraid.' "—Haggai 2:4, 5.

⁸ That Israelite remnant, who were charged with the rebuilding of the temple, had to be strong in faith. They would show their faith by their work at temple building. Why not? For Jehovah of armies was with them. As the Jewish Christian apostle Paul later on said to the congregation at Rome, Italy: "What, then, shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who will be against us?" (Romans 8:31) Such a divine assurance is very strengthening, as this same Paul experienced when doing God's work in the Grecian city of Corinth in the first century C.E. Concerning this, the account in Acts of the Apostles tells us: "Moreover, by night the Lord said to Paul through a vision: 'Have no fear, but keep on speaking and do not keep silent, because I am with you and no man will assault you so as to do you injury; for I have many people in this city.' " Did Paul show faith and do as told? The account says: "So he stayed set there a year and six months, teaching among them the word of God."—Acts 18:9-11.

⁹ Just so, too, the repatriated Israelite remnant needed to be strong in their reliance upon Almighty God and do His work. The foremost officials among them, Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua, were responsible to take the lead, and the rest of the

8. In what respect did those temple builders have to be strong, and how was a similar thing true of the apostle Paul in Corinth?

9. (a) Likewise, in what quality should those temple builders be strong, and under whose leadership? (b) What was it that God concluded with their forefathers that they should remember, and why now?

remnant would follow along and work with them. They should remember the covenant that Jehovah had concluded with their forefathers when He was leading them away from Egypt. It was very fitting for them to be reminded of this by Haggai, for during their forty-year journey from Egypt to the Promised Land their forefathers had lived in tents or booths, and, look here! the Israelite remnant at Jerusalem were celebrating the Festival of Booths in remembrance of that experience of their forefathers. Their forefathers had encountered enemies along the way; but Jehovah had delivered his people and had kept his covenant and brought them into the Promised Land. The same God of deliverances was with the Israelite remnant at the Festival of Booths there in Jerusalem. They should not be afraid.

GRANDER GLORY FORESEEN

¹⁰ The Israelite remnant were not to be discouraged because what they were now starting with was like nothing in comparison with the magnificent world-famous temple of Solomon. They might have expected nothing outstanding or deserving of notice to result from their efforts at temple building. But Jehovah saw something simply surpassing for the product of their labors of faith. So, in order to spur them on, to cheer them on with the highest of expectations, Jehovah now explained why they should not be afraid but be strong in faith and should work, by saying through the prophet Haggai:

¹¹ "For this is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Yet once—it is a little while—and I am rocking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground.' 'And I will rock all the nations, and the desirable things of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory,' Jehovah of armies has said."—Haggai 2:6, 7.

¹² Was that not a thrilling prospect for that Israelite

10, 11. (a) Why should those temple builders not be discouraged at the comparative look of things? (b) To build up their expectations, what did Jehovah now say through Haggai?

12. Despite the universal rocking, what would remain, and who was it indicated would turn to Jehovah?

remnant to entertain with respect to the house of worship that *they* were about to build? Jehovah of armies himself was setting that prospect before them, and it was therefore certain to be realized. There was to be a universal shaking. He would cause it. Things high and low with respect to their earth would be rocked—out of their place, if not also to their destruction! But, through all this rocking, one thing was bound to remain standing—that house that the Israelite remnant had built! That meant that the pure worship of Jehovah was to endure, even as His house endured. His house of worship He would fill with glory, for the desirable things of all the nations would come into it. Those desirable things would be borne there by all those who had turned to worshiping Him from among all the nations. That house of divine worship would become the most important and famous house on earth. Not alone would natural Israelites worship Jehovah there, but also non-Jewish peoples from all the nations!

¹³ This assured that Israelite remnant that this time they would complete the building of the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. No matter what world-shaking events might take place around them, this goal would be gloriously attained. Let all the rest of the world be disturbed, frightened and preoccupied by the shaking and rocking that unsettled them, the work of building the house of worship to Jehovah must go forward—to glorious completion! And then would come the jubilant inauguration of it! (Deuteronomy 20:5) Jehovah of armies has given his word for it, and so it must come to pass! So, then, to the work, with His strength! There is every incentive to work!

¹⁴ When, though, is this to be? Jehovah of armies said: "Yet once—it is a little while—and I am rocking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground." (Haggai 2:6) "Yet once"—in relation to what previous? When, previous to this, did he do a rocking of things? This must have been down south at Mount

13. What were the workers thus assured this time about their temple building, and so what was there incentive for them to do?

14, 15. The expression "yet once" is in relation with what—where and when?

Sinai in the third lunar month (Sivan) in the year of the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt, the year 1513 B.C.E. On the first day of that month (Sivan) they encamped in front of Mount Sinai, the mountain at which Jehovah by means of his angel had appeared to the prophet Moses by miraculous manifestation of the burning bush that did not get consumed. On the third day of their encampment there, what happened? Let us read the account in Exodus 19:16-19:

¹⁵ "And on the third day when it became morning it came about that thunders and lightnings began occurring, and a heavy cloud upon the mountain and a very loud sound of a horn, so that all the people who were in the camp began to tremble. Moses now brought the people out of the camp to meet the true God, and they went taking their stand at the base of the mountain. And Mount Sinai smoked all over, due to the fact that Jehovah came down upon it in fire; and its smoke kept ascending like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain was trembling very much. When the sound of the horn became continually louder and louder, Moses began to speak, and the true God began to answer him with a voice."

¹⁶ Then, after issuing instructions for the Israelites to take care and keep a respectful distance from the mountain so as not to touch it, Jehovah, by means of his angel, pronounced the Ten Commandments from the top of Mount Sinai. (Exodus 19:20 to 20:17) After that divine expression, did the Israelite people care to hear the voice of Jehovah directly anymore? Moses tells us, saying:

¹⁷ "Now all the people were seeing the thunders and the lightning flashes and the sound of the horn and the mountain smoking. When the people got to see it, then they quivered and stood at a distance. And they began to say to Moses: 'You speak with us, and let us listen; but let not God speak with us for fear we may die.' So Moses said to the people: 'Do not be afraid, because

16, 17. (a) What warning was then issued, after which there were given what? (b) What request did the Israelites now make about hearing God speak directly to them?

for the sake of putting you to the test the true God has come, and in order that the fear of him may continue before your faces that you may not sin.' And the people kept standing at a distance, but Moses went near to the dark cloud mass where the true God was." —Exodus 20:18-21.

¹⁸ In farewell talks almost forty years later to the younger generation of Israelites, the prophet Moses referred back to these experiences at Mount Sinai. (Deuteronomy 4:9-14; 18:15-19) Even the psalmist David was inspired to tell about it in a melodious song, saying: "O God, when you went forth before your people, when you marched through the desert— . . . the earth itself rocked, heaven itself also dripped because of God; this Sinai rocked because of God, the God of Israel." (Psalm 68:7, 8, NW; RS; JP) This shaking of an entire mountain was something not soon forgotten. Interestingly, also, this making of Mount Sinai rock took place nine months before the Israelites finished making the sacred tent of meeting, the tabernacle. After this the inaugurating of this holy tabernacle occurred on the first day of the first lunar month (Nisan) of the following year, 1512 B.C.E. Thus the shaking and rocking preceded the start of the worship of Jehovah at this tabernacle erected in the wilderness of Sinai.—Exodus 39:42 to 40:37.

¹⁹ According to his declaration in Haggai 2:6, Jehovah purposed to do another shaking or rocking of the earth, this to be accompanied by a rocking also of the heavens and the sea and the dry ground. When? "Yet once—it is a little while," said He.

²⁰ It was on Tishri 21 of the year 520 B.C.E. that he said this. The rebuilding of the temple was not finished until the third day of the twelfth lunar month (Adar 3) of the sixth year (515 B.C.E.) of the reign of

18. (a) When did Moses later refer to these experiences at Mount Sinai, and what did David say about it in Psalm 68? (b) What relation did that shaking have with the building and inaugurating of the sacred tabernacle?

19. According to Haggai 2:6, Jehovah was to do another rocking, but this time of what?

20. As regards the literal rebuilt temple at Jerusalem, during what period of time would that rocking have to occur as a primary fulfillment of Haggai 2:6-9?

the Persian Darius I. That was more than four years four lunar months later than Jehovah's prophecy of Haggai 2:6-9. After that would come the inauguration of the rebuilt temple. Following that, Jehovah would fulfill his word and fill that sacred house with glory. (Ezra 4:24; 6:14, 15) Hence the shaking and rocking of things to fulfill his prophecy in connection with that literal rebuilt temple at Jerusalem would have to occur during that period of time (520-515 B.C.E.), as a primary fulfillment of the prophecy. The records of history would have to show how the prophecy was fulfilled in the international affairs of that particular time. It was indeed a time of considerable disturbance for the Persian Empire.

²¹ However, we must remember that the rebuilt temple at Jerusalem was typical. It was a small-scale representation of Jehovah's greater temple, his spiritual temple where his dedicated people worship him today. So the larger and final fulfillment of Haggai 2:6-9 is the fulfillment in which we today should be interested.

THE CERTAINTY OF A MODERN FULFILLMENT

²² All informed persons will readily agree that, ever since the fourteenth year of our twentieth century, something out of the ordinary has been happening to the nations. World War I, which began in 1914 C.E., unloosed a chain of events that have sent all the nations reeling today. All their efforts to steady themselves, even with the aid of the United Nations organization for world peace and security, continue to fail. What is the meaning of it all? How will it at last turn out? Political forecasters of events and world historians have no reliable answer. But is there no answer?

²³ The answer is contained in the words that come ringing out to us from Jerusalem of the sixth century before our Common Era: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Yet once—it is a little while—and

21. Why should we today be interested in a larger fulfillment of the prophecy of Haggai 2:6-9?

22. Since what year have modern nations been unsteady, and what question arises?

23. The answer is contained in what message out of the sixth century B.C.E.?

I am rocking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground.' 'And I will rock all the nations, and the desirable things of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory,' Jehovah of armies has said."—Haggai 2:6, 7.

²⁴ How, though, do we know that those thrilling words transmitted to us by Jehovah's prophet Haggai do not just apply back there in that prophet's time or a "little while" after? How can we be sure that those same words have a modern application in our own day?

²⁵ We know, because, a long while after Haggai's prophecy, in fact, about 580 years after, those prophetic words were quoted under divine inspiration and were given a future application, to the end of this international system of things. As with Haggai's prophetic words, this quotation of his words was made to Hebrews, to the descendants of the patriarch Abraham the Hebrew, only these latter Hebrews had become Christians in the first century of our Common Era. (Genesis 14:13; Hebrews 1:1, 2; 2:16) The quotation from Haggai's prophecy was made to them about ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem and its rebuilt temple by the Romans in the year 70 C.E. Consequently a great change was impending, and the Christianized Hebrews had to be careful now that they did not suffer harm and loss along with those unbelieving Hebrews who still clung to the earthly Jerusalem and its material temple.

²⁶ Telling the Christianized Hebrews how to avoid irreparable loss by pursuing the right course with proper appreciation of spiritual values, the inspired writer said to them: "Pursue peace with all people, and the sanctification without which no man will see the Lord, carefully watching that no one may be deprived of the undeserved kindness of God; that no

24. What questions arise as to the application of those prophetic words?

25. (a) The answer is indicated for us in what quotation made later to people of the same race? (b) Why did those people need to be careful because of an impending catastrophe?

26. For those Christianized Hebrews to avoid loss, what did the writer say to them, with a reference to Esau?

poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and that many may not be defiled by it; that there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things, like Esau, who in exchange for one meal gave away his rights as firstborn. For you know that afterward also when he wanted to inherit the blessing he was rejected, for, although he earnestly sought a change of mind [in his father Isaac] with tears, he found no place for it [in Isaac].”—Hebrews 12:14-17.

²⁷ For those Christianized Hebrews things had changed tremendously since they became followers of the Messiah, Jesus the descendant of King David and of the patriarch Abraham. Those Hebrews faced a bigger and more serious set of circumstances than did their forefathers, when these were led to the mountain of Sinai by the prophet Moses in 1513 B.C.E. Bigger things were at stake and could be permanently lost, with destruction finally for the losers. As the patriarch Isaac the son of Abraham refused to repent in spite of the tears of his materialistic son Esau, so Jehovah God would not repent if these Christianized Hebrews lost their appreciation of His undeserved kindness to them through the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of being like Esau, who placed a cheap value on the spiritual opportunities that were open to him as a grandson of Abraham, they should avoid profaneness by showing full appreciation for sacred things and holding fast to these. That is why the inspired writer went on to say to these Christianized Hebrews who had now been brought into a new covenant through Jesus Christ:

²⁸ “For [that is to say, In view of what I have just said in the preceding sentences] you have not approached that which can be felt [like Mount Sinai] and which has been set aflame with fire, and a dark cloud and thick darkness and a tempest, and the blare of a trumpet and the voice of words; on hearing which voice the people implored that no word should be

27. (a) Why was the condition of these Christianized Hebrews more serious than that of their forefathers at Mount Sinai? (b) How could they avoid being like Esau?

28. According to the writer, what had those Christianized Hebrews not approached?

added to them. For the command was not bearable to them: 'And if a beast touches the mountain, it must be stoned.' Also, the display was so fearsome that Moses [the mediator] said: 'I am fearful and trembling.'

²⁹ "But you have approached a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels [not just those angels back there at Mount Sinai], in general assembly, and the congregation of the firstborn [Christian firstborn sons of God who are greater than Isaac's firstborn son Esau] who have been enrolled in the heavens [not on Isaac's earthly family record], and God the Judge of all [not God's representative angel as at Mount Sinai], and the spiritual lives of righteous ones who have been made perfect [not condemned sinners like the Hebrews at Mount Sinai], and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant [better than the Law covenant mediated by Moses], and the blood of sprinkling, which speaks in a better way than Abel's blood [it being the blood of Jesus Christ]."—Hebrews 12:18-24; Galatians 3:19; Acts 7:37, 38.

³⁰ When we consider all those bigger things to which the Christianized Hebrews had approached, we can appreciate that they were in a situation more serious than that of their Hebrew forefathers in front of Mount Sinai of Arabia in the year 1513 B.C.E. They had more to lose. Eternal destruction was possible for them by becoming like Isaac's firstborn son Esau and losing their appreciation of the sacred things connected with the spiritual firstborn sons of God who are enrolled in the heavens.

³¹ The same thing holds true for people of today who claim to be Christians, regardless of whether they are converted Jews or converted Gentiles. We should recognize who it is that is speaking to us—God—through his inspired Word, the sacred Bible. We should be eager therefore to listen to the additional things

29. But what had those Christianized Hebrews approached and what set of circumstances?

30. So, now, what can we appreciate more about the position of those Christianized Hebrews?

31. The same thing holds true for whom today, and so what should these be eager to do?

that he has said to us through the Mediator Jesus Christ and his disciples who were inspired to write sacred scripture. We should not fail to appreciate fully these most highly important things. We should not excuse ourselves from listening and paying attention to them. Hence the inspired writer to the Christian Hebrews goes on to say:

³² "See that you do not beg off [excuse yourselves] from him who is speaking. For if they did not escape who begged off from him who was giving divine warning upon earth, much more shall we not if we turn away from him who speaks from the heavens. At that time his voice shook the earth [but did not shake Mount Sinai to pieces], but now he has promised, saying: 'Yet once more I will set in commotion not only the earth but also the heaven.' "

³³ Where did Jehovah God make such a promise? Why, in the prophecy of Haggai, chapter two, verse six, given in ancient Jerusalem, in these words: "For this is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Yet once—it is a little while—and I am rocking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground.' " But that divine promise was not completely fulfilled in "a little while" after the prophet Haggai uttered them. That is why the writer to the Christianized Hebrews makes this further inspired comment on that divine promise about shaking the heavens as well as the earth:

³⁴ "Now the expression 'Yet once more' signifies the removal of the things being shaken as things that have been made, in order that the things not being shaken may remain. Wherefore, seeing that we are to receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us [unlike Esau] continue to have undeserved kindness, through which we may acceptably render God sacred service with godly fear and awe. For our God is also a consuming fire [as destructive as the fire with which Mount Sinai was set aflame]."—Hebrews 12:25-29.

³² Hence, what did the writer go on to say about begging off?

³³ Where did God make such a promise, and why did the writer now quote it as fitting?

³⁴ What comment does the writer make on his quotation of Haggai 2:6?

³⁵ Have we noticed? The writer to the Christianized Hebrews applies the divine expression "Yet once more" to the future and explains that the only unshakable thing is the kingdom that the Christians who render sacred service to God in an acceptable manner will receive. Also, that the removal of all the made things that are shaken will leave room for that kingdom, a government that will remain standing and in operation. The shakable made things have not yet been removed, although they may be already set in commotion and be rocking and shaking. Evidently, then, according to the interpretation placed on things by the inspired sacred Scriptures, the prophecy of Haggai 2:6, 7 has a modern, twentieth-century application and the fulfillment of the prophecy to the point of completion is yet ahead of us, but very close!

HOW?

³⁶ The literal heavens, earth, sea and dry ground will not be removed and perish. Certainly this was not the case in any small-scale first fulfillment of the prophecy in or a little while after Haggai's day. So, how is it that the divine promise is carried out in modern, twentieth-century fulfillment? "For this is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Yet once—it is a little while—and I am rocking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground.' 'And I will rock all the nations, and the desirable things of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory,' Jehovah of armies has said."—Haggai 2:6, 7.

³⁷ Who is there that cannot see that the rocking and shaking of all the things mentioned is to lead up to the glorification of the Temple of Jehovah God? That means the beautification and exaltation of the pure worship of the one living and true God, not at a literal house of worship on earth, but at his true Temple,

35. To what time does the writer apply the expression "Yet once more," and so what must be close as regards the shakable, made things?

36. What question now arises regarding a modern, twentieth-century fulfillment of Haggai 2:6,7?

37. To what is the rocking of all the things mentioned to lead up, and what must happen to the things that oppose and hinder this?

namely, the realm of the worship of Him with spirit and with truth, within the framework of his special arrangement. (John 4:21-24) Jehovah must be given his rightful place of worship in all the living universe. All things that have opposed and hindered this right and pure worship must be removed from all existence. According to the inspired writer in Hebrews 12:26, 27, the rocking and shaking of all those things signifies the removing of them, their being shaken to pieces.

³⁸ The "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem," will not be shaken and removed. Neither will its heavenly location, "Mount Zion." Nor will the holy "myriads of angels, in general assembly," nor the "congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens," nor the "spiritual lives of righteous ones who have been made perfect." (Hebrews 12:22, 23) These things to which the dedicated, baptized, anointed Christians have approached are not things perishable. These are not associated with or dependent on a typical, material temple here on earth, like the temples built in the earthly Jerusalem by King Solomon and Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak. These imperishable things have to do with Jehovah's greater temple, his spiritual temple, which is the only temple that can contain him in its Holy of Holies (heaven itself). (1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 66:1; Acts 7:48-50; 17:24, 25; Hebrews 9:23, 24) Also, those imperishable, irremovable things have to do with Jehovah's "kingdom that cannot be shaken."—Hebrews 12:28.

³⁹ What, then, are the "heavens" that are to be rocked and shaken and removed? Jehovah, the great Rocker and Shaker and Remover, makes the answer plain to us. In that marvelous book of "signs," the Revelation, which He gave to the Hebrew-Christian apostle John, He gives us a symbolic picture of the removing of those heavens. In Revelation 20:11 he inspired the apostle John to write: "And I saw a great

38. As regards the rocking or shaking, what about the things to which the anointed Christians have approached (Hebrews 12:22,23)?

39. So, are the "heavens" that are rocked literal or symbolic, and why?

white throne and the one seated on it. From before him the earth and the heaven fled away, and no place was found for them." That fugitive heaven was replaced, for, in Revelation 21:1, 2, John goes on to say: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Just as here the "holy city, New Jerusalem," is a sign picturing "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Revelation 21:9), so the "former heavens," the "heavens" that fled away from before God on his great white throne, are a "sign" or symbol.

⁴⁰ A "sign" of what? Evidently of some invisible, spiritual heavenly organization that dominated over mankind. Revelation chapter twelve gives us the clue to this. It tells us: "And another sign was seen in heaven, and, look! a great fiery-colored dragon, with seven heads and ten horns and upon its heads seven diadems; and its tail drags a third of the stars of heaven, and it hurled them down to the earth. . . . And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels battled with the dragon, and the dragon and its angels battled but it did not prevail, neither was a place found for them any longer in heaven. So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth; he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

⁴¹ "Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been hurled down, who accuses them day and night before our God! And they conquered him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their witnessing, and they did not love their souls even in the face of death. On this account be glad, you heav-

40, 41. What does Revelation 12:3-5, 7-12 say to give us a clue as to what "the heavens" signify?

ens and you who reside in them! Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time.'"—Revelation 12:3-5, 7-12.

⁴² From this account in sign language it can clearly be seen that the symbolic "heavens" picture the invisible spirit organization of Satan the Devil and the demon angels under him. With these wicked demon angels Satan the Devil has misled the "entire inhabited earth." Jesus Christ called him the "ruler" of the world of mankind. (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) The Christian apostle Paul identifies him as "the god of this system of things" who blinds the minds of the unbelievers. Paul also speaks of him as "the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience." (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2) The apostle John calls attention to Satan's influence on the world of mankind by saying: "We [Christians] know we originate with God, but the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) Satan and his demon angels are the ones whom Ephesians 6:12 speaks of as "the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." They are the unseen heavens now dominating evil mankind.

⁴³ Thanks be to Almighty God that they are not a permanent "heavens" over the human race. Shortly now, after the coming "great tribulation" upon all mankind, those "heavens" must flee from before the face of Jehovah God seated upon his "great white throne." (Revelation 20:11) So they are removable "heavens." They are heavens that can be shaken to their complete destruction. The shaking of them has already begun. At what time? After God's Messianic kingdom was born in the heavens when the "times of the Gentiles" or "appointed times of the nations" ended in early fall of the year 1914 C.E. Then the enthroned Jesus Christ, acting as the heavenly Michael, the "great prince" who stands in behalf of God's people, began waging war upon Satan the Devil and his demon

42. From this account the "heavens" are seen to be pictorial of what?
43. What can be said as to whether those "heavens" have already begun to be shaken?

organization. As a consequence those wicked spirit forces were shaken out of their heavenly position and were made to fall to the vicinity of our earth.

⁴⁴ Their chagrin at being shaken loose from former heavenly contacts has resulted in increased "woe" for mankind and also persecution upon Jehovah's dedicated, baptized people, the spiritual Israelites, here on earth. (Revelation 12:5-13, 17; Daniel 12:1) But with this debasement the shaking of them is not all over. The final shaking to a finish must come after the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon and must cause their fall into the prisonlike abyss, where they will be restrained for the thousand years of Christ's uninterrupted reign over redeemed mankind. Thus those wicked "heavens" now will disappear and will give way to the "new heavens" in which righteousness will dwell forever.—2 Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 20:1-3.

⁴⁵ This abasing and restraining of the demonic heavens to the neighborhood of the earth for a "short period of time" till their drop into the "abyss" takes place tremendously affected the affairs of mankind on the earth, since 1914 C.E. But how is it that Jehovah God fulfills his promise to rock, shake and set in commotion the "earth" as well as the "heavens"? (Haggai 2:6; Hebrews 12:26) Well, just as the "heavens" to be shaken are not the literal visible heavens over mankind, so the "earth" that is set in contrast to those heavens is not the literal earth under man's feet. Concerning the literal earth and its permanence, Psalm 104:5 speaks of God's creation and says: "He has founded the earth upon its established places; it will not be made to totter to time indefinite, or forever." In harmony with this, our literal earthly globe will not be made to rock and shake with a view to its removal.

⁴⁶ Logically, then, it is the symbolic "earth" that

44. What has that shaking of the "heavens" from contacts above resulted in, and when will the shaking be brought to a finish?

45. That initial shaking of those "heavens" has affected affairs where, and what must be said as regards a shaking and removal of our literal earth?

46. What, then, is the "earth" that is shaken and removed, and when did it come into existence?

Jehovah has promised to rock and set in commotion with a view to its removal. Just as the associated "heavens" are made up of intelligent living creatures (the spirit demons under Satan the Devil), so the symbolic "earth" is made up of intelligent living creatures, namely, human society that is lying in the power of the wicked one, Satan the Devil. This ungodly human society came into existence sometime after the flood of Noah's day and now includes practically all the world of mankind. (Revelation 12:9; 1 John 5:19) This symbolic "earth" and the associated "heavens" over it make up the "heavens and the earth that are now" and that, by the word of God, "are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men," as 2 Peter 3:7 tells us. Before the Sovereign Lord Jehovah destroys this symbolic "earth" as by consuming fire, how is it that he makes it rock, shakes it, puts it into commotion?

MAKING THE "EARTH" TO ROCK

⁴⁷ This He begins to do by exerting his claim to sovereignty over the dwelling place of human society, namely, the literal earth. This He does in a way that he never did before. Selfish, self-centered human society claims to own the earth and to have the right to do with the earth and its seas just what it cares to do. This leaves earth's Creator out of consideration and is wrong as well as shortsighted. The Sovereign Lord Jehovah let this view and its application prevail uninterruptedly and unchallenged until the close of the Gentile Times or "appointed times of the nations" in 1914 C.E. Then he put life into his own rightful claim by bringing to birth in the heavens his Messianic kingdom. This invisible heavenly government, pictured in Revelation 12:5 as a "child," the "son" of God's "woman," is appointed to "shepherd all the nations with an iron rod." Jehovah's assertion of his universal sovereignty in this way shook the symbolic "earth," ungodly human society, loose from its long quiescent

47. How did God begin to do the shaking of the symbolic "earth"?

state of being settled down, its being permitted by Jehovah God to treat the literal earth as its own, and misusing it as if they were responsible to nobody.

⁴⁸ How, though, would earthly human society be rocked or shaken by this invisible heavenly action of the Universal Sovereign if human society was unaware of it? How would unspiritual human society feel it, feel jarred by it? This would be by his having them notified that the Gentile Times, "the appointed times of the nations," had ended in 1914, the year in which World War I began. Their long world domination had now ended, for now it could be said to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah: "We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king. But the nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came." (Revelation 11:17, 18) The notifying of the earthly human society concerning this universal change in the *status quo* was done by the ambassadors on earth of that now reigning Sovereign, Jehovah God the Almighty.

⁴⁹ Who are these "ambassadors"? These are the dedicated, baptized, spirit-anointed Christians who are described by the apostle Paul's words in his second letter to the Corinthians, chapter five, verses nineteen and twenty: "God was by means of Christ reconciling a world to himself, not reckoning to them their trespasses, and he committed the word of the reconciliation to us. We are therefore ambassadors substituting for Christ, as though God were making entreaty through us. As substitutes for Christ we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.'" Now that Jehovah God the Almighty had taken to himself his great power and had begun to reign by means of his newborn Messianic kingdom in the heavens, it was more urgent than ever for earthly human society to become reconciled to God. The complete removal of the entire worldwide system of things was now impending, and its "time of the end" had

⁴⁸ How would the symbolic unspiritual "earth" be jarred by the invisible heavenly action by the Universal Sovereign Jehovah?

⁴⁹ Who are those "ambassadors" that serve the notification, and why is their mission now more urgent than ever?

begin. (Daniel 12:4) The question is, Who will escape destruction with it?

⁵⁰ How did the symbolic "earth," the war-afflicted human society, react to the notification served upon it by the "ambassadors" of God's established kingdom in the hands of His Christ? Did the earth quiet down, in peaceful reaction to the invitation to become reconciled to Jehovah's newborn kingdom by Christ? The history of those years of World War I answers No! The war-torn "earth" was rocked, shaken, set in commotion by such notification. As Revelation 11:18 foretold: "The nations became wrathful," that is, against the Kingdom ambassadors. They tried to use the earth-wide wartime conditions to suppress these Kingdom ambassadors. They even resorted to violent persecution, in some cases even to the death of ambassadors. This was the experience of the dedicated, baptized, anointed Christians then known as International Bible Students, but today known as Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

⁵¹ On the pages of history stands written the shameful record that the symbolic "earth" made for itself as it rocked, shook, became filled with violent commotion in hostility to Jehovah's Kingdom ambassadors. The notification served by the faithful ambassadors of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has continued to this day, on an ever-widening scale, and the symbolic "earth" is still being rocked, shaken, set in commotion by the notification and its challenging significance. As a proof that this notification tells the truth we see fulfilled the things that Jesus Christ said would mark this "time of the end": "There will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another pestilences and food shortages; and there will be fearful sights and from heaven great signs." (Luke 21:11) But in a symbolic way it has been just as Hebrews 12:26 says concerning Jehovah's presence at Mount Sinai when giving the Ten

50. How did the symbolic "earth" react to the notification served upon it by the Kingdom ambassadors?

51. (a) What may be said further about this serving of notice by the Kingdom ambassadors and the effects thereof? (b) How has the cause of this been just as stated in Hebrews 12:26?

Commandments: "At that time his voice shook the earth." In these days the delivery of the message from his written Word by means of his Kingdom ambassadors has shaken the symbolic "earth."

⁵² All elements of human society on earth have been made to rock and shake. It is just as the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: "Yet once—it is a little while—and I am rocking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground." (Haggai 2:6) On the upper crust of our earthly globe there appear the sea and the dry ground; the sea being constantly in motion and the dry ground being quite stable, except for a local earthquake. The prophecy of Haggai 2:6 having a symbolic meaning, as in the case of the "heavens and the earth," the symbolic "sea" would be that part of human society that is unsettled, restless, tossing up, as it were, "seaweed and mire," unpeaceable, desirous of radical changes, continually beating against the "dry ground." (Isaiah 57:20) In contrast, the symbolic "dry ground" would be that part of human society that is settled, stable, conservative, trying to keep the *status quo*, opposed to radical changes.

⁵³ Nevertheless, both of these elements of human society desire rule of the earthly globe by men rather than by God, the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Hence they also have been rocked by the serving of notice upon them by the spiritual ambassadors, announcing that the "appointed times of the nations" have expired and that Jehovah's kingdom by Christ now reigns in the heavens and that the time fast approaches for the utter removal of this whole earthly system of things in a great tribulation such as mankind has never experienced before. (Matthew 24:3-22; Mark 13:4-20) Showing that they are being rocked by the message from God's Word, both elements of human society, the conservative and the radical, have become "wrathful" against the proclaimers of the divine message, the Kingdom ambassadors.

⁵². What is pictured by the "sea" and by the "dry ground" that are also to be rocked?

⁵³. How is it shown whether these two elements of human society have been rocked?

CHAPTER
5

**"THE DESIRABLE
THINGS OF ALL
THE NATIONS
MUST COME IN"**

IT IS apparent that the outworking of the prophecy of Haggai 2:6 has been going on since Jehovah God the Almighty took over his universal sovereignty in that war-marked year of 1914 C.E. But the prophecy goes on to tell us what will result from the rocking of all the nations, besides the total removal of the man-made system of things on earth. In Haggai 2:7 the Sovereign Lord Jehovah continues on to say: "'And I will rock all the nations, and the desirable things of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory,' Jehovah of armies has said." In view of this divine promise, showing that Jehovah of armies is pleased to glorify his temple or house of pure worship, who are we that we should despise and downgrade the true worship of Him in these troublous days?

² In faithfully carrying out this prophecy, Jehovah of armies has rocked all the nations. Since 1914 C.E. he has sent his Kingdom ambassadors to notify all the nations of the critical change that has taken place in the universal *status quo*. The outcome has been just as Jesus Christ predicted in his prophecy on the "conclusion of the system of things": "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:3-14) All the nations are obliged to confess that they have become wrathful

1. What does Haggai 2:7 go on to say about what follows the rocking of the nations, and so what should we not want to do as respects Jehovah's worship?

2. How, since 1914 C.E., has Jehovah rocked the nations, and why must there be a final reaction on their part?

against the Kingdom ambassadors. The historic record testifies against the nations. But the being wrathful on the part of the nations is not yet over. In the decisive showdown that is yet ahead, the Kingdom ambassadors will continue to stick to Jehovah's universal sovereignty and to live up to their God-given message. Therefore, as foretold in God's prophetic Word, the wrath of all the nations is due to burst forth in a final expression.

³ The hostility of the political nations of earth will be shown to its fullest, and accordingly Jehovah of armies will rock all those nations until they crumble in ruin and are removed forever. Hence any religious tolerance of the nations toward the Kingdom ambassadors at the present is merely temporary. Let no one be deceived by it.

⁴ Before the final outburst of wrath on the part of all the nations and then their violent removal, what are we to expect, according to the prophecy of Haggai 2:7? This: "The desirable things of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory," Jehovah of armies has said." Well, then, what do the historic facts show regarding the fulfillment of this prophecy up until now? They do not show that all the political nations as whole nations, as political establishments, have come into Jehovah's true temple of worship and have brought with them as voluntary gifts the desirable things of their nations. After all that has happened since 1914 C.E., the nations still do not renounce their own earthly sovereignty and come out in favor of Jehovah's universal sovereignty. After the end of World War II in 1945 they set up the United Nations as the international organization for world peace and security. To this they tenaciously hold, in desperation, down till this day. That international organization stands in outright opposition to Jehovah's sovereignty.

⁵ Yet, what about individual citizens in all the nations

3. To what extent will Jehovah rock the nations, and hence what about any religious tolerance by them at present?

4. Have the nations, as whole political establishments, fulfilled the prophecy of Haggai 2:7, and what proves whether?

5. How have individual citizens within the rocking nations reacted, and with whom have they associated themselves?

that have been going through a strong rocking during which they have been trying to hold themselves together? Well, down till now there have been tens of thousands of individuals who have reacted to the Kingdom preaching in a way different from that of their political governments and that of religious organizations mixed up in politics. They have come to see that there is no happy, peaceful, prosperous future for themselves under such man-made political governments. They have come to see that the only hope of being saved from destruction with the political nations of this system of things is the Messianic kingdom of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. They keenly feel that Satan the Devil is the "god of this system of things" and they do not want to worship that false god by worshiping the political nations. They recognize that all sovereignty rightfully belongs to the Most High God. Hence they have dedicated themselves wholly to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah to worship him at his true house of worship. They have associated themselves with His ambassadors.

⁶ In beholding such modern-day advocates of Jehovah's universal sovereignty and worship we are beholding a thrilling fulfillment of that often-quoted prophecy of Isaiah 2:2-4: "It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream. And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' For out of Zion law will go forth, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem. And he will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword

6. In beholding such modern-day advocates of Jehovah's sovereignty and worship, what prophecy of Isaiah are we seeing fulfilled?

against nation, neither will they learn war anymore."

⁷ Not in the forepart, but in the "final part of the days" of this "time of the end" this international throng has begun to stream to the most highly exalted worship of Jehovah, "the God of Jacob [or, Israel]." Coming as they do from "all the nations," they are not spiritual Israelites, as the Kingdom ambassadors are.

⁸ When did these individuals out of "all the nations" begin to stream up the symbolic "mountain of Jehovah" to worship unitedly at the "house of the God of Jacob"? It was observable after the publication of the two-part article entitled "Great Multitude" in the issues of the *Watchtower* magazine under date of August 1 and 15, 1935, four years before the outbreak of World War II. The material set out in this article was earlier presented to a general assembly of Jehovah's witnesses at Washington, D.C., U.S.A., Friday afternoon, May 31, 1935. The speech and the printed article were in explanation of the "great multitude" that was foreseen and foretold in Revelation 7:9, 10, in the following words:

⁹ "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."—Authorized Version Bible of 1611 C.E.

¹⁰ This unnumbered "great multitude" was distinguished from the spiritual Israelites who were pictured in the preceding five verses (Revelation 7:4-8) and who were to be sealed with the seal of the living God. This international "great multitude" is made up of recent disciples of Christ who are not sealed with God's seal for association with Jesus Christ as kings and priests in God's spiritual temple. (Revelation 20:4-6)

7. When did this begin to occur, and by what kind of people?

8, 9. The fulfillment of the prophecy observedly began in what year, and after what events?

10. Of whom is this unnumbered "great multitude" made up?

They are dedicated, baptized disciples of Christ who are not thus sealed but who follow Jesus Christ as the Fine Shepherd. By him they are led to an earthly destiny, to eternal life in a paradise earth under the heavenly kingdom of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 sealed disciples. These unsealed disciples belong to the "other sheep" whom Jesus Christ mentioned in John 10:16, saying: "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd." Every year since 1935 these "other sheep" being gathered in have increased in number to form a "great multitude" indeed.

THE "DESIRABLE THINGS" PRESERVED

¹¹ Are such dedicated, baptized "other sheep" desirable at the house devoted to pure worship of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah? Most truly, Yes! These are really "the desirable things of all the nations" who, as Jehovah of armies foretold, would come in for worship at his temple. It is not material gifts and financial contributions that Jehovah desires from all the nations. Rather, it is beautiful living worshipers like this numberless "great crowd" from all nations, tribes, peoples and languages. (John 4:23, 24) These are not things that will be rocked and shaken to pieces, destroyed, in the coming "great tribulation" upon the worldwide system of things. Such sheeplike believers in the Lamb Jesus Christ are to be preserved through that destructive tribulation. This is emphasized in the following question and answer:

¹² "And in response one of the elders said to me: 'These who are dressed in the white robes, who are they and where did they come from?' So right away I [John the apostle] said to him: 'My lord, you are the one that knows.' And he said to me: 'These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'"—Revelation 7:13, 14.

11, 12. (a) What must be said as to whether they are things to be desired at Jehovah's temple of worship? (b) What shows whether they are among the things to be rocked to ruin?

¹³ It is by the incoming of these "other sheep" who come out of all the nations that Jehovah of armies fulfills the further part of his promise, saying: "And I will fill this house with glory." (Haggai 2:7) An empty temple, barren of worshipers, would be no glory to Jehovah of armies. But to have his place of worship thronged with worshipers in washed white robes and waving palm branches and crying out: "Salvation we



owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb," this would fill Jehovah's house with glory more than all kinds of material decorations. That His house of worship is thus filled with glory was foretold in the further part of the answer to John's question:

¹⁴ "That is why they are before the throne of God; and they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his

temple; and the One seated on the throne will spread his tent over them."—Revelation 7:15.

¹⁵ Hundreds of thousands of this "great crowd" of "other sheep" are already at the spiritual temple of Jehovah God, who is now enthroned in his universal sovereignty. Day and night they are rendering sacred service to him there by everywhere proclaiming his Messianic kingdom and salvation for all mankind through the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. Not being the sealed spiritual Israelites, they are, as it were, in the Court of the Gentiles such as was a part of the temple at Jerusalem in the days of Jesus Christ and his apostles. It is at this great spiritual temple also

13, 14. (a) How, then, is the further part of Haggai 2:7 fulfilled, "And I will fill this house with glory"? (b) How was this foretold in Revelation 7:15?

15. (a) Where is it, as it were, that this increasing "great crowd" are serving God day and night? (b) Who are they, on earth, who stand in awe at how Jehovah thus fills his temple with glory?



that a remnant of the spiritual Israelites are today serving as underpriests under the High Priest Jesus Christ. Because of this, the remnant of spiritual Israelites who serve as spiritual underpriests are now having loving association with this increasing "great crowd" of "other sheep" who sincerely join in the pure worship of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Such underpriests stand in awe at how God has thus filled his temple with glory.

¹⁶ With a view to preserving the "great crowd" of sheeplike worshipers through the coming "great tribulation," it is promised: "And the One seated on the throne will spread his tent over them." That they will not be rocked to destruction and removed from the earth is assured to them in the further words about this "great crowd" at Jehovah's spiritual temple: "They will hunger no more nor thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat down upon them nor any scorching heat [in divine displeasure], because the Lamb, who

16. (a) With a view to preserving them through the "great tribulation," what does Jehovah do? (b) What does the Lamblike Shepherd do for them?

is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life. And God will wipe out every tear from their eyes.”—Revelation 7:15-17.

¹⁷ Never before has such a marvelous thing as this taken place at the spiritual temple of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Never before has it been filled with glory by the coming in of so many “desirable things” out of all the nations. The worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple is assured to Him forevermore. When the present rocking and shaking of all nations, yes, of the symbolic heavens, earth, sea and dry ground, reaches its grand climax in the “war of the great day of God the Almighty” at Har-Magedon and then the abyssing of Satan, his spiritual temple in which he thrones will remain unshaken. His worshipers there will enjoy loving protection under His tent and will be preserved for his sacred service for all time to come.

THE GREATER GLORY OF THE LATER HOUSE

¹⁸ The thing of greatest value that the “desirable things of all the nations” can give to the great Creator is their pure worship of Him as their God. The religious systems of Christendom and of Jewry and of other dominant religions have filled their houses of worship with gold and silver and other material treasures of high earthly value. But such material wealth is not what the one living and true God desires from his worshipers. He is the Owner of all material things by reason of his being the Creator.

¹⁹ Nobody can enrich God the Creator by bringing such material valuables into a building dedicated to some kind of religion. One’s giving to the Creator what is already the Creator’s does not enrich him, although it may make the priests of the different religions richer. So in filling Jehovah’s house with

17. (a) Has anything like this occurred at Jehovah’s spiritual temple before? (b) How is worship of Him at his temple assured to Him forevermore?

18. What is the thing of greatest value that the “desirable things of all the nations” can give to the Creator, and why?

19. (a) Can we enrich God by material gifts? (b) Why did the temple builders back in Haggai’s day not need to worry about expenses?

glory such material things are not the required things. As Haggai's prophecy goes on to say: "'The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies." (Haggai 2:8) Back there in Haggai's day, in 520 B.C.E., did the temple builders at Jerusalem need to worry about expenses? No! Not with such a rich God.

²⁰ Back there, Jehovah of armies as Creator was the Owner of all the material things that the temple builders needed. He could be depended upon to provide all financial backing that was needed to start and finish the rebuilding of the temple of his worship. He could see to it also that, by His spirit, certain possessors of material riches would make contributions toward the rebuilding work. The fact that he promised to fill the proposed new house of worship with glory was a divine guarantee that the rebuilding of the house could be started in full confidence. It would be completed and to it worshipers would come. The unpromising look of things at the start was therefore no reason for the temple builders to become discouraged. Jehovah would not encourage them to start something that they would be obliged later on to leave uncompleted. The richest person in all the living universe was behind them!

²¹ This reminds us of the statement printed in the second issue of the *Watch Tower* magazine under date of August, 1879, page 2, under the heading "Do You Want 'Zion's Watch Tower'?"

Do not suppose these remarks to be an appeal for money. No. "Zion's Watch Tower" has, we believe, JEHOVAH for its backer, and while this is the case it will never *beg* nor *petition* men for support. When He who says: "All the gold and silver of the mountains are mine," fails to provide necessary funds, we will understand it to be time to suspend the publication.

That was published in the then 6,000 copies of the magazine.

20. How would the Creator see to it that all needed expenses were provided, and why did the builders not need to be discouraged at the unpromising look of things at the start?

21. Of what statement published in *Zion's Watch Tower* does that remind us?

²² When undertaking to rebuild Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem, Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak and the rest of the Israelites needed to exercise extraordinary faith in God, especially as the official ban of the Persian Empire was still in effect upon rebuilding Jehovah's house of worship. Besides that, the builders needed to fight off discouragement because the humble beginning of the work appeared like nothing when compared with the former glorious temple built by King Solomon. They needed to have Jehovah's outlook to encourage them onward. So Jehovah used his prophet Haggai to reveal what the divine outlook was, in these words: "Greater will the glory of this later house become than that of the former," Jehovah of armies has said. 'And in this place I shall give peace,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies."—Haggai 2:9.

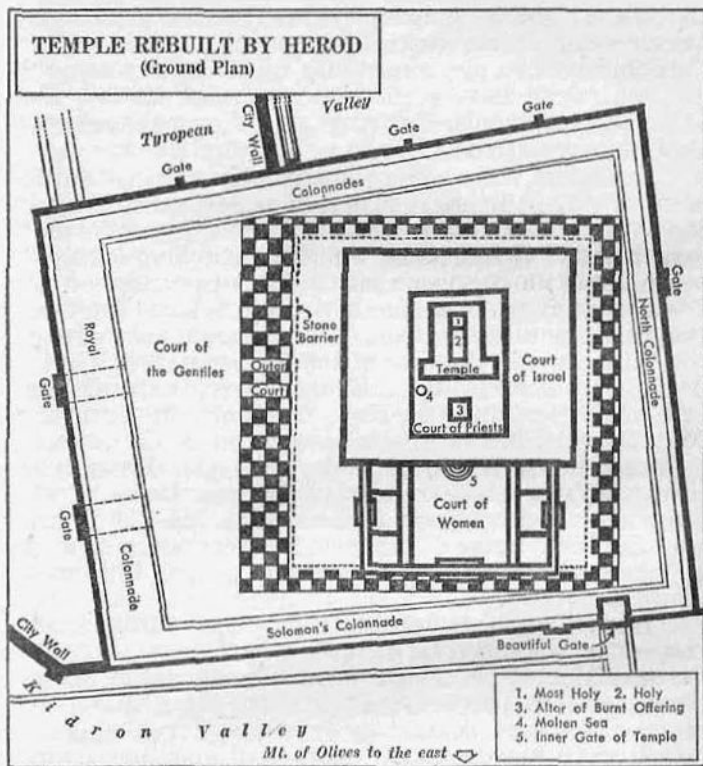
²³ Toward understanding those prophetic words, we must remember that Jehovah's spiritual temple has as its Holy of Holies the holy residential place of Jehovah God in the invisible heavens and that this spiritual temple of His was not destroyed by the Babylonian armies in the year 607 B.C.E., when all of Jerusalem was laid desolate. Only the typical representation of it on earth was destroyed. The real spiritual temple of Jehovah was yet to come into existence and would not need to be rebuilt. So this then future spiritual temple has endured till today and the final and complete fulfillment of Jehovah's prophecy in our day applies to that one spiritual temple of the one living and true God.

²⁴ Back there in Haggai's time, more than 2,490 years ago, a new and second temple at Jerusalem needed to be constructed. It would be the "later house," whereas the destroyed Solomon's temple was the "former"

22. Why did the temple builders need extraordinary faith, and what was the outlook that they needed to have?

23. As regards the 'glory of the later house being greater than that of the former one,' what must we remember with regard to Jehovah's true temple?

24. In Haggai's day, what was the "later house" and what was the "former" one, and how did the glory of the one become greater than that of the other?



temple. Both those houses were "the typical representations of the things in the heavens." (Hebrews 9:23) According to Jehovah's assurance in Haggai 2:9, the glory of the temple built under the supervision of Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua at Jerusalem was to be greater than that of King Solomon's temple. How did this come to be true? For one thing, it continued in use longer, from 515 B.C.E. to 70 C.E., or for 584 years, whereas Solomon's temple stood for 420 years. So the "later house" lasted till Messiah's coming, and he himself taught there. Furthermore, in

the year 17 B.C.E. King Herod the Great of the Roman Province of Judea began the gradual rebuilding of Zerubbabel's temple, expending much money upon it and making it have a magnificence that rivaled that of Solomon's temple. But what would count more with God is appreciation of His house by worshipers.

²⁵ Doubtless, then, more worshipers flocked to Jehovah's rebuilt house of worship at Jerusalem than in the case of Solomon's temple. Especially so over a longer period of time. Also, since the temple was rebuilt more than ninety years after the dispersion of the Jews to many parts of the earth as exiles and fugitives, the worshipers came from more widespread parts of the earth than in the case of the former temple. On the day of Pentecost of 33 C.E. there were natural Jews and proselytes there at Herod's temple in Jerusalem from Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, which is toward Cyrene, Rome, Crete, Arabia, as well as from Judea. (Acts 2:1-11) In this way the later house had a greater religious patronage and hence a greater glory, in the typical fulfillment of the prophecy.

²⁶ How, though, is Jehovah's prophecy fulfilled with respect to the spiritual temple, which is only one indestructible temple, never having a rebuilding or replacement? In this way: During the time that those material temples as built by Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod were standing, Jehovah's real spiritual temple was having attention called to it by those typical representations of it upon the earth at Jerusalem. Even the visionary temple as miraculously seen by the prophet Ezekiel in the year 593 B.C.E. typically called attention to Jehovah's spiritual temple. (Ezekiel 40:1 to 47:2) Such mundane, earthly temples, though awe-inspiring to the human beholder, could never give the worshipers therein full discernment of the indescribable glory of Jehovah's true, spiritual temple.

25. What did the greater glory of the "later house" mean in the way of worshipers at the temple?

26. What glory did Jehovah's spiritual temple get from its typical representations built by men on earth?

This typing of the realities continued on until Jesus the Son of God was baptized in water and anointed with Jehovah's spirit in 29 C.E. to be the promised Christ or Messiah.—Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:29-34.

²⁷ From that event onward Jehovah's spiritual temple began to have more than just a typical representation of itself at Jerusalem. From then on it actually took on reality, by Jesus' being anointed with God's spirit to be a "high priest according to the manner of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 6:20; Psalm 110:4) Jesus Christ was brought into the spiritual condition as pictured by the first compartment or Holy of the temple, where the golden lampstand, the table of loaves of presentation and the golden incense altar were located. Also, he had come into the condition pictured by the temple courtyard for the priests, where the copper altar was located, and he had approached God's altar equivalent for presenting his perfect human body as an atoning sacrifice for the "sin of the world." So the anti-typical Day of Atonement with respect to the real, spiritual temple of Jehovah had begun. (Hebrews 8:1 to 10:10) This procedure went on for three and a half years, till 33 C.E.

HEAVENLY TEMPLE GLORIFIED

²⁸ On Nisan 14 of the year 33 C.E., Jesus Christ as a spiritual high priest completed his sacrifice on earth, his dead body of flesh being entombed. On the third day therefrom, on Nisan 16, 33 C.E., he was resurrected from the dead as a spirit person, thus passing beyond the barrier that was pictured by the temple veil between the Holy and the Most Holy, namely, his flesh. Thus he was able to enter into the real Most Holy, into the presence of Jehovah God in heaven itself, there as high priest to present the value of his human sacrifice and make atonement for humankind.—Hebrews 9:23-28; 6:19, 20; 10:19, 20.

²⁷ How, in 29 C.E., did Jehovah's true temple begin to have more than a typical representation of it on earth?

²⁸ How and when did Jesus Christ pass the barrier that was illustrated by the temple's inner curtain, and for what purpose?

²⁹ When this Jesus Christ entered into the real Most Holy of God, this imparted a glory to Jehovah's real spiritual temple that it had never had before. For, look! now in His most holy presence there stood His everlasting High Priest, raised "in glory," immortal, invested with the "power of an indestructible life"! —1 Corinthians 15:42-57; Hebrews 7:15-24.

³⁰ On the festival day of Pentecost, Sivan 6, 33 C.E., the glorified Jesus Christ was used by Jehovah God to pour out the holy spirit upon his faithful disciples. (Acts 2:1-38) By this means they became spirit-begotten children of God and were anointed to be spiritual underpriests of the High Priest Jesus Christ. (John 3:3, 5; 2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 John 2:20-27; 3:1, 2; 1 Peter 2:9) In accord with this they were brought into the priestly spiritual condition pictured by the Holy of the temple at Jerusalem to enjoy the light of the antitypical golden lampstand and the table of the loaves of presentation and to offer up the incense of prayer on the golden incense altar. (Hebrews 9:1, 2; Luke 1:8-12, 21, 22) The congregation of spiritual Israelites will finally number 144,000 spiritual underpriests, and at their resurrection from the dead they will be raised up each with a spiritual body, "in glory," clothed upon with immortality, after Christ's kingdom is established.—Romans 6:5; 2 Corinthians 5:1-5.

³¹ By thus participating in the "first resurrection," they will be ushered into the heavenly Most Holy; and "they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years." (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1, 3; 20:4-6) By Jehovah's granting these faithful spiritual Israelites such a glorious entrance into the Most Holy of his own presence, he will add a further glory to his spiritual temple such as it did not have before while the material temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod were functioning on earth as types.

29. How was a glory imparted to Jehovah's true temple by Jesus Christ's appearance in God's presence?

30. When were others ushered into the condition pictured by the Holy of the temple, and how many will finally pass beyond the barrier pictured by the inner curtain?

31. How will this add to the glory of Jehovah's spiritual temple?

³² In the days of those typical temples at Jerusalem their courtyards, outside the courtyard of the priests, were crowded with worshipers coming from far and near. (Psalm 84:1, 2, 10; Luke 1:21) Since the year 70 C.E. the throngs of worshipers stream up no more to the courtyards of Jehovah's house of worship at Jerusalem, for the typical material temple for divine worship has vanished forever. (John 4:20-24; Acts 21:26-28; Matthew 24:1, 2; Luke 21:5-7, 20-24) The glory of the typical temples made with men's hands has faded for all time, for now we are no longer living in the time of the shadows of good things to come. We are living in the days of the glorious realities that are enduring. (Colossians 2:16, 17; Hebrews 10:1-4, 10) But what of the courtyards of the true temple?

³³ Speaking of his real spiritual temple, Jehovah of armies used his prophet Haggai to foretell the coming in of the "desirable things of all the nations" into his house of worship. This would be at a time when the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land would be rocked. We are now nearing the spectacular climax of that time of universal commotion. It is now timely to ask, Have those desirable things actually come in from all the nations before these are rocked to pieces and removed? Yes!

³⁴ Hundreds of thousands of them have "come in," in the form of dedicated, baptized disciples of Jesus Christ. These he has brought in as his "other sheep" and made them to be "one flock" with the still surviving remnant of his spiritual underpriests at the courtyards of Jehovah's temple. (John 10:16; Revelation 7:9, 10) As this unnumbered "great crowd" orderly render sacred service in the courtyards of Jehovah and ascribe their salvation to their enthroned God and to his Lamb, they are a sight that glorifies the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. They fill, not the churches

32. What was the case of the outer courtyards of those typical man-made temples at Jerusalem, and till when?

33. With regard to Jehovah's spiritual temple, what are we in this time of rocking led to ask about the "desirable things of all the nations"?

34. How, then, have the courtyards of Jehovah's spiritual temple been filled with a glory that they never had before?

and cathedrals of Christendom and the synagogues of Jewry, but the courtyards of Jehovah's true spiritual temple with a glory that it has not had before. In very truth it has already come about that "the latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former." (Haggai 2:9, *RS*) "The new glory of this Temple is going to surpass the old, says Yahweh Sabaoth." (*Je*) "The future glory of this house shall be greater than the first."—*By*.

PEACE AMID THE ROCKING

³⁵ Jehovah closed his second prophecy through Haggai with these consoling words: "'And in this place I shall give peace,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies."—Haggai 2:9.

³⁶ In the year 70 C.E. the passing away of Jerusalem and the temple that had been built by Zerubbabel and renovated by King Herod was not peaceful, but occurred amidst a most horrible time of tribulation. (Matthew 24:1-22) But the real spiritual temple of Jehovah is a place of abiding peace. With regard to the correct carrying on of the meetings of true Christians at that spiritual house of worship, it is written: "God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace. . . . let all things take place decently and by arrangement." (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40) This rule of conduct is observed at the meetings of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, so that the spirit of peace does prevail among them.—Galatians 5:22, 23.

³⁷ Whereas Jehovah of armies rocks the symbolic heavens, earth, sea and dry ground, he gives peace in the earthly courtyards of his spiritual temple. The anointed remnant of His spiritual underpriests attend strictly to their duties at His house of worship and keep free from all embroilment in the controversies and conflicts of this world. The "great crowd" of the "other sheep" that has streamed up to the "mountain

35, 36. (a) With what comforting words did Jehovah close his second prophecy through Haggai? (b) Was Jerusalem's temple disposed of peacefully, and where does peace on earth obtain today?

37. Despite all the rocking round about, how is peace given in the courtyards of Jehovah's house as regards the remnant and "great crowd"?

of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob," have figuratively done what Isaiah 2:2-4 foretold about them. They have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. They learn carnal warfare no more. In the approaching "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon, they will not lift up a hand in any violence against God's enemies. They will let it be His war to fight, confident in His glorious victory. (Revelation 16:14-16; 2 Chronicles 20:15) By this course they manifest God's spirit and display the "wisdom from above."—James 3:17.

³⁸ How grand is the peace that Jehovah's Christian witnesses enjoy today at his spiritual house of worship! How gladdening to the eyes it is for us to see the glory of Jehovah filling his spiritual temple as the "desirable things of all the nations" continue coming in! Long ago the prospect of such an amazing thing was held before the hearts and minds of the once frustrated builders of a new temple at Jerusalem by Jehovah's prophet Haggai. Today we are actually beholding the wondrous fulfillment of Haggai's prophecy in these days when all the nations are being rocked, and this should spur on the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites in their sacred service to Jehovah God at his spiritual house of worship. To this remnant the inspired exhortation applies for them not to forfeit the undeserved kindness of Jehovah as did the unappreciative Esau: "Wherefore, seeing that we are to receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us continue to have undeserved kindness, through which we may acceptably render God sacred service with godly fear and awe. For our God is also a consuming fire."—Hebrews 12:16, 17, 28, 29.

38. What prospect, once held before the frustrated temple builders in Haggai's day, does the remnant of spiritual Israelites see being fulfilled world wide today, and what admonition is given to them?

CHAPTER

6

CALLING A NATION TO RETURN TO JEHOVAH

AT LEAST ten days passed by from the time that the prophet Haggai gave his second prophecy at Jerusalem, on the twenty-first day of the seventh lunar month (Tishri), in the year 520 B.C.E. This was still in the second year of the reign of King Darius I of the Persian Empire. A faithful remnant of the worshipers of Jehovah God who had come back in 537 B.C.E. from the exile of the Jews in Babylonia were now back in their homeland for seventeen years. A ban that had been imposed by a preceding king of the Persian Empire against the rebuilding of the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem was still in force. The rebuilding of the temple had got no farther than the laying of its foundation in the year 536 B.C.E. Then, without waiting for the official ban of a mere man against the rebuilding of his house of worship to be lifted, Jehovah God had raised up his prophet Haggai to rouse up repatriated Jews to resume their construction of the temple. This had occurred on the first day of the sixth lunar month (Elul). For two lunar months Haggai had continued alone as the only prophet urging the rebuilding work.

² Although the prophesying of Haggai alone should have been sufficient and did stir the Jews to some action, yet it would be strengthening to faith and courage for the Jews to have a second witness of Jehovah to testify that now, without delay, was Jehovah's time for the rebuilding of his temple at Jerusalem to be resumed. Considerately, Jehovah did raise up a

1. How long by now had Haggai prophesied alone, and what had Jehovah roused up the Jews to do?
2. What did Jehovah now furnish to strengthen further the faith and courage of the temple builders?

second prophet at the critical time, a man named Zechariah. Concerning the ban on temple building and how and why it was defied by the temple builders in due time, we read this record:

³ "Now after the copy of the official document of Artaxerxes the king had been read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they went in a hurry to Jerusalem to the Jews and stopped them by force of arms. It was then that the work on the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, stopped; and it continued stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius the king of Persia. And Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo the prophet prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and in Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. It was then that Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jehozadak got up and started to rebuild the house of God, which was in Jerusalem; and with them there were God's prophets giving them aid." —Ezra 4:23 to 5:2.

⁴ When in that second year of King Darius I (520 B.C.E.) did Zechariah the grandson of Iddo begin to prophesy? Zechariah's own book of prophecy informs us in its opening words, saying: "In the eighth month in the second year of Darius the word of Jehovah occurred to Zechariah the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo the prophet."—Zechariah 1:1.

⁵ The eighth lunar month, of twenty-nine days, was called Heshvan, and was an autumn month. The day of the month is not given in the prophecy. Evidently it was the first day of Heshvan, the day of the new moon, when many Jews would celebrate in Jerusalem. If so, this would be exactly two months after Haggai began to prophesy. The translation by S. Byington here reads: "On the eighth new moon in the year two of Darius, Jehovah's word came to the prophet Zecariah the son of Berekiah the son of 'Iddo.'" (Zechariah 1:1,

3. What does Ezra say about how the building ban was enforced and how in due time the Jews defied it?

4. When did Zechariah begin to prophesy?

5. (a) What day may it have been when Zechariah began to prophesy?

(b) What shows his book to be important for us to examine today?

By) Little did Zechariah know then that his book of prophecy would be so important that, hundreds of years later, inspired Christian writers would quote it to prove that the expected Messiah, the Christ or Anointed One, had come and had carried out the first part of his mission in behalf of all mankind. (Matthew 21:5; 26:15, 28, 31; 27:9; Mark 14:24, 27; Luke 22:20; John 12:15; 19:37; Revelation 11:2, 4) This proves, not only that the book of Zechariah is an inspired book of true prophecy, but also that it is important for us today to examine for modern-day fulfillments.

⁶ From the start the utterances of God that Zechariah is instructed to declare are said to be the expressions of "Jehovah of armies," a very significant phrase. Very appropriate for the time and situation, also. Fifty-two (52) times through Zechariah's prophecy of fourteen chapters that forceful expression is used. The final chapter, verse three, shows that this is no idle designation of God, for this is what it foretells: "Jehovah will certainly go forth and war against those nations as in the day of his warring, in the day of fight." (Zechariah 14:3) It is highly important to bear this prophecy in mind, in these days when the last book of the Holy Bible is being fulfilled regarding the march of all the nations to Har-Magedon for the "war of the great day of God the Almighty." (Revelation 16:14, 16) This is the same God as the Jehovah of armies worshiped in the days of High Priest Eli and of the prophet Samuel and of the shepherd boy David, who went out "with the name of Jehovah of armies" to fight the heavily armored Philistine giant Goliath and killed him with a perfectly aimed stone from his sling.—1 Samuel 1:3-4:4; 17:45.

ZECHARIAH'S OPENING PROPHECY

⁷ The opening message of Jehovah of armies through his new prophet Zechariah was addressed to the re-

6. Zechariah was instructed to declare the utterances of whom, and what shows that it is important for us to bear Zechariah's book in mind now as we near Har-Magedon?

7. According to Zechariah 1:2, against whom had Jehovah grown very indignant, and why so?

patriated Jews, "saying: 'Jehovah grew indignant at your fathers—very much so.'" (Zechariah 1:1, 2) Such "fathers" were their fathers and grandfathers who had been taken into exile in Babylon in the years 617 and 607 B.C.E. Jehovah of armies was very much indignant against these because they had profaned and polluted his holy temple at Jerusalem and had broken their national covenant with Him and had formed political alliances with worldly pagan nations. His indignation heated up to such a degree that he finally let Jerusalem and its temple be destroyed and the whole land of Judah become desolated without man or domestic animal for seventy years. At the root of the trouble was the Jews' abandoning of the pure, undefiled worship of Jehovah of armies. This serious fact was something of which to remind the Jews who had been released from exile in Babylon to go home to Jerusalem to rebuild Jehovah's temple there.

⁸ To these Jews, already back in their homeland for seventeen years, the message to Zechariah went on to say: "And you must say to them, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: "'Return to me,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, 'and I shall return to you,' Jehovah of armies has said.'" —Zechariah 1:3.

"RETURN," IN WHAT SENSE AND WITH WHAT RESULTS?

⁹ In what way did Jehovah mean for those restored Jews to "return" to Him? Had not Haggai the prophet already spoken to them with some resulting action? Yes! And the account says, after Haggai's first prophecy: "And Jehovah proceeded to rouse up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, and the spirit of all the remaining ones of the people; and they began to enter in and to do the work in the house of Jehovah of armies their God. It was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month

8. What was Zechariah then told to tell the Jews to do toward God?
9. In what sense were those restored Jews to "return" to Jehovah of armies, and why?

in the second year of Darius the king." (Haggai 1:14, 15) But in the more than a month since then there may have been a lag in their efforts and possibly some indifference on the part of a number of persons. This would make it very appropriate for another rousing exhortation to be given by another prophet as a corroboration.

¹⁰ The whole nation needed to return to Jehovah of armies with one heart and with one soul, and to do it without fear of the enemy. The return was to be in the form of again taking up the fearless, wholehearted worship of the one living and true God. In their case back there this would mean their giving visible expression of their return to their God by rebuilding his temple to a completion. That had been the main objective of their coming back to their homeland. (Ezra 1:1 to 4:3) Building their own private houses and running their farms and other material interests were of secondary importance. Only by having their completed temple at the city where God had put his name could those restored Jews fully carry out their worship of him according to his law given to them through the prophet Moses. (Haggai 1:3-9) So there was much to which to return in order for those Jews to worship their God in complete obedience to his law and arrangements.

¹¹ And if they did thus "return" in whole-souled worship, what? "I shall return to you," Jehovah of armies has said." His return to them would signify the full restoration of his favor to them. He would bring to nothing the opposition of the enemy to their rebuilding of their central house of divine worship. He would take away from them the setbacks that they had been suffering in their material prosperity ever since they left off working at the restoration of the temple. He would bless them with material good things as well as unspeakable spiritual blessings.—Zechariah 8:9-15.

10. How were those Jews to "return" to their God, and what would be the evidence of their full return?

11. For returning to him, how would Jehovah "return" to them?

¹² Total mobilization of the nation! The time had come for just such a thing as that—under Jehovah's direction, and with the encouragement of his prophets. All the restored Jews should get behind their most important work and bring Jehovah's house of worship to its completion in all parts. This would make a name for Jehovah, and only then could the nation's high priest, underpriests and all the Levites carry out their prescribed duties and services to the spiritual benefit of all the nation and of all the faithful proselytes out of all the nations. But minus the completed temple, the Jews from near and far could not celebrate their three annual festivals properly, nor their annual Day of Atonement. And, too, the Nethinim, the "gatherers of wood and drawers of water," could not make their full contribution to the services at the temple. (Joshua 9:23; Ezra 2:43-58) So here now was a work for which the whole nation should unite, to gain divine blessing.

¹³ The course of their fathers and the outcome thereof should have served as a warning example to the restored Jews at this critical time. That is why Jehovah, speaking through the prophet Zechariah, continued on to say to them: "'Do not become like your fathers to whom the former prophets called, saying: 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Return, please, from your bad ways and from your bad dealings.''" 'But they did not listen, and they paid no attention to me,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'As for your fathers, where are they? And as for the prophets, was it to time indefinite that they continued to live? However, as regards my words and my regulations that I commanded my servants, the prophets, did they not catch up with your fathers? So they returned and said: 'According to what Jehovah of armies had in mind to do to us, according to our ways and according to our dealings, that is how he has done with us.''" —Zechariah 1:4-6.

12. So what was the work that the whole nation should unite for, in order to gain the divine favor?

13. The outcome of the course of their fathers should have served as what to those restored Jews, and so what was called to their attention?

¹⁴ According to this warning, if the restored Jews did become like their fathers who were taken into exile in Babylon, they could be sure of suffering Jehovah's displeasure. The reason why he asked them where their fathers were was that their fathers were no more alive, because of the divine displeasure. They had refused to leave their bad ways and dealings and return repentantly to their God. However, the restored Jews could raise the question, 'What about the prophets, like Jeremiah who specifically prophesied about the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of the land of Judah? "Did they continue to live?" Are they not dead the same as our disobedient fathers?' Although the answer to this had to be Yes, still such a fact was no sound reason for the restored Jews to pay no attention to the prophets Haggai and Zechariah whom Jehovah was now raising up in that year 520 B.C.E.

¹⁵ The mortal prophets, whom Jehovah used as his inspired mouthpieces to declare his words and his regulations, were not the things upon which to base a sound argument. What Jehovah inspired those prophets to say was the important thing, the determining thing. Did Jehovah's words by them and his regulations or decrees that he decided upon come true? The fathers of the restored Jews were obliged to answer Yes! The fathers were forced to return or turn around in their thinking and to admit: "According to what Jehovah of armies had in mind to do to us, according to our ways and according to our dealings, that is how he has done with us." Why, then, should the restored Jews put Jehovah to the test as to whether he meant exactly what he said, as their fathers had done? The outcome was sure to be just as with their fathers, Jehovah's un-failing words and regulations or decrees would catch up with them; the fulfillment of such pronouncements of Jehovah would in course of time overtake them.

14. (a) If the restored Jews followed the course of their fathers, what was to be expected? (b) Why did Jehovah ask them about their fathers' condition, and was the like condition of the former prophets a reason for not listening to Haggai and Zechariah?

15. (a) Rather than the mortality of those former prophets, what was the important, determining thing in connection with them? (b) So, in what was imitating their fathers' course sure to result?

Disaster would result. So, why not rather they return to Jehovah now, that he might return to them, as promised?

THE SIMILAR ISSUE IN MODERN TIMES

¹⁶ The vital question on which we must make our decision is, How do we stand with regard to the house of worship of the only living and true God, Jehovah? That is the question that early faced the generation of mankind that has survived from the year 1914 C.E. until now. World War I of 1914-1918 C.E. saw many religious buildings damaged or destroyed in the arena of international conflict. Quite a number of those churches were repaired or rebuilt in the postwar period. However, after that world conflict the thing that vitally concerned the true dedicated people of Jehovah God was not the building of any religious house or church, as in the case of the restored Jews back there in 537-520 B.C.E. Jehovah's true spiritual temple had not been damaged or destroyed by any bombs from the air or other explosives used during World War I. It had not been touched. Hence the question in the first postwar year of 1919 C.E. was, How did the remnant of Jehovah's dedicated people stand with regard to his true *spiritual* temple and the pure, undefiled worship that was due to be rendered therein?

¹⁷ During World War I the dedicated, baptized International Bible Students had had their work of witnessing to God's kingdom seriously interfered with by war operations, governmental bans and violent persecutions. They had yielded in a measure to fear of men, which lays a snare for the fearful one. (Proverbs 29:25) They had tried to keep free from bloodguilt by undertaking, for the most part, noncombatant service, but had not kept a strict, total neutrality toward the conflicts of this world. In certain serious respects they

16. (a) What is the vital issue on which we must make our decision now? (b) So the question that the surviving remnant faced in the first postwar year of 1919 C.E. was in connection with what?

17. Was there need for the dedicated, baptized International Bible Students who survived World War I to repent and return to Jehovah, and why?

needed to repent and return to Jehovah, that he might return with favor to them.—Zechariah 1:3.

¹⁸ The nations of this world had definitely entered their "time of the end"—with the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. (Daniel 12:4) The stage of world affairs now certainly called for Jehovah's appointed work to be taken up again, and that was that which his Son Jesus Christ had foretold:

¹⁹ "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10.

²⁰ Such a tremendous work of worldwide scope required to be done in a most organized way, with a fully united organization, under the supreme headship of the theocratic Ruler, Jehovah God, who was in his true spiritual temple. Jehovah must do the organizing. There are only two organizations that are operating universally, and the organization of the One should be well known to every intelligent creature. That is the Creator's organization, Jehovah's organization. The other is that of his chief adversary, the one to whom the prophet Zechariah himself refers, namely, Satan the Devil.—Zechariah 3:1, 2.

²¹ The present system of things among men certainly represents an organization, and the Christian apostle Paul speaks of Satan the Devil as "the god of this system of things." (2 Corinthians 4:4) In a letter to the Ephesians (2:2; 6:11, 12) he describes how highly organized the invisible spirit part of Satan the Devil's organization is. Both the invisible part and the visible earthly part of Satan's organization are opposed to the preaching of the good news of God's Messianic kingdom. This makes it all the more imperative that the preachers of the Kingdom work in an organized way.

18, 19. It was the due time to take up what work again, and why?
20. (a) In what way did that tremendous worldwide work need to be done? (b) What two organizations are there to take into account?
21. What are the main parts of the Devil's organization, and what makes it imperative that Kingdom preaching be done in an organized way?

²² Jehovah of armies certainly has all these armies organized. (Luke 2:13-15; Revelation 14:6, 7) The assignment to preach the Kingdom news on earth Jehovah of armies would give only to his visible earthly organization. From the days of the prophet Moses down to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the earthly nation of natural, circumcised Israel was the visible organization of Jehovah God. (Psalm 147:19, 20) But from the pouring out of God's spirit upon the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ on the festival day of Pentecost in 33 C.E., the spiritual Israel with circumcised hearts has been God's "holy nation" and his visible earthly organization. (Acts 2:1-40; Galatians 6:16; Romans 2:28, 29; 1 Peter 2:9) The spiritual Israel is thus the true Christian congregation made up of the dedicated, baptized, spirit-anointed disciples of the Messiah Jesus. Like the human body, it is highly organized, the many members of it having each one his individual part to perform. (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 4:15, 16; Colossians 2:19) For special services the congregation has its appointed elders and ministerial servants.—Philippians 1:1.

²³ In this "time of the end" for this present system of things the preaching of "this good news of the kingdom" for a witness to all the nations is not the only work of God's visible earthly organization after the close of World War I. There has been a harvesting work in progress, in a spiritual sense. Jesus Christ foretold this. When explaining his parable of the wheat field that an enemy oversowed with darnel weeds, Jesus said:

²⁴ "The sower of the fine seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; as for the fine seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; but the weeds are the sons of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels."—Matthew 13:37-39.

22. (a) Are Jehovah's "armies" organized? (b) Till Jesus' death, what was Jehovah's visible earthly organization, and since Pentecost of 33 C.E., what has been his visible earthly organization, with what features?

23. Besides Kingdom preaching, what other work has there been for Jehovah's visible organization to do?

24. What did Jesus say about the harvest and the reapers?

²⁵ In the postwar year of 1919 C.E. and under angelic guidance the faithful remnant of Jehovah's spirit-anointed people were gathered into his visible earthly organization, for the foretold Kingdom-preaching work. This fact was very manifest by the holding of the eight-day general assembly of the International Bible Students Association at Cedar Point, Ohio, in September of 1919. But the members of this faithful anointed remnant who had survived the severe trials and persecutions during World War I were not enough to complete the foreordained number of those who are anointed to reign with Jesus Christ in his heavenly kingdom. The full number of the joint heirs of Christ in his kingdom was foreordained to be 144,000. (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1, 3; 20:4, 6) Consequently more of the "wheat" class had to be found and harvested by the angels and gathered into Jehovah's visible earthly organization. As the invisible heavenly angels were working through the anointed remnant on earth, what did the harvest work now require?

²⁶ It required, from 1919 forward, that the surviving members of the joint heirs of Christ's kingdom must do further work of making disciples, baptizing them and teaching them. Following their baptism as dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ, these new disciples must be anointed with God's spirit to become "sons of the kingdom," joint heirs of Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:15-17) Those thus collected during this "conclusion of the system of things," together with all the other wheatlike Christians who had already proved faithful to the death, will complete the foreordained number of 144,000 "sons of the kingdom." As regards all such faithful harvested ones, it is written: "Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule

25. In 1919, into what was the surviving remnant of spirit-anointed servants of Jehovah gathered, but why was there yet a harvest to be carried out by His angels, and through whom?

26. What did this harvest work require the surviving members of the anointed remnant to do, and what must occur with those whom they baptize for these to become joint heirs of Christ?

as kings with him for the thousand years.”
—Revelation 20:4, 6.

SPIRITUAL UNDERPRIESTS IN THE TEMPLE'S "HOLY"

²⁷ Note that these faithful anointed disciples are not merely to reign with Jesus Christ in the heavenly kingdom. They will also be “priests of God and of the Christ.” The 144,000 anointed ones are therefore underpriests of the High Priest Jesus Christ. While yet alive on earth, they hold this relationship with Jesus Christ their Head. That is why, nineteen hundred years ago, the apostle Peter wrote to his fellow anointed Christians and said: “You are ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession, that you should declare abroad the excellencies’ of the one that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” As underpriests they are privileged “to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:9, 5) Accordingly, while yet on earth they are in a special relationship to Jehovah’s spiritual temple, the Holy of Holies of which is His exclusive residence in the holy heavens where the resurrected Jesus Christ presented the value of his perfect, human sacrifice.

²⁸ These underpriests, even while yet on earth in the flesh, are in the spiritual condition pictured by the first interior compartment or “Holy” of the temple at Jerusalem. And just as the Holy of the temple of Jerusalem held the golden tables of showbread or loaves of presentation, and the golden lampstands and the golden altar of incense, so the Christian underpriests in the spiritual Holy eat spiritual food, enjoy spiritual enlightenment and offer up the perfume of faithful prayers and zealous service to Jehovah while they are yet on earth. (Exodus 40:4, 5, 22-28; 1 Kings 7:48-50; 2 Chronicles 4:19-22) Although this may not be appreciated by persons who have no spiritual discernment and appreciation, there is a real sacred service

27, 28. (a) What relationship do these anointed ones hold to the High Priest Jesus Christ, and so what location do they occupy as regards Jehovah’s spiritual temple? (b) What special privileges do they enjoy in that special area?

that these spiritual anointed underpriests render in this Holy area of Jehovah's great spiritual temple. From his exalted position in the Most Holy of this spiritual temple He can scrutinize the activities of these underpriests and can render judgment concerning them as to their service under His High Priest, Jesus Christ. —Malachi 3:1-5.

²⁹ When we take these things into consideration, there is this fact that we can see: In the year 1919 C.E., the surviving anointed remnant of Christ's disciples presented themselves for their part on earth in the harvest work under the superior direction of the "reapers," the heavenly angels. In this way they were undertaking a work that affected the true spiritual temple of Jehovah. How so? Well, by doing their discipling work and thus collecting the "wheat" class under angelic reapers, they were working for the producing of more spiritual underpriests. They were collaborating with Jehovah God that he might put more underpriests, yes, the full complement of the spiritual underpriests, into the Holy of His great spiritual temple. They were thus working for an enlarged sacred service by more underpriests at Jehovah's temple.

³⁰ Instead of this being a "gleaning work" such as followed a regular harvest in the ancient land of Israel,* this collecting work on the part of the surviving anointed remnant was the real harvest under the angelic "reapers." The time of their doing this was the "conclusion of the system of things," since the year 1914 C.E., and Jesus said that "the harvest is a conclusion of a system of things." (Matthew 13:39; 24: 3, 31) As a result of the spiritual harvesting work during the years that followed, the anointed remnant of wheatlike disciples of Christ grew in numbers,

* See *The Watch Tower*, as of May 1, 1919, under the heading "The Harvest Ended—What Shall Follow?"; also, as of August 15, 1919, page 249, under the headings "Perilous Times Come" and "The Gleaning Work."

29. (a) So, since 1919, what kind of work were the surviving anointed remnant doing? (b) How did this affect Jehovah's spiritual temple? 30. Was this the right time for the collecting of the wheatlike Christians, and how was this a building up of the working force in the temple "Holy"?

notably down to the year 1931 when the anointed remnant embraced the Scripturally backed designation "Jehovah's witnesses." Manifestly the number of spiritual underpriests in the Holy of Jehovah's spiritual temple had increased, likely to include the full complement that was needed to complete the foreordained quota of 144,000 spiritual underpriests under the High Priest Jesus Christ. It was indeed a buildup of the working force in the Holy of Jehovah's true temple.

³¹ Here, then, was a spiritual temple work that began to be undertaken in the year 1919 C.E. by the surviving anointed remnant. By Jehovah's loving-kindness through his Greater Cyrus, Jesus Christ, they had been released from bondage to Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, and its political paramours. They had been liberated and restored to their rightful estate on earth for the very purpose of applying themselves to this temple work.

³² It was just like back in the year 520 B.C.E., when the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were raised up to encourage the restored Jewish remnant to take up again their work on the long-neglected temple at Jerusalem. In the year 1919 C.E. the columns of the *Watch Tower* magazine were used to rouse up and encourage the surviving anointed remnant to resume their open, public service of the Most High God in a fearless manner. His Messianic kingdom had been established in the heavens at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 and it must now be announced world wide. This sacrifice of praise to God was now due to be offered up to him even in the presence of all His enemies.—Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 138:1-3.

³³ In this way they were able to "return" to Jehovah, in view of which he would "return" to them with divine favor. If they were to become like the fathers of the ancient Jewish remnant against whom He had

31. In behalf of the temple work, how had they been liberated and restored in 1919 C.E.?

32. How did what occurred in 1919 C.E. correspond with what occurred in 520 B.C.E.?

33. If the anointed remnant were to imitate the course of the fathers of the ancient Jewish remnant, what was due to happen, and so what did the anointed remnant do?

had very much indignation, they would suffer calamity just as did those fathers for not listening or paying attention to the warnings and counsel of Jehovah's prophets. They also would have the prophetic words and decrees of Jehovah against the disobedient ones catch up with them in this "time of the end." Wisely, therefore, the anointed remnant began to "return" to Jehovah in 1919 C.E.

CHAPTER 7

BLESSINGS AND GOOD RULERSHIP AS THE WORLD ROCKS

THE OPENING prophecy of Zechariah in the eighth lunar month (Heshvan) in the second year of the reign of King Darius I of the Persian Empire was short, yet timely and pointed. (Zechariah 1:1-6) In the very next month the prophet Zechariah saw take place at Jerusalem significant action upon which the future welfare of the Jewish nation was hinged. On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth lunar month (Chislev) "the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was laid"! Zechariah's companion prophet, Haggai, records that momentous fact. (Haggai 2:18) That action taken in the face of an imperial ban against the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem was of such religious importance that it moved Jehovah of armies to inspire Haggai to prophesy again.

² The first one of Haggai's prophecies on that his-

1. In the month following his opening prophecy, what did Zechariah see take place, and what did this move Jehovah to do?

2, 3. (a) To whom was Haggai's first prophecy on Chislev 24, 520 B.C.E., addressed? (b) What start of a dialogue does Haggai 2:10-12 record?

torical day was addressed to the Levite priests who were hoping to serve in Jehovah's temple when completed. Those priests of the family of Aaron the Levite included the high priest, Joshua the son of Jehozadak. It impressed upon all those priests a lesson that is important for us in this late day. So let us read Haggai's record of it and follow the dialogue that took place:

³ "In the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah occurred to Haggai the prophet, saying: 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said, "Ask, please, the priests as to the law, saying: 'If a man carries holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and he actually touches with his skirt bread or stew or wine or oil or any sort of food, will it become holy?' " ' "—Haggai 2:10-12.

⁴ The "law" here spoken of is the divine law given through the prophet Moses and has reference to ceremonial matters and to the priests who would be the ones that carried "holy flesh." Of course, the priests should have been familiar with the Mosaic law, for it is said by the later prophet Malachi: "The lips of a priest are the ones that should keep knowledge, and the law is what people should seek from his mouth; for he is the messenger of Jehovah of armies." (Malachi 2:7) Reasonably, then, the priests should have been able to answer correctly the test question put to them by means of Haggai. Or had their familiarity with the law been affected by seventy years of desolation of the land of Judah during which the Jews had been exiles in the land of Babylon, and also by the troublous seventeen years that had elapsed since the return of the faithful remnant to their homeland? So how did the priests answer?

⁵ "And the priests proceeded to answer and say: 'No!' " (Haggai 2:12) That is to say, "Holy flesh" of an animal victim that had been offered to Jehovah in

4. According to Malachi 2:7, why should those priests have been able to answer that test question, and yet what may have affected them?
5. What law may those priests have had in mind in giving their right answer, and so what should an unclean person not think about gaining holiness?

sacrifice did not impart its holiness to any other food-stuff with which it might accidentally be brought in contact. For a guiding rule as to this answer, the priests may have had in mind what the Mosaic law says in Leviticus 7:19, 20: "The flesh that may touch anything unclean is not to be eaten. It is to be burned with fire. As for the flesh, everybody clean may eat the flesh. And the soul who eats the flesh of the communion sacrifice, which is for Jehovah, while his uncleanness is upon him, that soul must be cut off from his people." According to this, an Israelite who was unclean for any reason (Leviticus 7:21) should not think that because he comes in touch with "holy flesh" by eating it he is thereby cleansed, that what he has eaten has imparted holiness to him. Wrong reasoning according to the Law!

⁶ The prophet Haggai did not say that the priests had reasoned wrong. So now he proposed a question that called for an opposite answer. "And Haggai went on to say: 'If someone unclean by a deceased soul touches any of these things, will it become unclean?' In turn the priests answered and said: 'It will become unclean.'"—Haggai 2:13.

⁷ This correct answer of the priests proved that they knew Jehovah's law that was stated in connection with the "water for cleansing." This was water with which the ashes of the sacrificed red cow had been mingled and which was sprinkled upon persons defiled by contact with dead bodies. This law said: "Anyone touching the corpse of any human soul must also be unclean seven days. . . . Everyone touching a corpse, the soul of whatever man may die, and who will not purify himself, has defiled Jehovah's tabernacle, and that soul must be cut off from Israel. Because the water for cleansing has not been sprinkled upon him, he continues unclean. His uncleanness is still upon him. And it must serve as a statute to time indefinite for them, that the one spattering the water for cleansing should wash his garments, also the one touching the water

6. What question did Haggai next propose, and with what answer?

7. The right answer of the priests proved that they knew what law about cleansing someone defiled by a dead body?

for cleansing. He will be unclean until the evening. And anything the unclean one may touch will be unclean, and the soul who touches it will be unclean until the evening.”—Numbers 19:2-5, 11-13, 21, 22; Hebrews 9:13.

⁸ This illustrates how infectious an uncleanness can be—not only physically, but also spiritually. A person who is bearing something holy may not be able to pass on holiness to another person automatically or easily, without effort. But an unclean, contaminated person can easily infect another person by mere association and contact with him. As the Christian apostle Paul said: “Do you not know that a little leaven ferments the whole lump?” (1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:8, 9) That is the way it could be with a person’s unclean attitude of indifference toward how the temple of Jehovah is being neglected. Such indifference and carelessness toward the pure worship of Jehovah and its full expression through a temple could act like spiritual leaven and infect the whole nation of Israel. Even after the erecting of Jehovah’s temple it became necessary for a later governor of Judah and Jerusalem to say: “We should not neglect the house of our God.” Worship there should be fully supported.—Nehemiah 10:39.

⁹ Undeniably the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem had lagged during the seventeen years since the return of the Jewish remnant to their homeland. The evidence indicated that there were indifference and unconcern on the part of many, and the original enthusiasm for the rebuilding of the temple had cooled off.

¹⁰ As with the Christian congregation at the close of the first century C.E. it could be said to the Jewish remnant: “You have left the love you had at first. Therefore remember from what you have fallen, and repent and do the former deeds.” (Revelation 2:4, 5)

8. What did this illustrate with regard to uncleanness, and how did this apply with regard to one’s attitude toward the erection of Jehovah’s temple?

9. What evidently had happened to the Jewish attitude since the remnant’s return seventeen years previously?

10, 11. (a) What shows that the Jewish remnant had lost the love that they first had? (b) According to Haggai 2:14, how did the nation and its works appear to Jehovah?

Without a question there was a need on the part of the Jewish remnant to "return" to Jehovah that he might "return" to them. (Zechariah 1:3, 4; Jeremiah 2:2, 3) At the time for the celebration of the festival of the booths (tabernacles) at Jerusalem, immediately after their return from Babylon, the Jewish remnant had erected an altar temporarily at the proper location and began offering up the proper sacrifices thereon. (Ezra 3:1-6) But was that enough? With just that and a temple foundation, how did the nation appear to their God? Listen:

¹¹ "Accordingly Haggai answered and said: 'That is how this people is, and that is how this nation is before me,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and that is how all the work of their hands is, and whatever they present there. It is unclean.'"—Haggai 2:14.

¹² It was as in the case of the Israelite who became unclean by touching a dead body: everything that he touched before he was cleansed by being sprinkled with the water containing ashes of the sacrificed red heifer was made unclean. Being unclean in Jehovah's sight because of their neglect toward His house of worship, the restored nation of Israel contaminated the sacrifices that they presented to Jehovah on their temporary altar at Jerusalem. Under such circumstances, could Jehovah bless them, not just spiritually but also materially? Consistently, No.

NEED FOR MODERN-DAY CLEANSING

¹³ Similar to that was the situation that beset the anointed remnant of Christ's dedicated, baptized disciples after World War I. Christendom, with its hundreds of sectarian churches, had besmeared itself with the blood of the millions who were slain in that bloodiest war up till 1914 C.E. The anointed remnant of Christ's disciples had tried to keep clean from such bloodguilt and other unchristian conduct, but did not wholly succeed and bore a measure of community

12. So, how were the sacrifices that they presented at Jehovah's altar affected, and in view of that could he bless them?

13. Similar to the Jewish remnant in 520 B.C.E., how was the Christian remnant unclean?

responsibility. Members of the anointed remnant had also yielded to fear of men in high places, with spiritual injury to themselves. "Trembling at men is what lays a snare, but he that is trusting in Jehovah will be protected." (Proverbs 29:25) Hence to a large extent the remnant had refrained from boldly, publicly declaring the established Kingdom of God and His day of vengeance against this war-racked, bloodguilty system of things. In the postwar year of 1919, as the anointed remnant of spiritual underpriests in the "Holy" of Jehovah's spiritual temple, how did they feel? Like Isaiah, who said:

¹⁴ "Woe to me! For I am as good as brought to silence, because a man unclean in lips I am, and in among a people unclean in lips I am dwelling; for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of armies, himself!" —Isaiah 6:5.

¹⁵ This prophetic outcry of the prophet was made when he had a miraculous vision of Jehovah at his temple. This vision was brought to the attention of the anointed remnant in the year 1922 C.E. It was on what was termed "The Day," namely, September 8, 1922, of the second international assembly held by the International Bible Students Association at Cedar Point, Ohio, for eight days. Toward the climax of his speech on "The Day," the key Scripture text of which was Matthew 4:17, the then president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society said:

Why, then, deliver the message to those who do not understand? Will any one hear? The Prophet of the Lord answers: "... Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you; therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God."—Isaiah 43:8-12.

Thus we see that those of the temple class are clearly designated as the Lord's witnesses at this time, to bring

14. How did Isaiah voice his uncleanness at the temple?

15. When was this temple vision of Isaiah called to the attention of the anointed remnant, and in what words of the keynote speech?

a message of consolation to the people, that the kingdom of heaven is here, . . . Thus it is seen that God purposes that his name shall be magnified, that the people shall know that he is Lord. Thus we see that God purposes to have a people in the earth in this time of stress, clearly marked as separate and distinct from all others, standing as his witnesses, fearlessly crying out the message: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

. . . Since 1914 the King of glory has taken his power and reigns. He has cleansed the lips of the temple class and sends them forth with the message. The importance of the message of the kingdom cannot be overstated. It is the message of all messages. It is the message of the hour. It is incumbent upon those who are the Lord's to declare it. . . .

. . . Be faithful and true witnesses for the Lord. Go forward in the fight until every vestige of Babylon lies desolate. Herald the message far and wide. The world must know that Jehovah is God and that Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the day of all days. Behold, the King reigns! You are his publicity agents. Therefore advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom.—*The Watch Tower*, as of November 1, 1922, pages 336, 337.

¹⁶ Many of the anointed remnant saw the need for their lips to be purged just as the prophet Isaiah had had his lips purged as by fire that he might declare the further message of Jehovah, who was at His temple. (Isaiah 6:6-10) They sincerely desired to have part in the further work of collecting those whom Jehovah God would make associate priests with Jesus Christ in the heavens, to bring the number of 144,000 underpriests to the full. But not all of the spiritual remnant were so disposed at that time. As an example of this, in that year 1922 and before the May 1 issue of *The Watch Tower* was published, one of the five men on the editorial staff of that magazine and his wife left the theocratic organization and sought other employment. There were others who took similar action at the time or later. Being a publicity agent of God's kingdom and going from house to house as such in using one's cleansed lips did not suit them. Other requirements of the spiritual underpriests in the Holy of

16. (a) What did those who accepted the cleansing of their lips desire now to do? (b) What back there shows whether all those associated with the anointed remnant were so disposed?

Jehovah's temple were too much for them. They became unclean because of their indifference, unconcern and return to worldly interests.

¹⁷ Uncleanness of that kind, lack of devotion to the full worship of the true God at his spiritual temple, is a pollution to the rest of the theocratic organization. It results in Jehovah's withholding his blessing. Whole-hearted devotion to the furtherance of his pure worship brings a restoration of God's favor and his promised blessings. This important fact was emphasized by God himself as he went on to say to the priests whom Haggai had questioned:

¹⁸ " 'But now, please, set your heart on this from this day and forward, before there was the placing of a stone upon a stone in the temple of Jehovah, from when those things happened to be—one came to a heap of twenty measures, and it proved to be ten; one came to the press vat to draw off fifty measures of the wine trough, and it proved to be twenty; I struck you people with scorching and with mildew and with hail, even all the work of your hands, and there was no one with you turning to me,' is the utterance of Jehovah—'Set your heart, please, on this from this day and forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was laid; set your heart on this: Is there as yet the seed in the grain pit? And as yet, the vine and the fig tree and the pomegranate tree and the olive tree—it has not borne, has it? From this day I shall bestow blessing.' "—Haggai 2:15-19.

THE DAY OF RETURN TO PROSPERITY

¹⁹ It was now the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month (Chislev), and by that time there should have been increasing autumn rains, even some snow appearing on the mountaintops. That day the faithful

17. (a) How did such uncleanness affect the rest of Jehovah's theocratic organization? (b) What attitude is it that He blesses?

18. Before this day of Haggai's prophecy, what had been the condition of the remnant economically, and why would Jehovah now bless them from this day forward?

19. From that twenty-fourth day of Chislev the Jewish remnant could make a test of Jehovah in what regard, and what did His law covenant allow for them to expect?

Jewish remnant had begun work anew at the temple foundation, as if they were laying the foundation all over again. (Ezra 3:8-12) From that marked day the Jewish remnant could make a test of Jehovah as to whether he would fulfill his gladsome promise. Droughts would be a thing of the past, also the mildew, and the ruinous hail, and there would be no further shortages in the basic foodstuffs. And there is nothing in Bible history to indicate that things did not turn out that way. As they courageously stuck to the temple work to its completion, Jehovah faithfully stuck to his promise. Just as he had promised in His law covenant mediated by His prophet Moses, their whole-souled commitment of themselves to His worship would be rewarded with material prosperity on their God-given land.—Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

²⁰ That must have been true of the temple-minded Jewish remnant back there, if what happened to them back there was a foreshadowing of what has happened to the anointed remnant of spiritual underpriests from 1919 C.E. onward. The resuming of the priestly responsibilities in the Holy of Jehovah's true spiritual temple marked the turning point for the anointed remnant of Christ's disciples who survived the trials and afflictions of World War I of 1914-1918 C.E. Being spiritual Israelites with a heavenly inheritance in view, they were not expecting *material* blessings for their faithfulness as the natural Israelites back in Haggai's days were entitled to do. What the anointed remnant of spiritual underpriests expected according to God's promises was *spiritual* prosperity. They were not disappointed. Their testing of the promises of God was not in vain. In spite of mounting resistance from the world and the anguish of the worldly nations who do not know the way out of their continual distress, the work of the anointed remnant in promoting true worship at Jehovah's spiritual temple prospered, expanded, brought increasing results.

20. What kind of prosperity was the anointed remnant entitled to expect for resuming work in behalf of Jehovah's true worship, and how did such prosperity manifest itself?

²¹ The adversaries—religious, political, judicial and social—have taken note of this inescapable fact. For a detailed record of the spiritual prosperity of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, one has but to read the annual reports published in the columns of the *Watch Tower* magazine since 1919 and in the *Yearbooks* since 1927, presenting reports on the worldwide growth of the work in preaching "this good news of the kingdom" in all the inhabited earth and in making disciples of people of all the nations, as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ, Jehovah's High Priest. (Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Hebrews 2:17 to 3:1) The inerasable record of modern history testifies mightily to the fact that Jehovah God, who cannot lie, has kept true to his promise of blessings. We never serve Him in vain. —Joshua 23:14; Psalm 138:2; 1 Corinthians 15:58.

REWARD OF A GOVERNING BODY'S BACKING CLEAN WORSHIP

²² In the year 520 B.C.E., on the first day of the sixth lunar month (Elul), when the prophetic word of Jehovah first occurred to Haggai, it was directed to "Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah," as well as to "Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest." (Haggai 1:1) Almost four months later the final inspired prophecy of Haggai is addressed exclusively to the same governor of the Persian province of Judah, Zerubbabel. He had proved obedient to Jehovah's encouragement through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, and now, under his governorship, the work at the foundation of Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem had been taken up again with fine courage in defiance of a misapplied ban by a misinformed king of Persia. (Ezra 4:17-24) Was Jehovah God appreciative of this? He was, and in expression of this he sent a personal message to Governor Zerubbabel. We read:

21. Where can one find a record of such spiritual prosperity of the faithful remnant, and what does this prove about Jehovah's promise? 22, 23. (a) Haggai's final prophecy was addressed to whom, in expression of Jehovah's appreciation of what? (b) In that prophecy, what did Jehovah promise to put out of action, and what would he do to Zerubbabel?

²³ "And the word of Jehovah proceeded to occur a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying: 'Say to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, "I am rocking the heavens and the earth. And I shall certainly overthrow the throne of kingdoms and annihilate the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariot and its riders, and the horses and their riders will certainly come down, each one by the sword of his brother." ' " "In that day," is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, "I shall take you, O Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, my servant," is the utterance of Jehovah; "and I shall certainly set you as a seal ring, because you are the one whom I have chosen," is the utterance of Jehovah of armies.' "—Haggai 2:20-23.

²⁴ On that twenty-fourth day of the ninth lunar month (Chislew) in the second year of the reign of King Darius I of Persia, Governor Zerubbabel had taken a bold step, apparently in defiance of the mighty Persian Empire. But he had taken a good and right step in obedience to Jehovah of armies. Now through the prophet Haggai he had gained the expression of approval of Jehovah of armies. So what did the disapproval or objections of men matter? He had approval from the Highest Source of authority, the Theocratic Ruler of the nation of Israel. This God as divine Ruler is to be obeyed rather than man-made rulers. Why, Israel's Theocratic Ruler could rock both the heavens and the earth and remove them. What, then, could spirit creatures and human creatures who make up those heavens and earth do to thwart, frustrate, successfully oppose his declared purposes? Nothing! Devils and men, all combined, cannot triumph against him. He can rock them all.

²⁵ What goes along with or results from this rocking of the heavens and the earth by the Universal Sovereign? Jehovah of armies explains, saying: "And I shall

24. Whose approval did Zerubbabel gain by taking his bold step on that twenty-fourth day of Chislew, and why was it this that mattered?
25. What goes along with such rocking of the heavens and the earth, and why are the details of this fitting for such a person as Jehovah of armies to set out?

certainly overthrow the throne of kingdoms and annihilate the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariot and its riders, and the horses and their riders will certainly come down, each one by the sword of his brother." (Haggai 2:22) How fitting it is here for the God who calls himself Jehovah of armies to speak of taking action against the military forces of the world of mankind! Such armed forces for offense and defense really constitute the "strength of the kingdoms of the nations." The nations of this twentieth century C.E. proceed on that theory, and all the nations are arming themselves, some of them with the most fantastic weapons that modern science can devise. But such armaments and highly trained military forces are a vain hope for giving permanent stability to the throne or governmental seat of the kingdoms of the nations. Jehovah of armies can annihilate such "strength."

²⁶ The Persian Empire, as the Fourth World Power of Bible history, proved to be stable for little more than two hundred years. Its horses and chariots and their riders, even militarized elephants, did not save it from overthrow by Alexander the Great of Greece. Horses and chariots and their riders cannot fight directly against the invisible Jehovah of armies. Neither does Jehovah of armies have to put in personal appearance to fight against military forces on earth. Out of the invisible he can exert his invincible power and make them fight among themselves, either by fright causing panic or by bitter quarrels among themselves. He can produce anarchy among all his foes. He did it in previous times, and he promises to do it again. Governor Zerubbabel knew of such previous occasions. (Judges 7:19-22; 2 Chronicles 20:22-24) He had reason to believe that Jehovah of armies could foil the enemies of His people once again by causing them to turn their weapons against themselves.

26. What can be said as to whether Jehovah of armies has to put in personal appearance for his enemies to fight against him or for him to fight against them?

²⁷ However, Jehovah of armies did not state it to be his purpose to rock his faithful, obedient people who devoted themselves to the rebuilding of His house of worship and to the carrying on of clean worship therein. Neither would Governor Zerubbabel be deposed by the Persian emperor for going ahead with temple building before he received official authorization from King Darius I. This could no more occur than for a seal ring to be taken off the right hand of Jehovah of armies. Let the heavens and the earth rock! Let the mightily armed nations rock! But the position of Governor Zerubbabel would be stable, unshaken. This was the force of the assurance that Jehovah now made to Zerubbabel:

²⁸ “‘In that day,’ is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, ‘I shall take you, O Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, my servant,’ is the utterance of Jehovah; ‘and I shall certainly set you as a seal ring, because you are the one whom I have chosen,’ is the utterance of Jehovah of armies.”—Haggai 2:23.

²⁹ How opposite this divine prophecy was to what the prophet Jeremiah had been inspired to say respecting Jehoiachin (or, Jeconiah, Coniah), who had reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem in 618-617 B.C.E. and who was the grandfather of Zerubbabel! (1 Chronicles 3:17-19; 2 Chronicles 36:9, 10) Speaking of Jehoiachin as Coniah, Jeremiah said: “‘As I am alive,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘even if Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, happened to be the seal ring on my right hand, from there I would pull you off! And I will give you into the hand of those who are seeking for your soul and into the hand of those of whom you are scared and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. . . . O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of Jehovah. This is what Jehovah has said, ‘Write down this man as childless, as an able-bodied man who will not have any success in his days; for

27. How would the rocking of the heavens and the earth and the nations affect Zerubbabel as a seal ring on Jehovah's hand?

28, 29. How opposite was Jehovah's promise to Zerubbabel about the seal ring from His declaration about King Jehoiachin or Coniah?

from his offspring not a single one will have any success, sitting upon the throne of David and ruling anymore in Judah.'"—Jeremiah 22:24-30.

³⁰ From this divine decree against the grandfather of Zerubbabel it can be discerned that a seal ring was very precious to someone of high rank. It bore the name of its owner, and was used in official business for stamping the signature of the owner on a document to authenticate it. (Genesis 38:18-26; 41:42; 1 Kings 21:8) So if Zerubbabel's grandfather, King Jehoiachin, had been like a seal ring on Jehovah's right hand, he would have been very precious to Jehovah. As it was, he had been anointed to be king in Jerusalem and thus became "Jehovah's anointed" and sat upon "Jehovah's throne" in Jerusalem, even though for just three months and ten days. (1 Samuel 24:6, 10; Lamentations 4:20; 1 Chronicles 29:23) For this reason the person of King Jehoiachin deserved and commanded special respect, from men. Yet, despite his having an official connection with Jehovah, he became repulsive to Jehovah because he continued in the wicked ways of his father, King Jehoiakim. In indignation, Jehovah pulled him off and cast him away, letting him go captive to Babylon and to prison there.

³¹ What, though, is this? Eighty years later, in 537 B.C.E., Jehoiachin's grandson, Zerubbabel, is released from exile in Babylon and is made governor of the Persian province of Judah, to govern from Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1 to 4:3) Was that not a contradiction of what Jehovah had said to Zerubbabel's grandfather in Jeremiah 22:30? No, the captive Jehoiachin continued "childless" as far as having any of his sons to sit upon David's throne at Jerusalem. In fact, his uncle, Mattaniah, whose name was changed to Zedekiah, succeeded him upon David's throne, only to lose the throne in 607 B.C.E., at Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians. David's throne was overturned, never to

30. (a) How precious was a seal ring to its owner? (b) Why was the official position of Jehoiachin to be respected, and why did Jehovah cast him away?

31. Why was Zerubbabel's being made governor of Judah in 537 B.C.E. not a contradiction of what Jehovah said about Zerubbabel's grandfather in Jeremiah 22:30?

be set up again in literal earthly Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 21:25-27) The 2,520 years of the Gentile Times began there, in 607 B.C.E., for Jerusalem or the Messianic kingdom of God that it symbolized to be trampled upon by the Gentile nations. True to prophecy, none of Jehoiachin's several sons sat on Jehovah's throne in Jerusalem as David's royal descendant. His grandson Zerubbabel sat, not on David's royal throne, but in the seat of a governor appointed by King Cyrus.

³² Although inferior to his grandfather in official rank from man's standpoint, Zerubbabel became something very precious to Jehovah, like a seal ring on the right hand of Jehovah of armies. It was for a reason opposite to that for which King Jehoiachin was not too precious to be thrown away, namely, his keeping Jehovah's commandments and displaying courageous devotion to Jehovah's clean worship at his temple. Like a living seal ring, he served Jehovah of armies in an official way, for the glory and praise of Jehovah's holy name. Whereas the heavenly Commander in Chief of armies had rejected King Jehoiachin, he had "chosen" his faithful grandson Zerubbabel. The theocratic Sovereign of the universe might rock the heavens and the earth and all the worldly militarized nations, but he would not rock Governor Zerubbabel and remove him from an honored position of service in the visible theocratic organization. What he said later about Zerubbabel through the prophet Zechariah (4:6-10) confirmed this.

WIDER MEANING OF THE PROPHECY

³³ Does the complete fulfillment of this prophecy end with Governor Zerubbabel of the Persian province of Judah in the sixth century before our Common Era? Evidently not! He was a type of someone greater. Of whom? Of the one of whom he became an honored ancestor, the one with whom his genealogical line in

32. How did Zerubbabel act as a living seal ring on Jehovah's hand, and why was he precious to Jehovah whereas his kingly grandfather was not?

33. (a) Why did the complete fulfillment of Haggai's prophecy not end with Governor Zerubbabel in the sixth century B.C.E.? (b) Of whom is the antitypical Zerubbabel the Governor?

the Bible record ends, namely, Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-27) This antitypical Zerubbabel is now the heavenly Governor in Jehovah's visible theocratic organization on earth, namely, the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel. (Galatians 6:16; Romans 2:28, 29; Revelation 7:4-8) These were restored from spiritual bondage to Babylon the Great, as facts show, in 1919 C.E. Like the ancient remnant of Jewish exiles, they were released from the Babylonish world empire of false religion that they might apply themselves primarily to the things having to do with the clean worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple.

³⁴ The antitypical Zerubbabel, Jesus Christ, as heavenly Governor of spiritual Israel, is the leading Promoter of this work in connection with Jehovah's temple. He arranges it that his anointed disciples have a place of service as spiritual underpriests in the Holy of that temple.—John 17:17-19.

³⁵ The name Zerubbabel, which means "Seed of Babylon," need not disturb us in being applied to the heavenly Jesus Christ as Governor. True, he himself was never in Babylon the Great. Nevertheless, the remnant of anointed disciples who survived the trials and persecutions during World War I were, during that time, brought into religious bondage to Babylon the Great and her political paramours. According to the rule that what is done to them is as if it were done to him, the greater Governor Zerubbabel (as represented in the anointed remnant) was in Babylon the Great to resemble ancient Zerubbabel, who was literally born in Babylon of old and who could therefore be called "Seed of Babylon." He led the faithful anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites out of a Babylon greater than the ancient city on the Euphrates River, setting them free by his truth. (John 8:32) By him as Governor the visible earthly theocratic organization has good rulership.

34. How is that one the leading Promoter of the work in connection with Jehovah's temple?

35. How can the name Zerubbabel, despite its meaning, be fittingly used respecting the heavenly Governor, Jesus Christ?

³⁶ This Governor like Zerubbabel is most precious to Jehovah God, like the seal ring on the right hand, that bears the divine name. He is most concerned about the sanctification of his heavenly Father's name. (Matthew 6:9, 10; John 12:28; 17:6-12) He is fearless, like ancient Zerubbabel. Governor Zerubbabel was strengthened not to be afraid of defying the Persian Empire, the Fourth World Power of Bible history. Today the heavenly Governor of spiritual Israel is not afraid of the Seventh World Power of Bible history, namely, the British-American dual world power, nor of the Eighth World Power, namely, the international organization for world peace and security, now composed of the 132 members of the United Nations. (Revelation 17:7-17) Like their heavenly Governor, the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel do not fear those world powers either. Fearlessly they work on world wide in the interests of clean worship at Jehovah's spiritual temple.

³⁷ Was not an ancient seal ring used to affix the name of its owner to a document, thus to prove that it genuinely originated with him and that it expressed his will, purpose or instructions? Yes. In a like manner the antitypical Zerubbabel, Jesus Christ, is used by Jehovah of armies to fulfill the prophecies and promises and thereby prove that those recorded pronouncements really originated from the divine, infallible Source and are the divine truth. In this way, too, Jehovah's name and word are vindicated through Jesus Christ, who is as precious to Jehovah as an official seal ring. "For no matter how many the promises of God are, they have become Yes by means of him. Therefore also through him is the 'Amen' said to God for glory through us [Christian disciples]."—2 Corinthians 1:20.

³⁸ Since the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E., the figurative heavens and earth have been made to

36. How does the heavenly Governor compare with ancient Zerubbabel as to preciousness and courage, and who today on earth imitate him?

37. How is the antitypical Zerubbabel like a seal ring on Jehovah's hand as to usage and preciousness?

38. Why does the Greater Zerubbabel have nothing to fear from the rocking of heaven, earth and the nations today, and how will he maintain good rulership for Jehovah's worshippers?

rock. The nations of the world of mankind are rocking, unable to stabilize the worldly system of things. It is Jehovah of armies who is doing the rocking, just as he told Governor Zerubbabel of old time. The rocking, humanly uncontrollable, will reach its peak of agitation in the "great tribulation" that now appears to be very near, to be followed by the abyssing of Satan. (Matthew 24:21, 22) But the Greater Zerubbabel, Jesus Christ, has nothing to fear from the rocking. His position of heavenly governorship is unshakably fixed. His is "a kingdom that cannot be shaken." (Hebrews 12:28) It will not be removed, but will be used by Jehovah of armies in removing Babylon the Great and the world powers of today, annihilating their military "strength" in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. (Revelation 16:13-16; 17:12-14; 19:11-21) Thereafter it will bless all the surviving worshipers of Jehovah God at his spiritual temple with good rulership forever.

³⁹ Happy are we worshipers at the true temple to be already enjoying divine blessings and the good rulership of Jehovah's heavenly Governor as the world of false worshipers rocks.

39. Happy are we worshipers of Jehovah today—for what?

CHAPTER

8

MERCY TO THE PERSECUTED BUT JUDGMENT TO PERSECUTORS

AT THE Jerusalem of the days of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah the time had now moved into the first quarter of the year 519 B.C.E., but still in the second year of the reign of King Darius I of the Persian Empire, the Fourth World Power of Bible history. It was exactly two lunar months since the day that Haggai was inspired to give his final prophecies—to the Aaronic priests and to Governor Zerubbabel. That was on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month (Chislev), which was toward the beginning of the year 519 B.C.E. On that memorable day of Jerusalem's history, work had been taken up again at the foundation of the temple on Mount Moriah, just north of Mount Zion. Before another inspired message came to the Jewish builders from their God, they worked unceasingly at the sacred building site, for two whole months. This time they did not let any attempts at interference by enemies stop them.

² By Shebat 24, 519 B.C.E., the word of what was going on at Jerusalem may not have reached the ears of King Darius at the distant Persian capital city. The news traveled quite slowly, even by couriers riding post-horses and covering about a hundred miles a day. (Esther 3:13-15; 8:10, 14) From Jerusalem by way of the "fertile crescent" over to Shushan would be over a thousand miles, and from Shushan up to Ecbatana to the north would be more than two hun-

1. How much time was it after Haggai's final prophecy before another inspired message came to the temple builders, and what had they done meantime?

2. Who evidently would get the news before King Darius I did concerning what was going on at Jerusalem, and how much time for getting a decision would be involved?

dred miles, if the roads were straight. Hence considerable time would be required for King Darius to get the startling information. Persian officials of provinces lying beyond (westward of) the Euphrates River from the king in Persia, reasonably, would get the news earlier. This is evidently what happened. The discussions that followed and the investigations that were launched must have occupied months (four or five months, according to some estimates) before a decision by King Darius on the matter in dispute could be received and enforced. Here is what took place, as recorded in Ezra 5:2 to 6:2:

³ "It was then that Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jehozadak got up and started to rebuild the house of God, which was in Jerusalem; and with them there were God's prophets giving them aid. At that time Tattenai the governor beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them, and this is what they were saying to them: 'Who put an order through to you to build this house and to finish this beam structure?' Then they said to them this: 'What are the names of the able-bodied men that are building this building?' And the eye of their God proved to be upon the older men of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report could go to Darius and then an official document concerning this could be sent back.

⁴ "Here is a copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues, the lesser governors that were beyond the River, sent to Darius the king; they sent the word to him, and the writing in it was in this manner:

"To Darius the king:

"All peace! Let it become known to the king that we went to the jurisdictional district of Judah to the house of the great God, and it is being built with stones rolled into place, and timbers are being laid in the walls; and that work is being eagerly done and is making progress in their hands. Then we asked these older men. This is

3. What questions did the Persian governors westward beyond the Euphrates River ask the temple builders, and what did these do?

4. What did the letter that the Persian governors sent to King Darius I say?

what we said to them: "Who put an order through to you to build this house and to finish this beam structure?" And we also asked them their names, so as to let you know, that we might write the names of the able-bodied men that are at their head.

"And this is the word that they gave back to us, saying: "We are the servants of the God of the heavens and the earth, and we are rebuilding the house that had been built many years before this, which a great king of Israel built and finished. However, because our fathers irritated the God of the heavens, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, and he demolished this house and took the people into exile at Babylon. Nevertheless, in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, Cyrus the king put an order through to rebuild this house of God. And also the gold and silver vessels of the house of God that Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple, which was in Jerusalem, and brought to the temple of Babylon, these Cyrus the king took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were given to Sheshbazzar, the name of the one whom he made governor. And he said to him: "Take these vessels. Go, deposit them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt upon its place.' When that Sheshbazzar came he laid the foundations of the house of God, which is in Jerusalem; and from then until now it is being rebuilt but it has not been completed."

"And now if to the king it seems good, let there be an investigation in the king's house of treasures that is there in Babylon, whether it is so that from Cyrus the king an order was put through to rebuild that house of God in Jerusalem; and the decision of the king concerning this let him send to us.'

⁵ "It was then that Darius the king put an order through, and they made an investigation in the house of the records of the treasures deposited there in Babylon. And at Ecbatana, in the fortified place that was in the jurisdictional district of Media, there was found a scroll, and the memorandum to this effect was written within it."

⁶ During all the time that the things narrated by the priest Ezra were taking place, the Jewish remnant under Governor Zerubbabel and the High Priest Joshua

5. What action did King Darius take on receipt of the letter, and what was found?

6. While that was going on, what were the builders at Jerusalem doing, and what happened on Shebat 24 of 519 B.C.E.?

courageously went forward with the temple reconstruction. This was true on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which fell in the winter of the year 519 B.C.E. On that momentous day the prophet Zechariah began to receive a series of encouraging visions. About this he tells us:

THE FIRST VISION

⁷ "On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, that is, the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah occurred to Zechariah the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo the prophet, saying: 'I saw in the night, and, look! a man riding on a red horse, and he was standing still among the myrtle trees that were in the deep place; and behind him there were horses red, bright red, and white.'"—Zechariah 1:7, 8.

⁸ During the vision Zechariah had an angelic guide, who explained things to him, things that we today also want to understand. Those horses with their riders, standing there among the myrtle trees in the hollow alongside Jerusalem—why were they there? Was war impending against Jerusalem at this stage of temple building? In the Bible horses are a symbol of war. (Job 39:19-25; Proverbs 21:31) Who sent those horses? Whom do the horsemen represent? Is their purpose warfare? Zechariah desired to know:

⁹ "And so I said: 'Who are these, my lord?'"

¹⁰ "At that the angel who was speaking with me said to me: 'I myself shall show you who these very ones are.'"—Zechariah 1:9.

¹¹ Those horse riders proved to be holy angels, sent out by God on scout duty, as it were. This is what becomes apparent as we read: "Then the man [on horseback] who was standing still among the myrtle trees answered and said: 'These are the ones whom Jehovah has sent forth to walk about in the earth.' And they proceeded to answer the angel of Jehovah who

7. In the first vision on Shebat 24, what did Zechariah see?

8, 9. Who explained matters to Zechariah, and what questions did the sight of those horses arouse?

10, 11. Who did those horse riders prove to be, and what did they report to the rider among the myrtle trees?

was standing among the myrtle trees and to say: 'We have walked about in the earth, and, look! the whole earth is sitting still and having no disturbance.' ”
—Zechariah 1:10, 11.

¹² What was it that those angelic scouts were saying to their chief astride the red horse? Were they saying that there was universal peace throughout the whole earth? Apparently so! But this was true only in a relative sense, that is, in relation to something else. To what? To Jerusalem and the territory of Judah. How so? In that Jerusalem had lost its former earthly position among the nations. Down to the year 607 B.C.E., it had been the seat of the typical Messianic kingdom of God on earth. This miniature kingdom of Jehovah was a disturbing factor to the Gentile world, the pagan nations. Egypt fought with Assyria and then with Babylon to have treaty relations with Jerusalem or to have a controlling voice in its affairs. But no more since 607 B.C.E.

¹³ In that year of world importance King Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian armies and allies destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. The kingdom of David was overthrown, and a king of David's royal line ceased to sit on "Jehovah's throne" at Jerusalem. The last human king who sat there, Zedekiah the great grand-uncle of Zerubbabel, was caught and taken captive to Babylon, to wear out the rest of his life there as an exile, blinded, imprisoned. During the month of Tishri of 607 B.C.E., what few Jews had been left as a poor, inconsequential minority in the land of Judah fled down to Egypt because of fear of the Babylonians (Chaldeans), and the land of Judah and Jerusalem were left desolated without man or even domestic animal. Just as the prophet Jeremiah had foretold! It was then that a divinely marked out period of time began to count. What?

12. (a) In what way was "the whole earth" at peace, as reported by the angelic scouts? (b) Over what had Egypt fought with Assyria and then with Babylon in this connection?

13. Why, since 607 B.C.E., did Egypt cease to maintain treaty relations with the typical Messianic kingdom at Jerusalem?

¹⁴ "The times of the Gentiles," or, "the appointed times of the nations," as Jesus Christ later spoke of them, saying: "Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) Inasmuch as Jerusalem had been the seat of the miniature Messianic kingdom of God and therefore stood for the right of God's kingdom to rule in the hands of a Messianic descendant of King David, this meant something special to those Gentile nations that were to be permitted to trample on Jerusalem or its Kingdom right. What? Nothing less than that the Gentile nations would be permitted by Jehovah of armies to rule the earth without interference from any Messianic kingdom of God, such as the former one that had had its capital in earthly Jerusalem. As the Gentile Times of such noninterruption were to run for seven symbolic "times" or for 2,520 literal years, this marked period would run from Tishri of 607 B.C.E. down to Tishri of 1914 C.E., in our own twentieth century. (Daniel, chapter four) No wonder that, back there in 519 B.C.E., the angelic scouts reported the whole earth as without disturbance!

¹⁵ In that second year of King Darius I, the land of Judah with its local capital at Jerusalem was merely one of the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire "from India to Ethiopia." (Esther 1:1-3) It had a governor, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, but he was not sitting upon the throne of David as his grandfather, King Jehoiachin, had done for three months and ten days. He was directly responsible probably to one of the governors of a jurisdictional district on the western side of the Euphrates, probably Governor Tattenai, and then ultimately responsible to King Darius I. So now there was hardly anything to get seriously disturbed about as regards Jerusalem. Of course, Governor Tattenai had got excited because rebuilding work had been resumed at the temple foundation and he had

14. What did Jesus Christ call that divinely marked period, what did it mean for worldly politics, and when did it end?

15. Why was the status of the land of Judah and its Jewish governor nothing to be disturbed about, and how did the inquiring Governor Tattenai proceed respecting the resumed temple building?

officially inquired: "What are the names of the able-bodied men that are building this building?" But he did not apply military force to stop the work. He chose rather to submit the question to King Darius for his decision according to the "law of the Medes and the Persians, which is not annulled." (Daniel 6:8) Why such self-restraint on Governor Tattenai's part? Ezra 5:5 explains:

¹⁶ "And the eye of their God proved to be upon the older men of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report could go to Darius and then an official document concerning this could be sent back."

¹⁷ Accordingly, as regards world uneasiness over what Jerusalem was planning and doing, the angelic scouts could report to their chief among the myrtle trees in the deep place by Jerusalem: "The whole earth is sitting still and having no disturbance." The Gentile or pagan world, indeed, was sitting complacently without fears of any interference in its affairs by any kind of a Messianic kingdom of Jehovah God. But what about Jehovah of armies himself? What was his attitude toward Jerusalem and what it represented? Was there any further assurance from Him now that his prophet Haggai had ceased to speak under inspiration? Was he also complacent like the Gentile nations as regards the welfare of Jerusalem and the role it had to play in the outworking of Jehovah's purposes? The angels of heaven were also concerned about this, and especially so Michael, "the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your [Daniel's] people." (Daniel 12:1; 1 Peter 1:12) In proof of this the prophet Zechariah next sees this in the vision:

¹⁸ "So the angel of Jehovah answered and said: 'O Jehovah of armies, how long will you yourself not show mercy to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah, whom you have denounced these seventy years?'"
—Zechariah 1:12.

16. According to Ezra 5:5, why did Governor Tattenai proceed that way?

17, 18. (a) So what could the angelic scouts announce as to the state of the "whole earth"? (b) But whose attitude on this was it of highest importance to inquire about, and what inquiry was made?

¹⁹ To some minds, according to what was said by the angel, it appeared that Jehovah's denunciation of "these seventy years" was still continuing against Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah. This was due to the fact that the rebuilding of his temple had been neglected for the past seventeen years. He had had very much indignation against their fathers who suffered exile because of profaning the former temple that had been built by King Solomon. Now, in the eighth month (Heshvan) of the year 520 B.C.E. Jehovah had warned the repatriated Jewish remnant to avoid suffering divine indignation through becoming like their fathers and not returning to Jehovah with zeal for full worship of Him through a rebuilt temple. (Zechariah 1:1-6) In the light of this we are to understand the outcry of the angel according to what these things might indicate to him regarding Jerusalem and the other cities of repopulated Judah.

²⁰ The angel's mention of these "seventy years" calls to mind the seventy years mentioned by the prophet Jeremiah. During those seventy years the nations of Judah and Israel must serve the dynasty of kings of Babylon, at the end of which seventy years Jehovah was to call the erroneous conduct of the king of Babylon and of the Chaldeans to account and He would punish them therefor. (Jeremiah 25:11-13) So did Jehovah's angel mean that those seventy years had not yet ended, or that they had just now ended? This could not historically be true. Why not? Because about twenty years before this (in 539 B.C.E.) Jehovah had used Cyrus the Great of Persia to overthrow Babylon as a world power and about two years later, in 537 B.C.E., Jehovah moved Cyrus who was acting as the king of Babylon to let the Jewish exiles leave Babylon and return to Jerusalem to rebuild Jehovah's temple. —Ezra 1:1 to 2:2; 2 Chronicles 36:20-23.

19. Why had the "seventy years" of divine denunciation appeared to some to be continuing?

20. So why is the angel's outcry about "these seventy years" not to be misunderstood as if those "years" were continuing?

²¹ Furthermore, the land of Judah was to keep a "sabbath, to fulfill seventy years." (2 Chronicles 36:21) How? By lying as a "desolate waste without man and domestic animal," it having been "given into the hand of the Chaldeans." (Jeremiah 32:43; 33:10-12) Both the prophet Zechariah and the angels knew that those seventy years of utter desolation of the land of Judah and Jerusalem without man and domestic animal had ended in the year 537 B.C.E. when the Jewish remnant returned from Babylon and reoccupied the land, they being reported back in their cities in the seventh month (Tishri) of that year. (Ezra 3:1, 2) Instead of its lying as a desolate waste any longer, crops began to be raised in the land, as the prophet Haggai reports seventeen years later. (Haggai 1:6-11; 2:16, 17) So those seventy years were long past!

²² If, at the time of Zechariah's first vision, those seventy years were still continuing or were just now over, why would the angel, knowing what he did, speak as he did? Since he knew that the time period was definitely seventy years long, why would he say: "O Jehovah of armies, how long?" (Zechariah 1:12) Why, away back in the first year of Darius the Mede after the overthrow of Babylon in 539 B.C.E., the prophet Daniel "discerned by the books the number of the years concerning which the word of Jehovah had occurred to Jeremiah the prophet, for fulfilling the devastations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years." (Daniel 9:1, 2) And certainly Daniel verified the number of years, not seventeen long years before they were due to end, but immediately before the end of the seventy years in the first year of the reign of King Cyrus the Persian. Thus the aged prophet Daniel, who lived at least into "the third year of Cyrus the king of Persia," could know that he had calculated the length of the time period correctly. (Daniel 10:1) Hence those "seventy years" did not extend to the time when Zechariah got his first vision, in 519 B.C.E.

21. During those "seventy years," how was the land of Judah to lie, and what now shows whether that state of the land had long passed?
22. How did the prophet Daniel indicate that the "seventy years" did not extend to 519 B.C.E., when Zechariah got his first vision?

²³ Be it remembered, also, that those unforgettable seventy years were the first seventy years of the Gentile Times, "the appointed times of the nations." So, when those seventy years ended in 537 B.C.E., the Gentile Times still continued on for Jerusalem to be trampled on by the Gentile nations. (Luke 21:24) Apparently, then, the angel who cried out, "O Jehovah of armies, how long?" was referring *back* to that former period of seventy years as an illustration of Jehovah's denunciation of his chosen people. He was asking whether Jehovah's denunciation of them was being renewed because of their long neglect toward His temple. And so the angel was asking how long it would yet be before Jehovah would show mercy to Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah. The prophet Zechariah was also interested in knowing this. We, also!

²⁴ It must have been satisfying to Zechariah to be allowed to overhear the conversation between Jehovah of armies and the inquiring angel: "And Jehovah proceeded to answer the angel who was speaking with me, with good words, comforting words; and the angel who was speaking with me went on to say to me: 'Call out, saying, "This is what Jehovah of armies has said: 'I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy. With great indignation I am feeling indignant against the nations that are at ease; because I, for my part, felt indignant to only a little extent, but they, for their part, helped toward calamity.'""' —Zechariah 1:13-15.

²⁵ Justly, Jehovah felt indignation against this disobedient chosen people. He was therefore obliged to administer disciplinary punishment to them. He used Babylon and her allies and sympathizers as His instrument in applying the punishment. However, he was "indignant to only a little extent." On the other hand, the Gentile nations who were used as His instrument of

23. Those "seventy years" were the opening of what larger period of time, and so, in asking, "How long?" the angel was making what comparison?

24. How did Jehovah answer the inquiring angel, and so how did Jehovah feel toward Jerusalem and how toward the Gentile nations?

25. Why had Jehovah been indignant with his chosen people, but why had he become indignant toward the Gentile nations?

correction carried the disciplinary action too far, out of sheer hatred of his chosen people and to show their contempt for him and his worship. Viciously they "helped toward calamity" upon his people. In malice they added an extra measure to that calamity. How prone the persecutors in modern times have been to do that way to Jehovah's worshipers! For good and just cause Jehovah of armies could say: "With great indignation I am feeling indignant against the nations." Let the nationalistically minded persecutors of today remember that!

²⁶ "Therefore this is what Jehovah has said, 'I shall certainly return to Jerusalem with mercies. My own house will be built in her,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, 'and a measuring line itself will be stretched out over Jerusalem.'"—Zechariah 1:16.

²⁷ The disciplinary action of the Gentile nations against the people of Judah and Jerusalem had been carried to the point of outright persecution. These people had been completely abandoned by their God to them, the persecutors must have thought. But not so! Jehovah had not abandoned them for all time. He was determined to prove this to the persecutors. In symbol of this, Jerusalem was not to be left permanently desolated. He would return to her with mercies by having her raised from the dust and rubble and once again peopled. Houses would be built in her, and thus the "measuring line itself will be stretched out over Jerusalem," during house building. Why, even the most important building of all would be built in her—Jehovah's temple itself! What a setback that would be for the persecutors and to their false gods!

²⁸ The divine time for reconstruction had arrived. Nothing was now going to stop it. The divine choice had been made of his visible earthly organization. That choice was to be made manifest by divine favor, wheth-

26. Therefore, what did Jehovah now purpose to do as to Jerusalem?

27. How would Jehovah prove to the persecutors that he had not permanently abandoned Jerusalem, and how would the measuring line be stretched out over her?

28. Thus Jehovah's choice was to be made manifest to whom, and what was it that Jehovah chose?

er the worldly nations that were at ease resented it or not. No secret was to be made of the divine choice. To show that public attention was to be called to the divine decision and choice, the command was issued in the hearing of the prophet Zechariah: "Call out further, saying, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: "My cities will yet overflow with goodness; and Jehovah will yet certainly feel regrets over Zion and yet actually choose Jerusalem." ' ' "—Zechariah 1:17.

²⁹ Let us note that Jehovah of armies calls the cities of the Persian province of Judah "my cities." He has chosen them. He claims them as his possession. He will give proof that these reconstructed cities were his by filling them with goodness from him. Consequently they would prosper. Each of these cities would have its body of elders for their local government. Such reorganized cities would not be without their earthly capital. That chief city would be the one of Jehovah's choice. It would be the one that had been the preexile capital of Jehovah's people, namely, Jerusalem, rebuilt by his own people. That was no democratic choice, nor any imperial choice. It was the theocratic choice. This city chosen by the heavenly Theocrat Jehovah of armies was also called Zion, because Mount Zion had been the location of King David's palace alongside of which David had pitched the tent for the temporary residence of Jehovah's Ark of the Covenant. In rebuilt Zion or Jerusalem was to be the location of the provincial governing body. So Governor Zerubbabel resided here.

³⁰ Because of the persistent disobedience of its inhabitants, Jehovah had decreed that Zion or Jerusalem should be destructed by the Babylonians and that it would lie desolate for seventy years. At his due time Jehovah felt regrets for desolate Zion. Not that he had done wrong or made a mistake in having Zion destructed, but that his will had been carried out and his purpose had been served and he had vindicated himself. Now his indignation could subside and he could comfort

29. (a) So what did Jehovah claim as his possession, and how was he to show his choice of such? (b) By what other name was Jerusalem called and why, and who would reside there?

30. How and when did Jehovah "feel regrets over Zion"?

himself. He could now feel sorrow for the object of his indignation and now feel free to show pity toward it and comfort it. Thus, without having to admit any mistake, Jehovah felt regrets for Zion at the end of the seventy years of desolation. Without having to undo any misdeed on His part and without having to make reparations for any unwarranted injuries on His part, Jehovah mercifully brought his exiled people back and had them reconstruct Zion. The time of destruction was past; the time of construction was here! What a display of divine pity!

³¹ At the time of the razing of Zion or Jerusalem in the year 607 B.C.E., the enemy Edomites had egged on the Babylonian conquerors by saying: "Lay it bare! Lay it bare to the foundation within it!" (Psalm 137:7) The gloating enemies thought that its God, Jehovah, had cast off the city forever, and, like them, He would never choose Jerusalem again. But Jehovah could not forget or deny his gracious prophecies concerning Jerusalem. In faithfulness he did "actually choose Jerusalem," and that choice held good years later, in 519 B.C.E., at the time of the first vision of Zechariah. Not only was Jerusalem constructed again by his own people, but the foundation of his temple was laid there and work on the superstructure was already begun. When that temple was fully constructed, then Jehovah would put his own name there, his presence by his spirit would be there, his full worship would be resumed there. This would prove to all the nations that Jehovah had chosen Jerusalem. So, even in 519 B.C.E., it was time to call out his choice!

³² Has there been anything similar to this in modern times? Certainly not so with regard to modern Jerusalem over which the Arabs and the Israelis fought both in 1948 and in 1967. The orthodox Jews wail or recite prayers down below at the Western Wall (*Kótel Ma'arabí*), whereas on the platform about sixty feet

31. (a) What nation had called out for Jerusalem to be razed to the ground, and in what belief? (b) When was it the time to call out the choice of Jehovah as to a city?

32. Why can we not look to modern-day Jerusalem for a fulfillment of Zechariah 1:17 today?

above them the Mohammedans worship at the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque el-Aksa. To the south of this the Biblical Mount Zion lies desolate outside the present city walls. With all due regard for the facts of the situation, Jehovah has not chosen this earthly Jerusalem as a place for his name and worship. We must look elsewhere for the modern-day fulfillment of Zechariah 1:17.

³³ On earth today there is no temple-building being carried on by Zerubbabel as governor of Jerusalem. But there is the Greater Zerubbabel, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ glorified in the heavens. In Jehovah's name he governs at what Hebrews 12:22 calls "Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." At the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 he was installed as reigning King there and he governs over those who are his true and faithful disciples on earth. Such disciples do not make up any part of Christendom, by any means, for she is made up of hundreds of conflicting religious sects and adheres to the United Nations as the preserver of world peace and security and her hands are full of bloodshed from the unchristian wars of this world. The heavenly Greater Zerubbabel governs over those who worship the same God that he does, namely, Jehovah of armies. These worshipers are also under obligation to be the Christian witnesses of this God, Jehovah. (Isaiah 43:10-12; 44:8) They are the ones identified with the "heavenly Jerusalem," the seat of government of the Greater Zerubbabel.

³⁴ Because of all these Scriptural connections, such Christian witnesses of Jehovah on earth represent the Mount Zion up above and the "heavenly Jerusalem." What has happened to them has been like happening to the figurative Zion or Jerusalem. In the turmoil of World War I (1914-1918) they were persecuted by the so-called Christians of Christendom for trying to hold fast to the Kingdom of the Greater Zerubbabel, Jesus Christ. Their public witnessing to Jehovah's Messianic

33. (a) What today corresponds with Zerubbabel governing over ancient Jerusalem? (b) What about those over whom this one governs?

34. During World War I of 1914-1918, how did it appear as if Jehovah had abandoned his spiritual Zion or Jerusalem?

kingdom was obstructed and reduced to a minimum. They were not fighting against one another with carnal weapons by fighting on the opposing sides of war-mad Christendom, but their international cooperation with one another was broken up by the enemies in breaking up their international organization. Because of the worldwide affliction upon them, it was as if Jehovah their God had abandoned the spiritual Zion or Jerusalem.

³⁵ Quite suddenly World War I came to an end by an armistice in November of 1918. The postwar period set in. Peacetime activities could now be resumed. In December of that year the religionists of Christendom began taking their stand in favor of an international organization for world peace and security. This was notably made publicly clear by the declaration of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America that the proposed League of Nations is "the political expression of the kingdom of God on earth." This even though all the nations of the proposed League were stained with the blood of the millions of war dead. Was the Federal Council correct in its high-sounding declaration, so piously religious in its wording? For a certainty it was the time for Jehovah of armies to make an expression of Himself. Whom would he choose as his representatives of spiritual Zion or Jerusalem? Christendom with her bloodstained persecutors, or the persecuted adherents to the kingdom of his Greater Zerubbabel, Jesus Christ? Whom would he organize as His witnesses?

³⁶ Does the religious disorganization and deterioration of Christendom today overwhelmingly prove that back there in the postwar year of 1919 she was the choice of Jehovah of armies? Do the facts of today prove beyond all contradiction that He has filled her "cities" with His goodness to overflowing? Does his spiritual temple stand rebuilt within her as a house of

35. At the beginning of the postwar period, Jehovah's choice as to who should represent his spiritual Zion or Jerusalem was between what groups?

36. What questions do we ask today to prove whether Christendom was Jehovah's choice as his organization right after World War I?

worship, that is to say, is she through her hundreds of religious sects worshipping Jehovah as God at his spiritual temple? Who will come forward as the witnesses of Christendom to offer the unequivocal answer Yes? In the absence of such witnesses we look elsewhere.

³⁷ Where? It is not just the name that draws our attention in the direction of Jehovah's plainly evident choice. What does draw attention to the chosen ones is how they have organized for His postwar service and what they have both proclaimed and what they have uncompromisingly stood for on the world stage. Also, what they have done! Yes, too, the "mercies" with which Jehovah of armies has "returned" to them. This we can appreciate when we consider the spiritual state from which they have arisen in the postwar period. From a state of apparently being disowned, rejected, by God they have arisen. Yes, from the state of being persecuted almost to the death by Christendom, who persecuted them not just during World War I but also during World War II and in between those bloodbaths of the world, all in the effort to break up their religious organization and ruin them permanently as an irritating religious problem. Who, then, are such objects of religious persecution and hostility, but also of divine "mercies"?

³⁸ The historical facts since World War I of 1914-1918 identify them. Their role on the international scene today marks them out in bold relief. They are the Christian witnesses bearing the name of the God whom they worship and serve, Jehovah. From the religiously crippled state in which the postwar year of 1919 found this internationally despised group, this remnant of dedicated, baptized, spirit-anointed Christians stepped forth in Jehovah's service upon the world stage of action. When the world, political, religious, military and social, was going over to the espousal of the League of Nations, this anointed remnant stood firm for Jehovah's Messianic kingdom as the only hope for all hu-

37. What is it, as respects a change of condition, that draws our attention in the right direction of Jehovah's choice?

38. Who on earth in the postwar period has proved to be Jehovah's choice, and by what identifying features?

manity and entered upon a course of preaching "this good news of the kingdom" as never before in their earthly career. Their preaching of "this good news" has by now proved to be just as Jesus Christ in Matthew 24:14 foretold that it would be: "in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." Yes, in 165 languages!

³⁹ This noteworthy exploit in world annals has been accomplished not by human strength, ability, ingenuity, courage and fortitude on their part alone. It is primarily because Jehovah of armies has chosen them for foretold service and witness. Nor just because they were wholly dedicated to him as disciples of Jesus Christ, but because he had shown mercy upon them through Jesus Christ and had now "returned" to them with "mercies." By faithfully following in Christ's footsteps they are approaching "Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." With greater understanding and discernment than ever previously they appreciate Jehovah's spiritual temple and they are worshiping him there, rendering service as spiritual underpriests under their heavenly High Priest Jesus Christ. In their worship there they have now been joined by an innumerable "great crowd" of peaceable sheeplike persons out of all nations, peoples, tribes and languages. Just as foretold! (Revelation 7:9-17) In 207 countries and island groups we find them.

⁴⁰ They do not have political communities such as cities. Their figurative "cities" are religious congregations of dedicated, baptized disciples of Jesus Christ, the Greater Zerubbabel. (Matthew 28:19, 20) These are organized according to theocratic rule as outlined in the inspired Holy Scriptures, and, like the cities of ancient Israel, these congregations have each a local presbytery or "body of elders." There are also "ministerial servants" (*diákonoi*) to assist each body of elders. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; 4:14; Titus 1:5-9; Philippians 1:1; 1 Peter

39. (a) This exploit is due to the fact that Jehovah has returned where and with what? (b) To what have these approached, and where do they render sacred service, being now joined by whom?

40. (a) Why may Jehovah call these congregations "my cities," and how are they organized? (b) In what way do those "cities" "overflow with goodness"?

5:1-4) Jehovah can appropriately call these Christian congregations "my cities," because he is really responsible for their organization and growth and they are unreservedly dedicated to Him through Jesus Christ. An investigation of these figurative "cities" of Jehovah reveals that they "overflow with goodness" from Him, in a spiritual sense. To judge from all the accumulated evidence, Jehovah of armies has chosen them as representative of his heavenly Jerusalem. Praise to Him, for the prophecy of Zechariah 1:16, 17 has had such fulfillment!

THE SECOND VISION

⁴¹ What, though, about the persecutors and would-be destroyers of the dedicated worshipers of Jehovah of armies? As we look at the world conditions today, we can observe what has already befallen them. But the present state with the persecutors is not the end of the matter. With a view to illustrating what is finally to happen to them, the prophet Zechariah was given another vision right on the heels of the first one, on that same twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month (Shebat) in 519 B.C.E., in the second year of the reign of King Darius I of Persia. The Medo-Persian Empire was the Fourth World Power of Bible history, and this second vision should have been of interest to it. The viewer, Zechariah, tells us: "And I proceeded to raise my eyes and see; and, look! there were four horns. So I said to the angel who was speaking with me: 'What are these?' In turn he said to me: 'These are the horns that dispersed Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.'"—Zechariah 1:18, 19.

⁴² The prophet Zechariah knew that in the inspired Hebrew Scriptures a horn is used to symbolize a governmental power of a nation or empire. Those four symbolic horns would not necessarily picture four individual nations or empires that had till then dispersed

41. (a) What must be said as to whether what has already befallen the persecutors is the end of the matter? (b) In his second vision on Shebat 24, about what did Zechariah ask?

42. What did those "horns" symbolize, and what is the significance of there being four of them?

the peoples of Judah, Israel and Jerusalem and ruined their cities. In Scripture, the number four has a symbolic meaning. For example, in using four with respect to the winds, the four winds of the heavens would refer to all parts or quarters of the heavens. Or just the four winds would refer to all directions of the earth. (Ezekiel 37:9; Daniel 7:2) The four wheels belonging to Jehovah's celestial chariot as seen by the prophet Ezekiel would suggest a well-balanced riding base for the divine chariot. (Ezekiel 1:15, 21) Four horns could accordingly mean all the governmental powers that were concerned or involved, and not just a literal four of such, operating from all directions and leaving no imbalance because of having omitted any quarter.

⁴³ So not just Egypt, Assyria and Babylon as world powers had been implicated with dispersing Judah, Israel and Jerusalem, but others also like the nation of Edom and other national allies or collaborators in such wicked action against Jehovah's chosen people. They were all persecutors. Those political organizations used their power, particularly military power, in a vicious, violent way toward Jehovah's chosen people. —Zechariah 1:15.

⁴⁴ Those pagan political powers had all of them gone beyond what Jehovah of armies had in mind for the disciplining of his heedless, disobedient people. They used the leeway that was given to them just to express their ill-will, resentment, envy and spite upon Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. For that reason Jehovah of armies said to the angel in Zechariah's hearing: "With great indignation I am feeling indignant against the nations that are at ease." (Zechariah 1:15) How did Jehovah purpose to express his great indignation against those nations that felt at ease because of having satisfied their feeling of revenge or malice upon His people? He discloses how in the further part of the second vision unfolded before Zechariah's eyes: He says:

43. Hence, besides Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, what other political powers would be included under the symbol of those "four horns"?

44. Why did Jehovah feel indignant with great indignation against the Gentile nations that were at ease?

⁴⁵ "Furthermore, Jehovah showed me four craftsmen. At that I said: 'What are these coming to do?' And he went on to say: 'These are the horns that dispersed Judah to such an extent that no one at all raised his head; and these others will come to set them trembling, to cast down the horns of the nations that are lifting up a horn against the land of Judah, in order to disperse her.'"—Zechariah 1:20, 21, *NW; JP; Ro.*

⁴⁶ These craftsmen or artisans by being four in number offset the four horns. Their number would have the same significance as that in the case of the four horns. They would picture all the "craftsmen" involved in the matter and organized in a balanced, fully adequate way. Being craftsmen or artisans, they were not destructionists. Primarily they were constructionists. But they could be used in an operation of destruction, and they could use their working utensils to that end. This was their mission in the vision. But whose craftsmen were they, or who sent them? Evidently Jehovah of armies, for they came to destroy the power of the four horns that had dispersed Jehovah's people, Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. What they used in order to do this were doubtless the hammers of their trade. Woe, then, to the persecuting "horns"! There was to be divine judgment executed against those persecutors.

PERSECUTORS COME IN FOR DIVINE ATTENTION

⁴⁷ Jehovah's great indignation did not fail to pour down upon the persecutor nations. Ancient history shows that the nations that maliciously mistreated Jehovah's chosen people of old did not fare well thereafter; they suffered calamity. Where are they today? This calamitous outcome was not just the natural course of world affairs without any overriding design. It was the outworking of the divine indignation against them. The lesson of that should not be lost on us today.

⁴⁵ What did Jehovah show in vision to Zechariah as his instruments to express his indignation against the nations at ease?

⁴⁶ (a) Why were there four such "craftsmen," and, despite their profession, what was their mission? (b) Who sent them, and what did this mean for the persecutors?

⁴⁷ How is what happened to those persecutor nations afterward to be viewed—as the natural course of world affairs or what?

⁴⁸ In the first century of our Common Era spiritual Israel came into existence under the leadership of the God-sent Messiah, Jesus of Bethlehem-Judah. The nation of natural, circumcised Israel was thus displaced. Just as Ishmael was displaced by Isaac the true heir of Abraham and became a persecutor of Isaac, so natural Israel persecuted Christ's disciples who made up spiritual Israel. Natural Israel fared badly for this, its holy city Jerusalem being destroyed in the year 70 C.E. and the survivors of the province of Judah being dispersed, largely by being carried off captive. (Galatians 4:21-31; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16; Genesis 21:1-14) After the burning of Rome in the year 64 C.E., Rome took up the persecution of the Christian spiritual Israel. She continued this persecution, not only as mistress of the pagan Roman Empire, but as religious mistress of the Holy Roman Empire. That Holy Roman Empire went out of existence in the days of Napoleon Bonaparte in the early part of the nineteenth century. Yet Rome continues as the head of the largest, strongest, most populous part of religious Christendom. But in that capacity Rome has been set "trembling."

⁴⁹ In the eighteenth century Rome as the Sixth World Power of Bible history had to bow to the British Empire as the Seventh and Greatest World Power of Bible prophecy. Its record discloses that it too has been guilty of persecuting and dispersing the spiritual Israel of Jehovah of armies. In this, too, the United States of America has shared, it being later integrated with the Seventh World Power to form a dual Anglo-American World Power. Such persecution notoriously raged against the remnant of spiritual Israel during World War I, yes, and to even a greater extent during World War II. This had been vividly foretold under prophetic symbols to the exiled prophet Daniel "in the third year of the kingship of Belshazzar the king," that is, before the fall of ancient Babylon, and thus more than twen-

48. (a) Of whom did Rome become the persecutor in the first century C.E., and how has she continued as such? (b) Of what part of Christendom is she the head today?

49. Who succeeded to Rome as a persecutor World Power, and by means of whom and when was this foretold?

ty years before Zechariah's vision of the four horns and the four craftsmen. (Daniel 8:1, 9-12, 23-26) Hence Jehovah knew that there would be need of his symbolic "craftsmen" to "cast down the horns of the nations" more than 2,490 years after Zechariah's vision.

⁵⁰ In modern times not only the two-horned Anglo-American dual world power has taken part in dispersing spiritual Israel by persecutions and oppressions, but also other modern symbolic "horns." One of the most outrageous instances of this in recent times was the sadistic mistreatment of Jehovah's Christian witnesses in the Third German Reich under the Nazi Fuehrer Adolf Hitler from 1933 to 1945 C.E. The other Axis Powers joined in with him in such malicious oppression of spiritual Israelites and their dedicated companions. Even since then other political "horns" who make up a composite "king of the north" have pushed and gored and threatened Jehovah's faithful worshipers.

⁵¹ "In the third year of Cyrus the king of Persia," after the fall of Babylon, Jehovah's angel foretold to the prophet Daniel the infliction of such persecution upon Jehovah's Christian witnesses by the symbolic "king of the north" in our times. (Daniel 10:1, 18-21; 11:29-36, 44, 45) From this it is apparent that Jehovah was thinking not just of "horns" that had persecuted his typical people in the past but also of "horns" that would persecute his antitypical people in the future, in our modern times.

⁵² Thus Jehovah was using a past case of persecution of his typical people to forewarn the modern nations that "are lifting up a horn" against the rightful spiritual estate of his faithful worshipers. Against all such nations He would use his symbolic "craftsmen." The visionary "craftsmen" being four in number calls to our minds what the Christian apostle John saw in vision near the end of the first century C.E. He tells it,

50. Besides the Seventh World Power, what other "horns" have engaged in persecuting spiritual Israelites in recent times?

51. When and by whom was persecution by the "king of the north" foretold, and so what did Jehovah have in mind about persecution?
52. Thus Jehovah was using a past case of his typical people to forewarn whom today, and how was this indicated in John's vision in Revelation 7:1-3?

saying: "After this I saw four angels standing upon the four corners of the earth, holding tight the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow upon the earth or upon the sea or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the sunrising, having a seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying: 'Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until after we have sealed the slaves of our God in their foreheads.'"—Revelation 7:1-3.

⁵³ The release of the four winds will result in a world-wide storm that will harm all the nations of the earth and destroy the symbolic "horns" that they have lifted up against the spiritual Israelites who are sealed with the "seal of the living God." This will produce the same result as that pictured by the "four craftsmen" in hammering and smashing the symbolic "four horns" of all the nations. In sharp contrast with all the "mercies" with which Jehovah returns to his persecuted worshipers, there will come the execution of his merciless judgments upon their persecutors. Putting our full trust in the divine assurance of this will strengthen all the persecuted ones to endure to the end.

53. In what will the loosing of those "four winds" result as respects the "four horns," but what strengthens the persecuted worshipers of Jehovah to endure?

CHAPTER

9

GROWTH AND PROTECTION OF GOD'S CAPITAL ORGANIZATION

THE GREATEST organizer in all existence is "The First Great Cause," the Cre-

ator of all the things made. His matchless organizing ability is amply demonstrated by all his works in heaven and on earth. In first-century Rome (Italy) there were those who worshiped, not the national god Jupiter, but the living Almighty God. To these worshipers it was written, about the middle of the first century C.E.: "What may be known about God is manifest among them, for God made it manifest to them. For his invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship, so that they are inexcusable." (Romans 1:19, 20) From the creation of the world of mankind onward, intelligent humans should have been able to perceive that there was a Creator, God, even though he was invisible and even without his speaking to any of them out of the invisible. By the visible works that he made and arranged so orderly, they should have perceived that he is a perfect Organizer.

² Since this God could organize unintelligent creations so perfectly in the visible heavens and in the amazing ecology of the earth, he could and would organize all his living intelligent creations. It would be in the interest of universal peace and harmony and in order to prevent anarchy that He would organize

1. (a) Who is the greatest Organizer? (b) According to Romans 1:19, 20, what should intelligent creatures on earth have perceived about that Organizer?

2, 3. (a) What basis is there for believing that He would organize his intelligent creatures with minds of their own? (b) What warning did He give through Enoch about his invisible heavenly organization?

such creatures with minds of their own. He visibly showed his organizing ability more than three thousand four hundred years ago when he organized the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai in Arabia and gave them a set of laws with which none of all the pagan nations had anything to compare. For immeasurable time before that he had an invisible organization, made up of heavenly spirit creatures. Enoch, the seventh man in line of descent from the first man, gave us people on earth a warning concerning this invisible organization, saying:

³ "Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him."—Jude 14, 15; Genesis 5:18-24; Hebrews 11:5.

⁴ Perfect man and woman in the Edenic garden that Jehovah God planted for their home were part of His universal organization. They were the earthly visible part of it. And since the earth is spoken of as the footstool of Jehovah who thrones in the heavens, perfect man and woman were the lowest part of his universal organization. (Isaiah 66:1) When man was driven out of the garden of Eden because of rebelliously sinning against Jehovah God, he was driven out of God's holy universal organization. Holy cherubs from out of his invisible organization appeared at the entrance of the garden of Eden and prevented disobedient man and woman from going back in. (Genesis 3:1-24) When God's Messianic kingdom restores an Edenlike Paradise to earth, obedient ones of all mankind will be elevated to human perfection and holiness and thereafter Jehovah God the great Organizer will make humankind once again a part of his universal organization. (Luke 23:43) Then there will be sublime harmony between heaven and earth.

4. When was mankind part of God's universal organization, when did they get out of it, and when will mankind be restored to that organization?

⁵ The perfect Organizer has more in mind than just to restore the earthly visible part of his universal organization. In the Book of his recorded purposes, the Holy Bible, he informs us of his grand purpose to establish a capital organization over all his intelligent creatures. Logically, that capital organization will be in the holy heavens, next below the Most High God himself. Most remarkable of all, those whom He takes to make up this capital organization are drawn out from mankind here on God's footstool the earth. What an exaltation for these! In the last book of the Holy Bible we have an illustration of this.

⁶ We remember that in the days of King David, when the nation of Israel was the visible theocratic organization of Jehovah God, the city of Jerusalem was made the royal capital of this theocratic organization. (2 Samuel 5:1-10) The capital quality of the city of Jerusalem was tremendously enhanced when Jehovah's Ark of the Covenant was transferred and lodged in a tent near King David's palace in Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 6:11-14; 7:1-3) By his spirit Jehovah throned in that sacred tent as Israel's invisible heavenly King.

⁷ Appropriately, then, the name of earthly Jerusalem is adapted to Jehovah's capital organization. Only it becomes called a New Jerusalem, of course. The Holy Bible could not be completed without this glorious fact's being called to our attention. In Revelation, chapter twenty-one, the application of the name is made and the organization to whom it is applied is identified. The aged Christian apostle John writes and tells us:

⁸ "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and

5. What does God purpose to set up over all his intelligent creation, and from where are the component members of this taken?

6. In David's days, what was made the capital of Jehovah's visible organization, and how was the capital quality thereof enhanced in David's days?

7-10. (a) The name of what city is adapted to God's capital organization? (b) How does the apostle John show the application of that name, and how does he describe the capital organization?

prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say: 'Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.'

⁹ "And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls which were full of the seven last plagues, and he spoke with me and said: 'Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.' So he carried me away in the power of the spirit to a great and lofty mountain, and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God and having the glory of God. Its radiance was like a most precious stone, as a jasper stone shining crystal-clear. It had a great and lofty wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names were inscribed which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. On the east were three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. The wall of the city also had twelve foundation stones, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁰ "And I did not see a temple in it, for Jehovah God the Almighty is its temple, also the Lamb is. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God lighted it up, and its lamp was the Lamb. And the nations will walk by means of its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. And its gates will not be closed at all by day, for night will not exist there. And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But anything not sacred and anyone that carries on a disgusting thing and a lie will in no way enter into it; only those written in the Lamb's scroll of life will." —Revelation 21:1-4, 9-14, 22-27.

¹¹ There is no mistaking of it. That "holy city," New

11. What body does that New Jerusalem picture, and what nationality do the members thereof have and on what official level?

Jerusalem, pictures the clean, undefiled, holy Christian congregation. It is composed entirely of spiritual Israelites, Jews inwardly, circumcised in their hearts. True, the "twelve apostles of the Lamb" were natural, circumcised Jews or Israelites; but from the festival day of Pentecost of the year 33 C.E. onward they all became spiritual Israelites or Jews, for then Jehovah's holy spirit was poured upon them through the Lamb Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:12 to 2:42) These spiritual Israelites are 144,000 in number (12 x 12 x 1,000), grouped into twelve tribes, as it were, the names of these twelve tribes being inscribed over the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem. (Revelation 7:4-8) Calling attention to their official position is the fact that they are called 'the kings of the earth.' (Revelation 20:4, 6) They are higher than "the nations" on earth who walk by means of the light of the New Jerusalem. —Revelation 5:10.

¹² The name New Jerusalem indicates that it would be a capital organization, resembling Jerusalem in the days of King David and of his son King Solomon. But what is there to show that the New Jerusalem of 144,000 spiritual Israelites would be the capital organization over all of Jehovah's realm of creation? It is this: The New Jerusalem is called "the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17) To this figurative Lamb, it is said: "You were slaughtered and with your blood you bought persons for God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and you made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God, and they are to rule as kings over the earth." (Revelation 5:9, 10) This once slaughtered Lamb is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Jehovah God. In agreement with that fact, one of the "twelve apostles of the Lamb" wrote to his fellow Christians and said:

¹³ "It was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were delivered from your fruitless form of conduct received by tradition from your fore-

12, 13. (a) What in that Revelation description shows that the New Jerusalem is to be a capital organization? (b) How does one of the symbolic foundation stones identify the bride's husband?

fathers. But it was with precious blood, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, even Christ's."—1 Peter 1:18, 19; 1 Corinthians 5:7.

¹⁴ As a husband, the Lamb Jesus Christ is the head of his bride-wife, New Jerusalem: "a husband is head of his wife." (Ephesians 5:23) Nevertheless, the bride-wife is made up of spirit-begotten sons of God, who are not only 'heirs of God,' but also "joint heirs with Christ." (Romans 8:16-18) Such heirdom elevates the station of the bride-wife, and she shares with her husband in his glory and honor in the heavens. What, then, is the heavenly station of her "husband," the Lamb Jesus Christ? Peter, one of the "twelve apostles of the Lamb," says of him:

¹⁵ "Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God, he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit. . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is at God's right hand, for he went his way to heaven; and angels and authorities and powers were made subject to him."—1 Peter 3:18, 21, 22.

¹⁶ To other "joint heirs with Christ," the apostle Paul writes in even greater detail, saying: "Keep this mental attitude in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he was existing in God's form, gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake. For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly

14, 15. (a) Who is the Head of that bride-wife? (b) Because of what heirdom of the members thereof is the station of the bride-wife elevated, and what does Peter state is the station of her Husband?

16. How does Paul, at Phillipians 2:5-11, go into greater detail as to the present station of the bride-wife's Husband?

acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."—Philippians 2:5-11.

¹⁷ No creature could get any higher than to the "right hand of God," and the "superior position" to which God exalted him was to that right-hand position. (Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1, 2; 10:12, 13; 12:2) This put the Lamb Jesus Christ in the capital position over all the rest of God's creation. Of course, the Lamb Jesus Christ is not an "organization" in himself. But since Jehovah God gives him a bride-wife, namely, the congregation of 144,000 joint heirs, the Most High God creates a capital organization over all his holy universal organization. In this capital organization that the Supreme Being establishes, Jesus Christ is His High Priest and the bride-wife class are 144,000 underpriests, "a royal priesthood." (1 Peter 2:9) Scripturally, then, beyond all contradiction, the Most High God Jehovah now has a capital organization through which he deals with all the rest of his universal organization.

THE THIRD VISION

¹⁸ This Scriptural understanding of Jehovah's capital organization to which the name Jerusalem is attached will aid us in understanding the third vision that the prophet Zechariah had on that wonderful twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month (Shebat) of the year 519 B.C.E. Zechariah had just had his vision about the four craftsmen whom Jehovah sent to "cast down the horns of the nations that are lifting up a horn against the land of Judah, in order to disperse her." This dispersion therefore included Jerusalem, and for that reason she would have to be regathered in Jehovah's fixed time, when he would "return to Jerusalem with mercies." (Zechariah 1:14-21) So the theme

17. (a) In what position did such elevation of God's Son put him, and how did God create a capital "organization"? (b) As to priesthood, what relative positions do Jesus Christ and those of his bride-wife hold?

18, 19. (a) According to Zechariah's previous vision, what would need to be done for Jerusalem? (b) In his third vision, what did the man with the measuring rope want to do?

of Zechariah's third vision logically follows. Here is how this vision proceeded:

¹⁹ "And I proceeded to raise my eyes and see; and, look! there was a man, and in his hand a measuring rope. So I said: 'Where are you going?' In turn he said to me: 'To measure Jerusalem, in order to see what her breadth amounts to and what her length amounts to.'"
—Zechariah 2:1, 2.

²⁰ The bearer of the measuring rope proved to be a young man, and naturally he has still quite a number of things to learn or things on which to be informed. With all the verve of youth he was interested in the full restoration of Jerusalem and was eager to see how large she would become or how extensive she ought to become. Hence his measuring rope. There was at least the Jerusalem of that year 519 B.C.E. that could be measured. However, the walls of the city had not yet been rebuilt, nor would they be rebuilt for a long time to come. As long afterward as the ninth lunar month (Chislev) of the year 456 B.C.E., over sixty-three years later, it was reported in the Persian capital Shushan: "The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its very gates have been burned with fire." (Nehemiah 1:1-3) Possibly, then, the Jerusalem of 519 B.C.E. had not yet reached the limits of the former preexile city. Or, possibly, the restored city might be extended beyond those former limits. The young man with the measuring rope may have had in mind to measure off what should be the final limits of the second Jerusalem.

²¹ Was it the proper thing for an enthusiastic young man to set the limits for the Jerusalem to which Jehovah was returning with mercies? Let us see, from what Zechariah now reports: "And, look! the angel who was speaking with me was going forth, and there was another angel going forth to meet him. Then he said to him: 'Run, speak to the young man over there, saying, "'As open rural country Jerusalem will be

20. (a) What did his being a young man indicate about him? (b) What did Jerusalem's walls not yet having been rebuilt allow for this young man to measure off?

21. What did the one angel tell the other angel to advise the young man with the measuring rope?

inhabited, because of the multitude of men and domestic animals in the midst of her. And I myself shall become to her,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'a wall of fire all around, and a glory is what I shall become in the midst of her.' " " " " —Zechariah 2:3-5.

²² Was Jehovah of armies there talking about the literal earthly Jerusalem of Zechariah's days? The later facts indicate plainly that He was not doing so. Why not? Because Jerusalem ceased to be inhabited "as open rural country." Sixty-four years later the walls of Jerusalem were completely rebuilt under the leadership of Governor Nehemiah, in 455 B.C.E. Also, those rebuilt walls had twelve gates, as reported by Governor Nehemiah. (Nehemiah 2:3 to 6:15; 7:1) There were the Valley Gate, the Gate of the Ash-heaps and the Fountain Gate on the south; the Water Gate, the Horse Gate and the Inspection Gate on the east; the Gate of the Guard, the Sheep Gate and the Fish Gate on the north; the Gate of the Old City, the Gate of Ephraim and the Corner Gate on the west. (Nehemiah 2:13, 14; 3:26, 28, 31; 12:39; 3:32, 3, 6; 2 Chronicles 25:23) That city was destroyed by the Roman legions in the year 70 C.E. (Luke 21:20-24) The third Jerusalem, which is standing in this year 1972, is also walled and has gates on all four sides. But a modern Jerusalem has been built alongside it and its population is reported to be 275,000 as a whole.

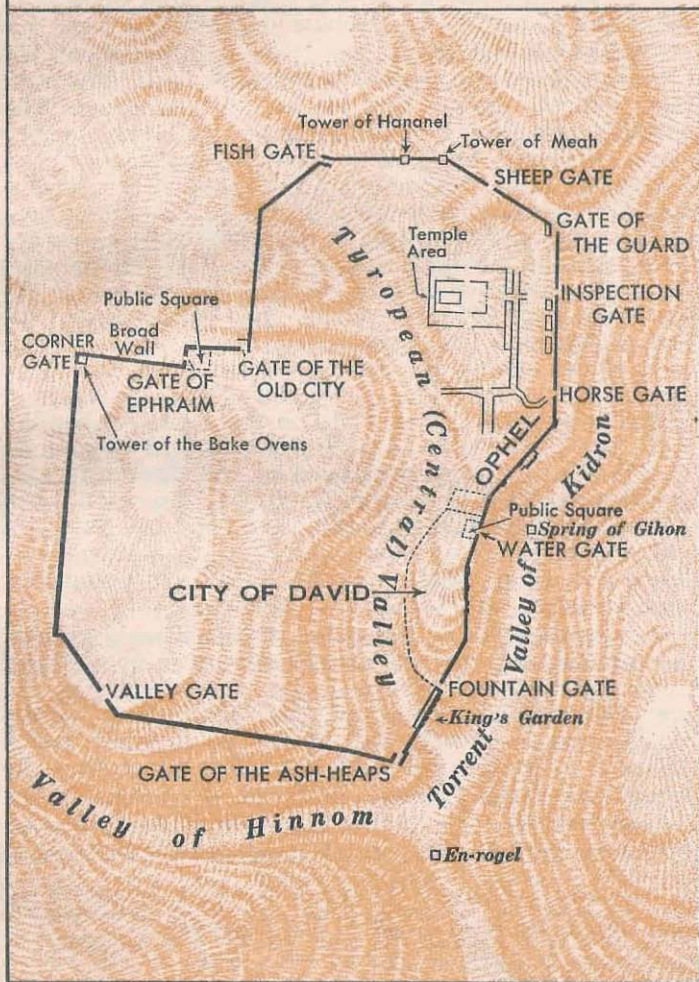
²³ Even though the Jerusalem of today has expanded far out beyond the old walled city even into "open rural country," no informed observer will argue, not even the Israelis themselves, that Jehovah of armies has become to her "a wall of fire all around" and a "glory . . . in the midst of her." For protection the Jerusalem of the Republic of Israel is trusting in the United Nations, of which it has been a member since 1949, also in the military aid supplied to the Republic

22. From what took place in the days of Governor Nehemiah and also after Jerusalem's destruction in 70 C.E., are we to understand this information to the young man to be in a literal way?

23. (a) How is it apparent that Zechariah 2:4, 5 is not fulfilled in modern-day Jerusalem? (b) Where, then, should we look for the prophecy's fulfillment?

JERUSALEM

IN THE DAYS OF THE RETURN



of Israel by friendly nations such as the mostly Gentile United States of America. All this obliges us to look to the spiritual Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the divine prophecy of Zechariah 2:4, 5. The prophecy has to do with the remnant of the spiritual Israelites, who are yet to become part of the heavenly New Jerusalem under the Greater Governor Zerubbabel, Jesus Christ, the capital organization of Jehovah's universal organization.

²⁴ The postwar year of 1919 C.E. found a remnant of the spiritual Israelites surviving on the earth and eagerly desiring to preach "this good news of the kingdom" world wide as a witness to all the nations. (Matthew 24:14) In that faithful remnant the heavenly New Jerusalem under Christ was represented. Because of what they represented on earth, these spiritual Israelites were the ones who were obligated to respond to the rousing prophetic command: "Arise, O woman, shed forth light, for your light has come and upon you the very glory of Jehovah has shone forth. For, look! darkness itself will cover the earth, and thick gloom the national groups; but upon you Jehovah will shine forth, and upon you his own glory will be seen. And nations will certainly go to your light, and kings to the brightness of your shining forth. And to you the sons of those afflicting you must go, bowing down; and all those treating you disrespectfully must bend down at the very soles of your feet, and they will have to call you the city of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

²⁵ "And as for your people, all of them will be righteous; to time indefinite they will hold possession of the land, the sprout of my planting, the work of my hands, for me to be beautified. The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time."—Isaiah 60:1-3, 14, 21, 22.

24. After World War I, who were the only ones surviving on earth who were obligated to respond to the rousing call of Isaiah 60:1-3 because of Jehovah's glory?

25. To what extent would Jehovah speed up the growth of his organization?

²⁶ The call to the spiritual "city of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel," was most fitting at the time. Back there in the year 1919 C.E. the outlook for the peoples of the earth was gloomy, dark. Today it was never darker! Back there it was the time for the representative remnant of the New Jerusalem to arise from the low, beaten-down condition to which the persecutions during World War I had brought them, and to shine, to "shed forth light." To shine with what? To shed forth what light? The only light that the faithful remnant had was, not any worldly enlightenment of this so-called Brain Age, but the "glory of Jehovah" that had shone forth upon his devoted remnant. Glory is resplendent, magnificent, beaming with light. Jehovah had glorified them by delivering them from bondage and abject subjection to their enemies, religious, political, military. He had glorified the remnant by appointing the members of it to be the witnesses to His sovereignty and the ambassadors of His established Messianic kingdom. They must let this "glory of Jehovah" upon them be seen everywhere by acting as his witnesses and Kingdom ambassadors.

²⁷ To whom, then, is it that Jehovah needs to become a "wall of fire all around"? Not the New Jerusalem in the invisible heavens, but the remnant of the New Jerusalem as that glorified remnant goes out into this bedarkened world and acts as the witnesses of Jehovah of armies and as his Kingdom ambassadors.

²⁸ A literal stone wall like that which surrounds Old Jerusalem in the Republic of Israel, of what protection could such a wall be in this day of nuclear weapons and missiles with nuclear warheads? The idea is ridiculous! The stone walls that were built around Jerusalem by Governor Nehemiah in 455 B.C.E. (and later) did not successfully resist the Roman legions

26. Why was that rousing call to the representatives of the "city of Jehovah" most fitting back in 1919 C.E., and how had Jehovah glorified these?

27. To whom, then, does Jehovah need to become a "wall of fire all around," and why?

28. Why is Jehovah's "wall of fire" around his remnant more effective in this Age of Violence than stone walls as now around Old Jerusalem?

in the year 70 C.E. In this Age of Violence, nuclear firepower must be met by fire. Jehovah of armies can meet it that way. He can be and he has promised to become a "wall of fire" all around the faithful remnant of the New Jerusalem. Who, then, can effectively assault them?

²⁹ The glorified remnant of spiritual Israelites are therefore not trusting in man-made or natural defenses. They look to Jehovah of armies to be a "wall of fire" all around them, even though it is invisible to them and to their enemies. They remember that the "horses and war chariots of fire" with which the mountains around the town of Dothan were full were invisible to the prophet Elisha's servant and to the Syrian war forces that surrounded Dothan to capture Elisha. (2 Kings 6:13-17) They get their spiritual eyes opened to discern that God Almighty can, by invisible means, protect them and that it would mean fiery destruction for any enemy to try crashing through the "wall of fire" and attacking them. "For our God is also a consuming fire."—Hebrews 12:29.

³⁰ Why do interested persons like the young man with the measuring rope think to measure off a limit on the growth of Jehovah's capital organization? Do not fear that otherwise the "city" will get so big and extensive that it will not be possible to build an adequate protective "wall" around it! For a time back there in 1919 C.E., after World War I was all over, the surviving remnant of spiritual Israelites thought that the harvest work that Jesus predicted for the "conclusion of the system of things" was finished and that all there was for them to do henceforth on earth was a "gleaning work," gathering up just a few left-overs or overlooked ones. (Matthew 13:39) They did not for the moment discern that the spiritual harvest was only really beginning and that there were many more of the "sons of the kingdom" to be collected into

29. What protection of Elisha at Dothan do the spiritual Israelites recall, and what do they discern would result to the enemies in trying to crash through the "wall" that God is about them?

30. How was the surviving remnant inclined in 1919 C.E. to limit the growth of the organization, and what was the real fact about the "harvest" of "sons of the kingdom"?

God's capital organization, "sons" whom their preconceived ideas had not allowed for. In fact, the full number of the remnant needed to bring to the full the foreordained company of 144,000 "sons of the kingdom" was to be collected during this "conclusion of the system of things."

³¹ Apparently, in Zechariah's vision of 519 B.C.E., the young man with the measuring rope wanted to measure off what the length and breadth of the restored Jerusalem should grow to be. At that time the population of Jerusalem was apparently not too large. Let us remember that only 42,360 Israelites and some 7,560 servants and singers, or a total of some 49,920, had returned from exile in Babylon in 537 B.C.E. and that later, in Governor Nehemiah's time, it was arranged to "bring in one out of every ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city." So Jerusalem had only several thousand inhabitants in Zechariah's day. (Ezra 2:64, 65; Nehemiah 7:66, 67; 11:1, 2) Hence when Jehovah's angel told the young man that "as open rural country Jerusalem will be inhabited, because of the multitude of men and domestic animals in the midst of her," he knew that it was not his business to measure off what should be Jerusalem's length and breadth in order to put a material wall all around it. Its population was to grow according to what Jehovah had in mind for it, and He would safely protect it.

³² In the case of the modern-day remnant of the spiritual heirs of Jehovah's capital organization, the number of members grew as the years went on. Correspondingly, the number of dedicated, baptized Christians who attended the annual celebration of the Lord's Supper and who partook of the emblematic bread and wine increased according to the reports sent in for the record. No matter to what extent the number of Jehovah's remnant of spiritual Israelites increased all around the earth, Jehovah protected them as with a

31. (a) How do we estimate Jerusalem's population in Zechariah's day? (b) How was the young man with the measuring rope made to see that it would be improper for him to put limits on the city's size, because of any fear about it?

32. Although the number of partakers of the emblems at the annual Lord's Supper increased, what was true of Jehovah's protection?

"wall of fire" all around them. Through all these perilous times he preserved them, even through the world's spree of war madness during 1939-1945 C.E., yes, down till the present time.

³³ Also, did Jehovah fulfill to this anointed remnant of heirs of the New Jerusalem his promise: "A glory is what I shall become in the midst of her"? (Zechariah 2:5) He has indeed, for he has glorified himself by being the heavenly Protector in the midst of the persecuted, harassed, opposed remnant. Their surviving despite their being without visible protection of an earthly carnal kind reflects gloriously upon the God whom they worship and in whom they put their trust. They glory in Him and not in men; and after years of bearing witness to his name and Kingdom, they embraced the name by which they have been known world wide since July 26, 1931, namely, Jehovah's witnesses. Through them, and not through any other religious organization on earth today, Jehovah has been made known by name all around the earth. They have conscientiously avoided bringing any reproach upon his holy name. In imitation of his Son Jesus Christ they have endeavored to live up to the rules of conduct set out in his sacred Word, the Holy Bible, obeying Him as ruler rather than men, and this course has brought glory to His name. (Acts 5:29) He is truly *a glory* amidst them!

THE CALL OF THE LIBERATOR

³⁴ Is not the glorious God, Jehovah of armies, a rallying point to which all lovers of pure worship that is undefiled by politics, militarism and commercialism should gather in unity and brotherhood? Yes! And where His glory is seen, there is the place to assemble. He issues the call to assemble, and he liberates his people from religious bondage to Babylon the Great and calls to them to assemble. Since 1919 C.E. the words of his call have rung out: "Hey there! Hey

33. What do the facts show as to whether Jehovah has become a 'glory in the midst of her' as represented by the anointed remnant?

34. Who is the rallying point for lovers of pure worship to assemble, and what call to assemble has rung out since 1919 C.E.?

there! Flee, then, you people, from the land of the north,' is the utterance of Jehovah."—Zechariah 2:6.

³⁵ In the prophet Zechariah's day the "land of the north" was Babylon, the city conquered by the Medes and Persians in the year 539 B.C.E. Babylon really lay to the east of Jerusalem, but, when sending its armies to bring about the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E., Babylon had its armies take the circuitous route and come down against Jerusalem from "the north." (Jeremiah 1:14-16; Ezekiel 21:18-22) Also, the conquered territories under Babylon extended to the north of Jerusalem. When the Jews were carried into exile in the years 617 and 607 B.C.E., they were, so to speak, carried off to the "land of the north." From that land they could be called to flee. This foreshadowed our modern times. During World War I the dedicated, baptized remnant of spiritual Israelites came into bondage to Babylon the Great, that is, to the world empire of false religion. From there it was that Jehovah of armies called the repentant remnant in the year of liberation, 1919 C.E. From there the remnant must flee, now that he had opened the way for them.

³⁶ It was quite a dispersion of the twelve tribes in Israel, Judah and Jerusalem that the "horns" of the Assyrian Empire and the Babylonian Empire had caused as agents of divine discipline for Jehovah's chosen people. So with correctness he could go on to say, as recorded in Zechariah 2:6 (b): "'For in the direction of the four winds of the heavens I have spread you people abroad,' is the utterance of Jehovah." Those Israelites who dodged the conquerors and managed to escape ahead of them fled to the various lands in different directions. In the case of the modern-day remnant of spiritual Israelites, they too were dispersed in all directions, to "the four winds of the heavens." Not necessarily physically or in a bodily

35. (a) What was called "the land of the north" in Zechariah's day, and why so? (b) The fleeing from there foreshadowed what today?

36. (a) How were Jehovah's words, "In the direction of the four winds of the heavens I have spread you people abroad," true back there? (b) How did they become true as to the modern-day remnant?

sense, for it was their God-given spiritual estate on earth from which they were dispersed.

³⁷ Hence the dispersing of them was in a figurative sense. It would mean scattering them into any and every situation or set of circumstances that would keep them from acting within their rightful God-given spiritual estate on earth. This resulted in their being limited in their spiritual privileges, in doing their spiritual work. For instance, government bans on certain literature or on all literature of Jehovah's remnant would be one way of doing it. Or, banning their religious organization. Or, putting some of the Christian spiritual Israelites in military prisons or encampments for their refusing to violate their Christian neutrality toward international conflicts of this world. Or, arresting the officers of their legal corporations and railroading these off to prison or penitentiaries on false charges trumped up because of war hysteria and religious prejudice. Methods of all kinds, in all directions, just to get the remnant of spiritual Israelites away from their God-given spiritual estate and their Christian privileges and activities on that spiritual estate.

³⁸ In the calamities suffered at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the larger part of the Jewish survivors were taken into exile in Babylon and its territories, which included territories taken from the former Assyrian Empire. It was therefore quite fitting for the angel of Jehovah of armies now to cry out: "Hey there, Zion! Make your escape, you who are dwelling with the daughter of Babylon. For this is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Following after the glory he has sent me to the nations that were despoiling you people; for he that is touching you is touching my eyeball. For here I am waving my hand against them, and they will have to become spoil to their slaves.' And you people will certainly know that

37. How was this dispersion of the spiritual Israelites in a figurative way accomplished?

38. Why was it fitting for Jehovah's angel to call out to the Jewish exiles: "Make your escape, you who are dwelling with the daughter of Babylon"?

Jehovah of armies himself has sent me.”—Zechariah 2:7-9.

³⁹ Ancient Zion, which is here the same as Jerusalem, represented the whole nation, not merely the exiled former inhabitants of the capital city. Now that Babylon had been overthrown in 539 B.C.E. and Cyrus the Persian conqueror had issued his decree of liberation to the Jewish exiles, the call to Zion was really addressed to all the exiled Jews. They were dwelling as exiles “with the daughter of Babylon,” the city of Babylon being spoken of as a woman no longer an unviolated virgin daughter.

⁴⁰ The expression “following after the glory” does not seem to mean being in pursuit of future glory but refers to time. Jehovah had got glory by having his word of prophecy vindicated as being true in what he had said about disciplining the Israelites.

⁴¹ It was now time for Jehovah of armies to turn his attention to the enemy nations that had been used to administer the discipline, but who had abused their assignment of work. They had gone too far and had used the occasion to vent their spleen at people who belonged to Jehovah God. They had gone too far in mistreating Zion and her people. (Zechariah 1:15, 21) They should have been more considerate in handling his people whom he delivered into their hands for disciplinary purposes. They should have shown some fear of the God of this people, some respect. He stated the reason why, in saying to his disciplined people: “For he that is touching you is touching my eyeball.”

⁴² Accordingly, when he now waves his hand against those arrogant, presumptuous nations it is a threatening waving of the hand, like the shaking of the fist. It is no idle, meaningless gesture. It was to warn them that they the dispersers and despoilers would suffer

39. In crying out, “Hey there, Zion,” to whom was Jehovah calling out to make an escape?

40. What is the meaning of the expression “following after the glory” in Zechariah 2:8?

41. In administering the discipline to Jehovah’s people, why should the nations have shown some fear, respect, toward Him?

42. (a) Jehovah’s waving of his hand was a warning of what reversal to the persecutor nations? (b) What was such a reversal for Babylon?

reprisals. They would become a spoil to those who had been their slaves in Babylonian exile. What a reversal, and this from the hand of Jehovah of armies! Something of this kind of reversal happened when the Jewish exiles were freed by the conqueror Cyrus the Great to return to the location of Jerusalem and rebuild Jehovah's temple. What a great humiliation it was for the conquered Babylon when, according to Ezra 1:7, 8, "King Cyrus himself brought forth the utensils of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought out from Jerusalem and then put in the house of his god. And Cyrus the king of Persia proceeded to bring them forth under the control of Mithredath the treasurer and to number them out to Sheshbazzar the chieftain of Judah."—Daniel 1:1, 2; 5:3-23.

⁴³ In the course of time and in many ways the once enslaved Israelite captives had occasion to trample Babylon under their feet, she becoming a "place of trampling, like the mire of streets." (Micah 7:8-10) At the fall of Babylon to Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian, the prophet Daniel ceased to be a slave of Babylon and was made one of "three high officials" whom King Darius the Mede set up over the one hundred and twenty satraps that were over the whole Medo-Persian kingdom.—Daniel 6:1-3, 28.

⁴⁴ Also, because of the difference between religion of the Persian worshipers of Zoroaster and the religion of the old Babylonian cultists, the magic-practicing priests, conjurers, Chaldeans and astrologers became overshadowed religiously and finally felt obliged to move from the religious center of Babylon. It appears that they transferred westward to Pergamum in Asia Minor and then from there over to Italy. (Revelation 2:12, 13) In sharp contrast with this, the worshipers of Jehovah won favor from the conquerors of Babylon, and their priests and Levites were reinstated in the posts of service at the rebuilt temple of Jehovah on

43. How was there a reversal for Babylon as in Daniel's case?

44. How was there a reversal as regards the Babylonian worship and the worship by Jehovah's people?

its original site in Jerusalem. Thus "Zion" escaped homeward from Babylon.

GOD'S REACTION TO TOUCHING "MY EYEBALL"

⁴⁵ All this vividly illustrates that it is an outrageous thing for the nations of this world to touch Jehovah's worshipers in a violent way. It pains Jehovah God. It is like touching his eyeball, a very sensitive part of a body. Long ago, as far back as the year 1473 B.C.E., the prophet Moses pointed out how sensitive Jehovah was over his chosen people, saying: "He began to encircle him, to take care of him, to safeguard him as the pupil of his eye." (Deuteronomy 32:10) He is just as sensitive about his Christian witnesses of today. But the nations of Christendom and of pagandom have chosen to ignore this fact in their handling of Jehovah's Christian witnesses. Is it any wonder, then, that He has been doing as he foretold, "waving my hand against them, and they will have to become spoil to their slaves"? (Zechariah 2:9) How has He been doing this?

⁴⁶ He has liberated his remnant of spiritual Israelites from religious bondage to Babylon the Great and restored them to their rightful God-given spiritual estate on earth. They do not bow in abject subservience to the political paramours of that international harlot, Babylon the Great, but say to worldly politicians that try to encroach upon the things belonging to Jehovah God: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) In the liberation year of 1919 C.E., they began to proclaim far and wide the adverse judgments of Jehovah God, especially against the international organization for world peace and security, namely, the League of Nations, saying that it would fail. The reason for this? Because the League of Nations was adopted and put in force in 1919 C.E. by the nations of Christendom instead of God's Messianic kingdom,

45. (a) How sensitive is Jehovah about anyone's violently touching his people? (b) So why has he been waving his hand against the nations of today?

46. How, in 1919 C.E., did Jehovah make the spoilers of his people to become a spoil to them?

which had been born in the heavens at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E.—Revelation 12:5.

⁴⁷ These adverse judicial decisions of Jehovah of armies became more pronounced and comprehensive during the seven years of 1922 through 1928. During that period a series of annual international assemblies was held by the International Bible Students Association in America, Great Britain and Canada, in connection with which Bible commentaries were released that dealt with the divine prophecies concerning these religious and political matters. At each of these principal annual conventions of the International Bible Students resolutions or declarations were adopted, the first one of these, in 1922, being entitled "A Challenge" and the seventh and last, in 1928, being called "Declaration against Satan and for Jehovah." These seven resolutions and the supporting public addresses, together with related Bible pronouncements, corresponded with things foretold in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, chapters 8 through 16.

⁴⁸ They corresponded with the seven trumpets that were sounded by the seven angels and that introduced seven prophetic tableaux. Also with the "seven last plagues," which are poured out from bowls by the seven appointed angels.—Revelation 21:9; 15:1 to 16:21.

⁴⁹ The modern fulfillment of those tableaux introduced by trumpets and of the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues caused a great stir, uneasiness, and rebellious resentment both in Babylon the Great (including Christendom) and in the worldly political governments. The publication of those adverse judgments of Jehovah of armies was not confined to just those seven years of 1922 through 1928, but it has continued on down till the present in greater volume and strength and on a wider scale than back there in the 1920's. By such publication world wide of his adverse

47. How did these adverse judicial decisions of Jehovah become more pronounced during the years 1922 through 1928?

48. These emissions corresponded to what in Revelation?

49. (a) What effect did the modern fulfillment of such things have on those concerned? (b) How long did the publication of such judgments of Jehovah continue, so that in effect he has been doing what to the nations?

judicial decisions against religious Babylon the Great and her political patronizers Jehovah of armies is in effect shaking his fist, waving his hand menacingly at the worldly organizations, religious and political, that have been despoiling his people. He is doing so by means of His witnesses, formerly slaves of such oppressors.

⁵⁰ Shortly we shall see those divine judicial decisions executed upon those enemies who have pained the Most High God as if they were touching his eyeball. That will be the momentous time of which the angel spoke in Zechariah's hearing, saying: "And you people will certainly know that Jehovah of armies himself has sent me." (Zechariah 2:9) But do we today have to wait until that time of complete fulfillment? Even now we have enough evidence at hand to prove that this angel has spoken the truth, like history written in advance. This, in turn, proves that only Jehovah of armies himself could be the One that sent this angel. In this way the prophet Zechariah is also being vindicated as being the recorder of true, infallible prophecy. And what about today? Today there is also a vindication taking place. Of whom? Of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, who have been calling attention to Zechariah's wonderful prophecies and to the modern fulfillment of them.

WHY NOW THE CALL TO REJOICE?

⁵¹ Once the maliciously minded nations did have reason to cry out loud and rejoice at the turn of human events. That was when Jehovah of armies let his Christian witnesses fall into their power during World War I and the nations were given the freedom to vent their spleen upon these Christian spiritual Israelites. At the time the nations were fighting over the issue of world domination, not domination by the Creator of heaven and earth, but domination by them-

50. (a) When Jehovah finally executes those judgments, what will be known about the angel who was sent? (b) By the divine execution, the vindication of what persons is brought about, even in our day?
51. Why did the maliciously minded nations have reason to cry out and rejoice during World War I?

selves, by either the democratic bloc of nations or by the autocratic, dictatorial bloc. They wanted to control the resources of the earth, exploiting these for commercial profit.

⁵² They were very nationalistic, with national patriotism running at fever heat. In their efforts at total mobilization of the people for their nationalistic goals, they became enraged at those who refused to be integrated with them because of standing for God's Messianic kingdom that had been inaugurated in the heavens at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. So, under war stress, the nations mistreated these champions of God's kingdom. How they did rejoice at killing off the influence of these for God's kingdom!

⁵³ The glee and self-congratulations that the beastly nations indulged in at this defeat for the advocates of God's Messianic kingdom is foretold in Revelation, chapter eleven, which borrows figures of speech from Zechariah's prophecy. In pictorial language Revelation 11:7-10 says: "And when they have finished their witnessing, the wild beast that ascends out of the abyss will make war with them and conquer them and kill them. And their corpses will be on the broad way of the great city which is in a spiritual sense called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also impaled. And those of the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their corpses for three and a half days, and they do not let their corpses be laid in a tomb. And those dwelling on the earth rejoice over them and enjoy themselves, and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those dwelling on the earth." But their jubilation proved to be short-lived.

⁵⁴ In 1919 C.E., just as portrayed in the Revelation vision, Almighty God resurrected these unburied witnesses spiritually and reactivated them in his Kingdom service. Dismay smote the nations and their religious

52. Why did those nations mistreat the spiritual Israelites for standing faithfully for God's Messianic kingdom?

53. How does Revelation 11:7-10 describe the nations' jubilation?

54, 55. (a) When, however, was it that the remnant of spiritual Israelites were called upon to cry out joyfully? (b) This was the same as calling to whom to cry out, with what reason for crying out?

prostitute Babylon the Great, but now the time had come for the revived remnant of spiritual Israelites to cry out loud and rejoice. Their heavenly Reviver and Liberator called upon them to do so. Inasmuch as they represented the heavenly New Jerusalem and were in line for membership therein it was as if God was calling out to that spiritual organization. Calling that organization Zion (the alternate name for Jerusalem), he said:

⁵⁵ “‘Cry out loudly and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for here I am coming, and I will reside in the midst of you,’ is the utterance of Jehovah. ‘And many nations will certainly become joined to Jehovah in that day, and they will actually become my people; and I will reside in the midst of you.’ And you will have to know that Jehovah of armies himself has sent me to you. And Jehovah will certainly take possession of Judah as his portion upon the holy ground, and he must yet choose Jerusalem. Keep silence, all flesh, before Jehovah, for he has aroused himself from his holy dwelling.”
—Zechariah 2:10-13.

⁵⁶ In seeing what that prophecy meant back there in Zechariah’s day we can discern what the fulfillment of it means in this remarkable twentieth century of our Common Era. Away back there did Jehovah let go his claim on the land of Judah and allow any territory-greedy nations to take possession of it or land squatters to move in upon it? By no means! Although he had his people deported from it to Babylon, he safeguarded that land and enforced a long sabbath of rest upon it. How? By keeping it desolate, without man or domestic animal, just as he had foretold. At the end of those seventy years of sabbath keeping for the land, he again took possession of the territory of Judah by freeing his exiled people and moving them back from Babylon onto their beloved homeland. Jerusalem he again chose as the capital of Judah by having the restored exiles build a second Jerusalem upon the old location. Thus a peopled land

56. (a) How did Jehovah show whether he let go his claim to the land of Judah at its desolation? (b) How did Jehovah take possession of the land again, and what miracle did he produce then?

was brought forth as with childbearing labor "in one day." Also, "at one time" a nation was "born" by having its capital reestablished at Jerusalem exercising governmental rule over the "holy ground" of Judah. (Isaiah 66:7, 8) It was miraculous!

⁵⁷ As ancient Israel was a theocratic nation, under divine rule and law, Jehovah God resumed his residence at Jerusalem when it was founded again and rebuilt. This became all the more evident when the temple of his worship was brought to its completion in 515 B.C.E. and his regular worship, on a full scale, began there. That rebuilt temple would be a symbol to all the surrounding nations that Jehovah of armies had taken up residence there, that he was now dwelling in Zion, in Jerusalem. He could be approached there.

⁵⁸ What effect was this to have upon the pagan nations round about? Many of the people in those nations would be rightly impressed with the evidence that Jehovah of armies was the God of truth; that he had displayed his perfect foreknowledge and his all-power by fulfilling the prophecies given over his own name. As he had resurrected his people of Israel from a national death and raised it out of its grave in Babylon and restored them to the land of the living in their own homeland, these observers with honest hearts saw that He was the one living and true God, the only One deserving to be worshiped. Sincerely they would desire to worship him and, if possible for them, they would come to his place of residence in Zion (Jerusalem) to do so. Zechariah 2:11 was not to be left unrealized: "And many nations will certainly become joined to Jehovah in that day, and they will actually become my people." That indicated an increase of the worshipers of Jehovah world wide, and not just on the "holy ground" of Judah.

⁵⁹ Has not the like of this also become true in the

57. So, when did Jehovah take up residence in the land of Judah, and when and how did his residence there become more evident?

58. How would honest-hearted people of nations round about make favorable observations, and so what would they do (Zechariah 2:11)? 59, 60. (a) How did the like take place in connection with the remnant who were in line for a place in the New Jerusalem and who were like buried in Babylon the Great's domain? (b) How has Jehovah shown that he has taken up residence with the remnant?

case of the modern-day remnant of spiritual Israelites? Do they not have every reason to "cry out loudly and rejoice," as the "daughter of Zion" was told to do in ancient times, in Zechariah's day? Yes! This remnant of spiritual Israelites is like a bride, 'promised in marriage to one husband so as to be presented as a chaste virgin to the Christ,' and it is therefore in line for a part in the heavenly New Jerusalem. That New Jerusalem with Jesus Christ as its Head is the capital organization of Jehovah God over all his universal organization. (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 21:2, 9, 10) During World War I the remnant's unity as a "holy nation" was broken up, they were exiled from their God-given spiritual estate and were as if buried in a grave in Babylon the Great's domain. After that first world conflict was over and its pressures were lifted, the amazing fulfillment of what was depicted prophetically in Revelation 11:11-13 startled the world!

⁶⁰ Jehovah revived the buried remnant spiritually, brought them up out of their grave in Babylon the Great, restored them to their rightful spiritual estate on earth, and reintegrated them as his united "holy nation." He had again chosen this faithful remnant that was looking upward to citizenship in the New Jerusalem under Christ. (Philippians 3:20, 21) Jehovah turned his favorable attention to them, and he energized them with that mighty active force, his holy spirit, to undertake a worldwide witness to his Messianic kingdom, the like of which has never been realized before in all Christian history. (Mark 13:10; Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) They did not join the nations of Christendom in worshipping the idolatrous League of Nations as "the last hope of the world," but fervently devoted themselves to the worship of the "God of hope" at his spiritual temple. (Revelation 13:14, 15; 14:9) They made known the name of their God, Jehovah, to an extent never before equaled. (Isaiah 12:4, 5) By all outward tokens, he had taken up his residence with them.

⁶¹ Can we see today that this had its effects upon the peoples of the world? The nations as political entities had their fears aroused. But among those nations there were sincere, honest-hearted individuals who were hungering and thirsting for a pure, true, sensible religion that really brought a person into touch with the true God, worthy of worship. As the faithful remnant of spiritual Israelites carried the preaching of "this good news of the kingdom" into more and more of the inhabited earth, more and more of these seekers for the true God were reached. They learned that the Lord Jesus Christ was the Messiah of Jehovah God and they took the steps of dedication to God and water baptism in order to become disciples of His Messiah. (Matthew 28:19, 20) It turned out to be just as foretold, "many nations will certainly become joined to Jehovah in that day." (Zechariah 2:11) No nationalities or races were barred from doing so.

⁶² This markedly became true from 1935 C.E. onward, four years after the anointed remnant had embraced the designation, Jehovah's witnesses. World War II did not stop these genuine seekers of the true God from becoming "joined to Jehovah" as disciples of His Messiah. In comparison with how many they were back there in 1935, yes, and in comparison with the anointed remnant, these thus "joined to Jehovah" have become a "great crowd" without a fixed number set for them in the Bible. (Revelation 7:9-17) And as Jehovah said, "they will actually become my people." They do not profess to be of the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites. This is because God has not begotten them with his holy spirit to become his spiritual sons, even though he has accepted their joining of themselves, their dedicating of themselves, to Him through His High Priest, Jesus Christ. It is the merit of Jesus' atoning sacrifice that makes them acceptable to Jehovah God. Thus these dedicated, baptized ones He counts as "my people," attached to Him. So these,

61. How has it become true, therefore, that "many nations will certainly become joined to Jehovah in that day"?

62. To what extent has this become true since 1935 C.E., and how have they become Jehovah's "people"?

as "other sheep," become "one flock" with the anointed remnant under the Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ.—John 10:16.

⁶³ These "other sheep" have heard the voice of the Fine Shepherd and have responded to his call and come forth from "many nations." They join with the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites in the worship of the true God at his spiritual temple. (Revelation 7:15) In such a way they become "joined to Jehovah."

⁶⁴ Since Jehovah has not begotten these "other sheep" with his spirit to become part of the heavenly New Jerusalem, he sets before them the hope of eternal life on His "footstool," that is, this earth, but then transformed to a beauteous Paradise. (Genesis 2:8; Luke 23:43) Jehovah God has rocked all the nations by the way that he has dealt with human affairs since 1914 C.E., and thereby these "other sheep" have become aware of His Messianic kingdom. In appreciation of His kingdom they have come into his house of worship, and He receives them as desirable worshipers. In fact, they are the "desirable things of all the nations" that were foretold to "come in," and by means of them at his place of pure worship Jehovah fills his house or temple with glory.—Haggai 2:7.

⁶⁵ Today, nearly forty years since that memorable year of 1935 C.E., which called our attention to the "great crowd" of Revelation 7:9-17 in a right understanding thereof, we see the things foretold in the third vision to Zechariah being grandly realized. Already, therefore, we have enough evidence to know that it was the God of truth, Jehovah, and not some false prophetic source, that sent the angel to Zechariah and his people. This same Jehovah also sent Zechariah as a prophet to record the vision for us today. This strengthens our conviction that all further visions to Zechariah will come true.

63. As such "sheep," how have they become "joined to Jehovah"?

64. (a) What hope has been set before them, and why? (b) How has Jehovah, because of them, filled his house with glory (Haggai 2:7)?

65. The evidence today shows what as to the sender of the ones by whom we got the third vision of Zechariah, and this strengthens our conviction as to what further?

⁶⁶ Should we not, then, keep silent so as to hear what Jehovah has to say? Indeed so! Highly appropriate, therefore, is the inspired command with which the third vision to Zechariah closes: "Keep silence, all flesh, before Jehovah, for he has aroused himself from his holy dwelling." (Zechariah 2:13) He has aroused himself from his holy dwelling in the heavens to fulfill his Word.

66. What are we rightly commanded to do now, and in order to do what has Jehovah "aroused himself from his holy dwelling"?

CHAPTER 10

SATAN'S FAILURE IN RESISTING THE HIGH PRIEST

THROUGHOUT the earth today there are to be

found high priests of various religious cults. The mightiest of such priestly chiefs is the Pontifex Maximus, the Supreme Pontiff, located at Vatican City. But what the whole world of mankind needs is just one high priest. Why so? Because there is just the one living and true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Sovereign of all the universe. He needs just one high priest to represent him to the people and to deal with Him for the people. This comports with the fact that there is just the one true religion, just the one pure worship of Him "with spirit and truth."—John 4:24.

² For more than fifteen centuries, from 1512 B.C.E. to 33 C.E., there was just one high priesthood that this living and true God recognized. That high priesthood was established in the line of Aaron the brother of Moses the prophet, of the tribe of Levi. Aaron was in-

1. Religiously, the whole world of mankind needs what today, and why just that?

2. What one high priesthood did Jehovah recognize down to Nisan 16 of 33 C.E., when what one spiritual high priest appeared?

stalled in office on the first day of the lunar month of Nisan in the year 1512 B.C.E. During the centuries that followed there was a succession of high priests from among the descendants of Aaron, down till Sunday, Nisan 16, in the year 33 C.E. That was the resurrection day of the Lord Jesus Christ from a sacrificial death. On the fortieth day from then he ascended as a spiritual High Priest to enter into the heavenly Most Holy and there presented the precious value of his perfect human sacrifice to the one living and true God, Jehovah.

³ From that time on till now Jehovah God has been dealing with just one High Priest—not a high priest of the family of Aaron the Levite, but the one never-dying High Priest, Jesus Christ. To him it was said prophetically: “You are a priest forever according to the manner of Melchizedek.”—Hebrews 5:5, 6, 10; 6:19, 20; 7:15-17.

⁴ However, Jesus Christ, as a sacrificing spiritual high priest, was also prefigured or typified by the Aaronic high priest of the ancient nation of Israel. Just as the high priest of Israel on the annual Day of Atonement entered with sacrificial blood into the Most Holy of the temple at Jerusalem, Jesus similarly entered with the value of his own sacrificial blood into the true Most Holy, heaven itself, of the spiritual temple of Jehovah God. Consequently, Jesus Christ was prefigured by the Israelite high priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak, who returned from exile in Babylon in the year 537 B.C.E. to Jerusalem in order to rebuild the temple of Jehovah there. (Haggai 1:1) From this standpoint it is intriguing for us to consider the fourth vision of the prophet Zechariah, in which this high priest Joshua is the principal figure. As if looking into a courtroom Zechariah writes:

⁵ “And he proceeded to show me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand in order to resist him. Then

3. Since then, why has Jehovah been able to deal with just one high priest?

4. (a) Also, by what other high priest, on the annual Day of Atonement, was Jesus Christ typed? (b) Hence, by whom was he typified in the fourth vision of Zechariah?

5. What did Jehovah's angel say to the one at Joshua's side?

the angel of Jehovah said to Satan: 'Jehovah rebuke you, O Satan, yes, Jehovah rebuke you, he who is choosing Jerusalem! Is this one not a log snatched out of the fire?'—Zechariah 3:1, 2.

⁶ The Satan who is pictured here was no mere ecclesiastical "devil's advocate" who was acting as a prosecuting attorney for Jehovah. He was the same Satan that appeared at the meeting of the angelic sons of God in heaven in the seventeenth century before our Common Era and wrongly accused the patriarch Job before the face of Jehovah God. (Job 1:6 to 2:7) But why, in that vision to Zechariah in the year 519 B.C.E. was Satan the Devil trying to resist the high priest Joshua before the angel of Jehovah? Because on the twenty-fourth day of the lunar month of Chislew of the preceding year High Priest Joshua had taken a decisive step for the worship of God. He and Governor Zerubbabel and the faithful remnant of Israel began working at the foundation of the second temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem. (Haggai 2:18, 19) High Priest Joshua was thus working for his reinstallation in the full service of Jehovah at a completed second temple. Such taking up of his duties at a completed temple would put Joshua in a new light.

⁷ Satan the Devil, who fights the true religion, was out to resist High Priest Joshua on this score, so as to downgrade him and keep him out of his full service to Jehovah in behalf of the nation of Israel. That would keep Joshua in poor appearance because of a major deficiency in his service to God. To that end Satan would try to counteract the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah and rouse up overwhelming opposition on the part of the enemies of Israel against the rebuilding of the temple. In that way he could charge High Priest Joshua with failure to discharge his full high-priestly duties, and this would result in reproach upon Jehovah.

⁸ Satan, however, was too late in his malicious at-

6. (a) Who was that Satan? (b) Why was he resisting Joshua?

7. (a) What was Satan trying to prevent in Joshua's case? (b) Satan was trying to counteract whose prophesying, and how?

8. (a) Why did the angelic judge say that it should be Jehovah who should rebuke Satan? (b) How had Jehovah already chosen Jerusalem?

tempt. Before he could give force to his resistance and launch his wicked charges against High Priest Joshua, the angel who was acting as a judge for Jehovah said to Satan: "Jehovah rebuke you, he who is choosing Jerusalem!" The Most High God was the One high enough to rebuke Satan, and not some subordinate angel who was merely representing Jehovah. Thus the angel was giving due regard to Jehovah's position. (Jude 8-10) Furthermore, Jehovah had already begun action to the magnifying of his own holy name. He was already choosing Jerusalem as the city for his temple. Satan could not alter this divine choice nor make it an unrealizable choice. He was the one to be frustrated, rebuked by beholding the temple completely rebuilt in the year 515 B.C.E. This rebuke would be from Jehovah, for he had successfully accomplished this!

⁹ Why, though, did the angelic judge of Jehovah add the question: "Is this one not a log snatched out of the fire?" Because, after a rescue from the fire not too much was to be expected instantly of a symbolic "log." "This one" who was pictured by the log snatched out of the fire was the high priest Joshua. But, due to his office, Joshua represented the whole nation of Israel for whom he served as high priest before God. Joshua was not the only one who had come back from exile in Babylon, where Satan the Devil had tried to burn to ashes their identity as Jehovah's chosen nation. More than 42,000 other Israelites had also come back, along with thousands of servants and singers. So the whole number of the remnant were, all together, like a "log snatched out of the fire." It was Jehovah's mercy and faithfulness to his promises that snatched them out of the symbolic Babylonish "fire" and restored their nationhood on the "holy ground." Since this was so, He was patient toward their long delay in rebuilding His temple, but He stuck to his purpose to have a temple there at Jerusalem for which purpose he chose her. Hence Satan should not be too hasty with his charges.

9. (a) What did the "log snatched out of the fire" symbolize? (b) What now showed that it had been snatched out of the fire, and how?

¹⁰ Satan's resistance to High Priest Joshua was blocked. So what is done with Joshua to clear him of anything about him that Satan might have used as a ground for bringing charges against him? Zechariah describes it for us, saying: "Now as for Joshua, he happened to be clothed in befouled garments and standing before the angel. Then he answered and said to those standing before him: 'Remove the befouled garments from upon him.' And he went on to say to him: 'See, I have caused your error to pass away from upon you, and there is a clothing of you with robes of state.'"—Zechariah 3:3, 4.

HOW A CHANGE OF GARMENTS WAS NECESSARY

¹¹ Here a question arises: Since Joshua the high priest was pictured as clothed with befouled garments, how could he typify or prefigure Jesus Christ as the heavenly High Priest? Does not Hebrews 7:26, 27 say to true Christians today: "Such a high priest as this was suitable for us, loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners, and become higher than the heavens. He does not need daily, as those high priests do, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for those of the people: (for this he did once for all time when he offered himself up)"? Yes, this is true. Yet it is with the High Priest Jesus Christ as with the ancient High Priest Joshua. The high priest represents the people for whom he serves in this high office, and their condition reflects upon him. He bears the iniquities of his people.

¹² That the priesthood bore the error of the people, the prophet Moses indicated, when he said to the two surviving sons of Aaron for a failure on their part: "Why did you not eat the sin offering in the place that is holy, since it is something most holy and he has given it to you that you may answer for the error of the assembly so as to make atonement for them before

10. What was now done to Joshua to remove any possible grounds for Satan to lay charges against him?

11. How could it be that Joshua in befouled garments pictured the heavenly High Priest Jesus Christ?

12. What had long ago been said to Aaron's two surviving sons and to Aaron himself to indicate that the priests bore the people's error?

Jehovah?" (Leviticus 10:16, 17) The sanctuary or temple was holy, and if the people touched it this would be committing an error on their part; and so the sanctified priests had to serve at the sanctuary for the people in order to prevent the committing of such an error. To this effect we read, in Numbers 18:1: "And Jehovah proceeded to say to Aaron: 'You and your sons and the house of your father with you will answer for error against the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you will answer for error against your priesthood.'" So the priests acted as shields against error by the people.

¹³ Now as regards the sanctuary or temple in Jerusalem at the time that Haggai and Zechariah had begun to prophesy, its foundation had lain neglected without a superstructure's being built upon it for sixteen years. This was due to forcible opposition by surrounding enemies. During that period the repatriated Israelites had lapsed into indifference and had turned to materialism. Hence, in a dialogue with the priests, when Haggai asked what would happen when someone ceremonially unclean touched a part of a sacrifice, they answered: "It will become unclean." At once Haggai came back with this statement: "That is how this people is, and that is how this nation is before me," is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and that is how all the work of their hands is, and whatever they present there. It is unclean.'" —Haggai 2:13, 14.

¹⁴ Since High Priest Joshua represented the nation of Israel before Jehovah, this unclean condition of the people was also attributed to him. As a consequence, it was as if he were clothed with befouled garments. He was trying to officiate without a temple, and for that reason it did not look right. He could not serve with the full dignity and grandeur as in a temple. In leveling charges against High Priest Joshua, Satan the Devil would be leveling charges against the entire negligent, unclean nation.

13. How had Haggai pointed out the uncleanness of the nation of Israel, in his dialogue with the priests, and why was it unclean?

14. So why did Joshua appear as if clothed with befouled garments?

¹⁵ Similarly with the antitypical High Priest, who was prefigured by High Priest Joshua in that year 519 B.C.E. The High Priest Jesus Christ was reflected upon by the spiritual condition of the remnant of the spiritual Israelites on earth as these entered into the postwar year of 1919 C.E. Because of impediments due to war restrictions, opposition and persecution, the remnant had come short in many respects with regard to the open, courageous worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple. They had yielded to bondage to Babylon the Great and her political and military paramours. They were in a spiritual state like that of the ancient remnant of Israel that had been repatriated. Like Isaiah, when he had his vision of Jehovah at his holy temple, they could say:

¹⁶ "Woe to me! For I am as good as brought to silence, because a man unclean in lips I am, and in among a people unclean in lips I am dwelling; for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of armies, himself!" —Isaiah 6:5.

¹⁷ If one judged the appearance of their High Priest by the spiritual appearance of the surviving remnant, their High Priest Jesus Christ would appear to be "clothed in befouled garments." This was an improper appearance to be attributed to him. The spiritually befouled condition was an improper situation in which the remnant was representing their High Priest, and it reflected badly upon the heavenly High Priest Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Such a state of affairs deserved to be remedied —promptly. Jehovah's judicial angel saw to that: "Remove the befouled garments from upon him." Then he said to Joshua: "See, I have caused your error to pass away from upon you, and there is a clothing of you with robes of state." —Zechariah 3:4.

15, 16. (a) Did the spiritual condition of the surviving remnant of spiritual Israelites in 1919 C.E. reflect favorably or unfavorably on the appearance of High Priest Jesus Christ in heaven, and why? (b) What did the remnant's outcry like that of Isaiah at the temple indicate?

17. Judged by the remnant's appearance, how did their High Priest appear, and so was this the proper condition for the remnant to be in then?

18. In the vision, what was done to remedy the situation?

¹⁹ How did this occur with High Priest Joshua? By getting the restored nation of Israel whom he represented in holy office out of their unclean state before Jehovah. This would be by getting the restored remnant to work again upon the temple of Jehovah and completing it, letting everything else be put in a secondary place, in the background. The cleansing of the people in this vital regard would result in a cleansed appearance of their high priest. It would be as if he had had a change of garments. He was meant to be clothed with "robes of state." He was meant to have a temple in which to serve clothed in those "robes of state." The completing of the temple and the inaugurating of it would call for him to don those "robes of state" and present a glorious appearance to the praise of Jehovah. High Priest Joshua as the national religious representative took the lead with Governor Zerubbabel in getting the temple rebuilding started again, and for this reason he deserved a change of garments for the better. In that way his religious appearance would not reflect reproachfully on God.

²⁰ The same was true of the one whom High Priest Joshua prefigured, namely, the heavenly High Priest Jesus Christ. The remnant of his spirit-begotten, anointed disciples came out of World War I in an "unclean" spiritual condition. They were spiritual Israelites, yes, spiritual underpriests of Jehovah under his High Priest Jesus Christ. Their spiritual garments were befouled by their deportment and deficiencies during World War I. This reflected badly upon their High Priest in the heavens and hence misrepresented him. Since he bears or answers for the iniquity or error of the nation of spiritual Israelites, it was as if he himself were clothed with befouled religious garments.

²¹ What was needed, then, was for the remnant of spiritual underpriests to repent and return to Jehovah and be forgiven by Him through Christ. This is what

19. What did Joshua the high priest have to do himself in order to experience a change of garments before God?

20. How was the heavenly High Priest Jesus Christ given a bad appearance because of the remnant's appearance after World War I?

21. Therefore, what did the surviving remnant need to do as the post-war period opened up?

actually happened at the beginning of the postwar period. They showed their return or conversion to Jehovah by searching the Holy Scriptures diligently to determine God's will and work for the postwar period and then applying themselves whole-souled to these things of first importance.

²² Thus the repentant, converted remnant of spiritual underpriests applied themselves whole-souled to Jehovah's worship at his temple and endeavored to purify that worship from any and all Babylonish pollution. Their efforts at rebuilding the pure, undefiled worship "from the standpoint of our God and Father" corresponded with the renewed work of the repatriated Israelites in rebuilding Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem. (James 1:27) It was the invisible, heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, who was taking the lead in this reviving of the remnant of his underpriests in Jehovah's worship and service. So, when Jehovah mercifully forgave them and cleansed them, this gave them a clean appearance before Him.

²³ Even the false accusers under Satan the Devil began to see the difference in the doctrines, the message and the public activity of the remnant of Christ's underpriests. This served to cast due credit upon their heavenly Chief Priest, Jesus Christ. He no longer had to bear or answer for such error on the part of his underpriests. The "befouled garments" that were indirectly attributed to him were taken from upon him, and he was given a change of garments. Bring forth "robes of state" for him!

²⁴ Who would not want to see the high priest of the one living and true God adorned with an official headgear? The prophet Zechariah wanted such a thing. Either in his mind he thought of such a thing or he even spoke out impulsively for such a thing! He tells us: "At that I said: 'Let them put a clean turban upon his head.' And they proceeded to put the clean turban upon

22. To what then did the forgiven remnant apply themselves, and who was taking the lead in promoting these efforts?

23. How was the heavenly High Priest thus relieved of his figurative "befouled garments"?

24. What did Zechariah ask to be put on Joshua's head, and what did Jehovah then say with regard to Joshua's privileges?

his head and to clothe him with garments; and the angel of Jehovah was standing by. And the angel of Jehovah began to bear witness to Joshua, saying: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, "If it is in my ways that you will walk, and if it is my obligation that you will keep, then also it will be you that will judge my house and also keep my courtyards; and I shall certainly give you free access among these who are standing by." ' '—Zechariah 3:5-7.

²⁵ How glad the high priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak must have been when the prophet Zechariah disclosed to him this part of the prophetic vision! Joshua could then realize that he had now an acceptable appearance before God and was no cause for reproach upon Him. Satan's malicious effort to find continued cause for shaming the high priest of Jehovah had failed!

²⁶ Joshua surely must have desired to judge Jehovah's "house" of Israel according to divine law and to keep the courtyards of God's temple.

²⁷ Hence Joshua would take to heart the admonitory witness from the angel and walk obediently in Jehovah's way and conscientiously keep his obligation to Jehovah, so as to prove worthy of the privileges mentioned.

²⁸ Besides that, Joshua would be given "free access among these who are standing by." It was the heavenly angels who were standing by in the vision; and just as they had access to God in heaven, so Joshua as high priest could approach God directly as an intermediary for the house of Israel. He would also be honored with the privilege of entering into the Most Holy of the completed temple of Jerusalem on the annual Day of Atonement.

²⁹ Jesus Christ is, of course, the ideal High Priest for

25. Why would Joshua the high priest be glad when Zechariah revealed this part of the vision to him?

26, 27. What obligations to Jehovah would Joshua conscientiously keep, in order to enjoy what privileges?

28. Who were those standing by in the vision among whom Joshua was to have free access, and how was this to be?

29. In the postwar period, what does the heavenly High Priest do about walking in Jehovah's way, keeping His obligation, judging His house and keeping His courtyards?

all the world of mankind. The royal priestly turban is placed upon his head as a "high priest according to the manner of Melchizedek forever." (Hebrews 6:20; Psalm 110:1-4; 21:1-5) He has always walked in God's way and kept his obligation to God. But after the experiences of his dedicated, baptized disciples on earth during World War I, he sees to it that the remnant of his underpriests learn more clearly God's way in order to walk in it, and he helps them to discern more fully their holy obligation to Jehovah God, so as to keep it completely. His glorious priestly garments are pictured in the Revelation that he gave to the apostle John, in which the glorified Lord Jesus is seen walking among the seven golden lampstands. (Revelation 1:12 to 2:1) He faithfully judges the house of spiritual Israel according to the law of the new covenant. He guides them in the earthly courtyards of Jehovah's spiritual temple, assigning to them their spiritual duties there.

³⁰ The earthly high priest, Joshua the son of Jehozadak, began entering the Most Holy of the temple of Jerusalem in the year 515 B.C.E. (Ezra 6:15); but the spiritual High Priest, the Greater Joshua, entered into the antitypical, real Most Holy, heaven itself, in the year 33 C.E. He ascended to heaven and presented the merit of his human sacrifice in the very presence of Jehovah of armies. He now being made "better than the angels" and having "inherited a name more excellent than theirs," he also can have "free access among these who are standing by," that is, among the angels of heaven. He, above all others, can approach God directly and intercede in behalf of Jehovah's worshipers on earth. As Jehovah prophetically said of him: "I will cause him to come near; and he must approach to me." —Jeremiah 30:21.

THE "SPROUT" AND "THE STONE"

³¹ In the vision to Zechariah, the judicial angel of Jehovah continued to speak to the high priest in his

30. How does the heavenly High Priest have "free access among these who are standing by," and from when on and to what extent?

31. To Joshua now in his robes of state, what does the judicial angel say about "Sprout" and "the stone"?

robes of state: "Hear, please, O Joshua the high priest, you and your companions who are sitting before you, for they are men serving as portents; for here I am bringing in my servant Sprout [New Growth, *By*]. For, look! the stone that I have put before Joshua! Upon the one stone there are seven eyes. Here I am engraving its engraving,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, 'and I will take away the error of that land in one day.'" —Zechariah 3:8, 9.

³² The message of this part of the vision, the prophet Zechariah had to make known, not only to the high priest Joshua, but also to his "companions" who were sitting before him, that is to say, the underpriests. Why? Because these were "men serving as portents." In *this* case they would not portend anything bad, but, in view of the divine announcement that they are about to hear, they would portend something good, especially good. They would have to bear witness to what they were told through the judicial angel of Jehovah, and on that account they would portend the coming of a greater priesthood in the not too distant future, a priesthood of higher rank than theirs at the temple in Jerusalem. It would be a Messianic priesthood, and their high priest would be the Messiah himself. In harmony with that portentous significance that they as underpriests of the second temple of Jerusalem had taken on, their present high priest, Joshua the son of Jehozadak, was a portent of the Messianic High Priest. He was a type of that one!

³³ There was need for a better priesthood, particularly a better high priest, one like ancient Melchizedek. (Genesis 14:18-20) In explanation of that fact it was later written, in Hebrews 7:15-22, to Hebrews who had accepted the promised Messiah:

³⁴ "And it is still more abundantly clear that with a similarity to Melchizedek there arises another priest, who has become such, not according to the law of a commandment depending upon the flesh, but according

32. How did Joshua and his "companions" serve as portents?

33, 34. (a) So, as portended, there was a need of what then? (b) Was this needed High Priest provided according to a legal commandment or according to something extraordinary on God's part?

to the power of an indestructible life, for in witness it is said: 'You are a priest forever according to the manner of Melchizedek.' Certainly, then, there occurs a setting aside of the preceding commandment on account of its weakness and ineffectiveness. For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in besides of a better hope did, through which we are drawing near to God. Also, to the extent that it was not without a sworn oath, (for there are indeed men that have become priests without a sworn oath, but there is one with an oath sworn by the One who said respecting him: 'Jehovah has sworn (and he will feel no regret), "You are a priest forever,"') to that extent also Jesus has become the one given in pledge of a better covenant."

³⁵ The underpriests who were companions of High Priest Joshua and who sat before him to receive instructions from him had to be "men serving as portents" of something better, forasmuch as Jehovah by his judicial angel went on to say: "For here I am bringing in my servant Sprout!" (Zechariah 3:8) "My servant," Jehovah's servant, was not to be a branch of the priesthood of Aaron's family. As far as priesthood was concerned, he was shooting up out of entirely different soil, from a different root. Jeremiah 23:5, 6 indicates of whom the Messianic High Priest would be the sprout, saying: "'Look! There are days coming,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I will raise up to David a righteous sprout [a new growth of David coming right, *By*]. And a king will certainly reign and act with discretion and execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel itself will reside in security. And this is his name with which he will be called, Jehovah Is Our Righteousness.'" God brought in this Sprout in the year 33 C.E.

³⁶ What, now, about that "stone" that God would put before High Priest Joshua? In a literal way, it would be the stone with which the temple then under con-

35. How was the greater High Priest a "sprout" rather than a "branch," and from what was he foretold by Jeremiah to sprout?

36, 37. (a) Jehovah's putting the "stone" before Joshua the high priest was a guarantee of what? (b) Whom did that "stone" picture, and how did Jesus apply Psalm 118:22, 23 in that connection?

struction would be given its finishing touch and be made complete. The foundation of that second temple had already been laid, and so this "stone" would serve as a headstone. So Jehovah's putting this stone before Joshua was a sign guaranteeing that the temple would be completed, despite any resistance on Satan's part. That stone, too, was symbolic of the Messiah, the Anointed One. Picturing the Messiah as a stone, Psalm 118:22, 23 (*By*) said: "A stone that the builders had rejected has become the head of a corner. This was from Jehovah, it is a wonder to our eyes." In the year 33 C.E., Jesus, when speaking to the Jews who rejected him as the promised Messiah, applied this scripture to himself and said to them:

³⁷ "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone that the builders rejected is the one that has become the chief cornerstone. From Jehovah this has come to be, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? This is why I say to you, The kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits."—Matthew 21:42, 43. See also 1 Peter 2:4-9.

³⁸ This symbolic "stone" was to be given full divine attention. As confirmation of this the high priest Joshua and his companion priests were to be told, "Upon the one stone there are seven eyes." (Zechariah 3:9) Not that seven eyes were to be carved upon that stone, to give the idea that those beholding the stone were being looked at in a sevenfold way. With the eyes we fix our attention upon something. Also, as the number seven Scripturally symbolized perfection, the seven eyes upon that one stone mean to say that Jehovah fixes his perfect attention upon that symbolic Stone, his promised Messiah. Others might overlook that symbolic Stone. Or, they might ignore it, reject it, but not so Jehovah. Because of such full attention from Him, it must be something most precious to Him.

³⁹ Consequently, in showing the complete attention that He gives to this symbolic Stone and its outstanding

38. What is signified by the fact that on that one "stone" there are seven eyes?

39. In what way is it that Jehovah engraves the engraving of that symbolic Stone?

position and appearance, Jehovah goes on to say: "Here I am engraving its engraving." In glorious fulfillment of this promise, Jehovah the heavenly Engraver gave the symbolic Stone, his beloved Son Jesus Christ, distinguishing marks of beauty such as he conferred upon no one else. Consequently, Hebrews 1:1-3 speaks of the outstanding Son of God as being the one who is the "exact representation [Greek, *ikharaktér*, meaning 'impress'] of his very being," that is, of God's being. As the symbolic engraved headstone, the Messianic High Priest, Jesus Christ, is given the highest and most responsible position of service in Jehovah's spiritual temple of worship. This betokened something most beneficial for all mankind.

⁴⁰ With the topstone in place and the temple all completed for the full-scale worship of the one living and true God, what could we expect logically to follow? Blessings, blessings, blessings! Nothing would now be in the way of such blessings, for, as Jehovah went on to say, "I will take away the error of that land in one day." (Zechariah 3:9) Because of the long interruption that the repatriated Israelites had allowed to take place in the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, the whole land of Judah was lying in "error." Its inhabitants were looked upon as unclean and the work of their hands in materialistic things was unclean. (Haggai 2:13, 14) But now, come 515 B.C.E., with the triumphant completion of the second temple at Jerusalem the erroneous course of the land of Judah was entirely corrected. So Jehovah was pleased, and he took away the error of inhabitants of the land in the special "one day," the day when the temple stood complete, with its engraved headstone, and pure worship was inaugurated therein.

⁴¹ What a stimulus this should give to us today to put the worship of the true God at his spiritual temple in the first place in our lives! We should not let ourselves be delayed in doing this. We should not let interruptions take place in this effort.

40. What was the "error of that land," and how was it to be taken away by Jehovah?

41. What stimulus should this give to us today with reference to God's worship?

⁴² The faithful remnant of spiritual underpriests of the Messiah know what blessings have come to them for doing this more and more determinedly during the now more than fifty years since that restoration year of 1919 C.E. They have come to appreciate more and more deeply that, like the underpriest companions of High Priest Joshua, they are "men serving as portents" for this "time of the end" of this worldly system of things. They portend the best of good things for all those who devote themselves to the pure, undefiled worship of the one living and true God.

⁴³ They are not deceived by any false Messiahs or false Messianic organizations of today. They have identified the one whom Jehovah calls "my servant Sprout." He is the one whom Jehovah of armies installed in the Messianic throne in the heavens at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E. and who has now begun his Messianic reign, namely, Jesus Christ. They have identified also the one symbolized by the stone that was laid before High Priest Joshua and upon which stone there were "seven eyes." They admire how Jehovah has engraved this symbolic Stone with a beauty that befits the high position given to that Stone, and they rejoice that this one has been made the symbolic headstone or topstone, the highest and most responsible one in Jehovah's system of worship. They are happy to be underpriests under that symbolic engraved Stone, Jesus Christ. They see from the Holy Scriptures that as "men serving as portents" they are under divine command to serve as witnesses to this exalted Stone, Jehovah's one High Priest, Jesus.

SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY LEADING TO ENDLESS LIFE

⁴⁴ What was to be expected after Jehovah fulfilled his promise given through Zechariah: "I will take away the error of that land in one day"? Nothing else but divine favor, expressed in material and spiritual bless-

42. Since 1919 C.E., in what way have the remnant of spiritual underpriests been "men serving as portents"?

43. What are the reactions of the remnant toward the one whom Jehovah calls "my servant Sprout" and the "one stone"?

44. After Jehovah's taking away the "error of that land," what was to be expected, according to Zechariah 3:10?

ings for the Israelites worshipping at their completed second temple in Jerusalem. Most appropriately, then, that promise was followed up by this divine prophecy: "‘In that day,’ is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, ‘you will call, each one to the other, while under the vine and while under the fig tree.’"—Zechariah 3:10.

⁴⁵ In this day when all false religions are crumbling and are about to be destroyed in the world's worst trouble, that prophecy meant spiritual prosperity to sincere God-fearing persons who give themselves wholeheartedly to divine worship at the one true spiritual temple where Jehovah's one approved High Priest serves. It means the fulfillment of the companion prophecy of Micah 4:1-4 (*By*):

And in the future days the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be set at the head of the mountains, lifted above hills, and peoples shall stream to it. And many nations shall go and say "Come and let us go up to Jehovah's mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob, to have him instruct us in ways of his that we may go in his paths," because from Sion instruction shall go out and Jehovah's word from Jerusalem. And he shall give judgment between many peoples and pronounce verdicts for numerous nations to a great distance, and they shall pound their swords into hoes and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not take up sword against nation, and they shall never again learn war. And they shall sit each man under his grape-vine or his fig-tree with no one to alarm them, for the mouth of Jehovah of Armies has promised it.

⁴⁶ Even so today, when nuclear warfare threatens the world, Jehovah's Christian witnesses reside on their God-given spiritual estate in spiritual prosperity. They maintain loving peace among themselves, absolutely taking no part in the wars of this world. Satan has failed in resisting their High Priest Jesus Christ!

45. What does that prophecy of Zechariah 3:10 mean for worshipers at the temple where Jesus Christ serves as High Priest?

46. So, what state of affairs do Jehovah's witnesses maintain on their God-given spiritual estate?

CHAPTER

11

"NOT BY A MILITARY FORCE, NOR BY POWER, BUT"—

WAS there any military force under arms in the Israel of the days of the prophet Zechariah? No; unlike in the Republic of Israel of today, in which even the womenfolk are conscripted for the army.

²Back in the year 522 B.C.E., during the brief reign of Artaxerxes (Gaumata the Magian) as king of Persia, when the Samaritan adversaries stopped the Israelite temple builders "by force of arms," the Israelites at Jerusalem did not muster out a military force to combat them. (Ezra 4:7-24) Later, in the eleventh lunar month (Shebat) of the year 519 B.C.E., on the twenty-fourth day of the month, when Zechariah received his fifth vision, there was still no military force in Jerusalem and the land of Judah. This was still in the second year of King Darius I, who had succeeded Artaxerxes as the ruler of the Persian Empire. Would it be possible for the Israelites to complete the temple of Jerusalem without operating from a "position of strength" by means of having an impressive military force? The fifth vision to Zechariah answered the question.

³After the faith-inspiring vision concerning High Priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the prophet Zechariah appears to have lapsed into an attitude of meditation and contemplation, in which he appeared to be

1. How do Israel of Zechariah's days and the Republic of Israel compare as to military force?

2. How long had the repatriated remnant been without a military force, and therefore what question arises as to building the temple?

3. (a) Out of what kind of state is Zechariah aroused before being given the fifth vision? (b) To the interpretative angel, what does Zechariah report seeing?

asleep. But the series of visions was not yet over; there was more for him to see. That is why he goes on to tell us concerning the interpretative angel who was explaining things to him: "And the angel who was speaking with me proceeded to come back and wake me up, like a man that is awakened from his sleep. Then he said to me: 'What are you seeing?' So I said: 'I have seen, and, look! there is a lampstand, all of it of gold, with a bowl on top of it. And its seven lamps are upon it, even seven; and the lamps that are at the top of it have seven pipes. And there are two olive trees alongside it, one on the right side of the bowl and one on its left side.'"—Zechariah 4:1-3.

⁴ Do we have a mental picture of what Zechariah was shown? That golden lampstand with its seven branches topped by seven lamps that are fed with olive oil stirs up recollections of Jehovah's house of worship. In earlier Israel, from the days of the prophet Moses down to the days of King David, that house of worship had a golden lampstand in its first compartment, The Holy. (Exodus 40:1-25) The vision of this lampstand was therefore very fitting, inasmuch as this vision had to do with the rebuilding of the temple.

⁵ The seven lamps had a central supply of illuminating oil. It was that bowl on the top of the golden lampstand, from which bowl there extended seven pipes, an individual pipe running to each individual lamp to convey oil to it from the central supply. But from where did this bowl get its supply of oil, and how regularly? From those two olive trees that stood alongside the bowl, one tree to its right and the other tree to its left. Those trees could be a constant source of supply, and they were immediately at hand, with no need for transporting oil from afar.

⁶ The lampstand being all one, its seven lamps were all connected with it by branches running from a central support.

4. The sight of that lampstand stirs up in us recollections of what house, and why so?

5. How were the seven lamps furnished with illuminating fuel from a central reservoir, and how was this central supply kept full?

6. Despite there being seven lamps, how was it one lampstand?

⁷ There was a meaning to this vision. So Zechariah at once responded to it: "Then I answered and said to the angel who was speaking with me, saying: 'What do these things mean, my lord?' So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me: 'Do you not really know what these things mean?' In turn I said: 'No, my lord.'"—Zechariah 4:4, 5.

⁸ Like the prophet Zechariah, we do not care to place our own interpretation upon the vision. We are willing to be taught from Jehovah of armies, by means of his angel. Only by getting the divine truth from the right source can we benefit from the vision. On being inquired of by Zechariah, the angelic interpreter does not first go into the meaning of all the details of the vision. Rather, he gives us the force, the all-embracing lesson, of the vision as a whole. This adds vigor to a vision of just a lampstand.

⁹ "Accordingly," says Zechariah, "he answered and said to me: 'This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, "Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit,' Jehovah of armies has said. Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a level land. And he will certainly bring forth the headstone. There will be shoutings to it: 'How charming! How charming!' " " "—Zechariah 4:6, 7.

THE BARRIER TO BE REDUCED TO NOTHING

¹⁰ How would anyone of us have liked to have the opposition of the pagan governors of the Persian provinces on this side (the western side) of the Euphrates River? Not just that, but how would any single one of us have liked to have the opposition of the emperor of the whole Persian Empire, King Darius I? That is the opposition that, for the time being, stood in the way of Zerubbabel as he went ahead with rebuilding Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem in that year 519 B.C.E. (Ezra 5:3 to 6:2) That would indeed appear like a

7. What did Zechariah now ask the angel concerning the lampstand?
8, 9. (a) By what course can we, like Zechariah, benefit from this vision? (b) What answer does the angel give to Zechariah, and what does this convey to us as instead of explanation of details?

10. What opposition did Zerubbabel face, and what might it seem to be like, especially in view of what circumstances?

"great mountain" in the way of carrying the temple's reconstruction to a successful finish, would it not? He did not have any military force among the less than fifty thousand who had returned with him from Babylon back in 537 B.C.E. How, then, could he withstand any armed invasion by protesters to stop the temple work? What power did he or his fellow Israelites have? He did not know King Darius I personally, and had no political pull or influence with him. How, then, could he ever expect to finish Jehovah's house of worship—without being severely punished?

¹¹ Do we today ask or did Governor Zerubbabel ask "How"? Back comes the answer from the greatest military Commander in Chief of all: "'Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit,' Jehovah of armies has said." (Zechariah 4:6) Zerubbabel did not need to worry about having a military force or power of any human source. All he had to do was to trust in the One who had told him by his prophets to go ahead with the work and to depend upon the spirit of that One, the Supreme Authority. That spirit of that One is, to be sure, an invisible active force, but it is irresistible, overwhelming, ever successful, always triumphant. Work invisibly it does, but it does produce results as purposed by the divine Source of that spirit. All the military might in the whole earth and all the political, religious power among all mankind cannot hold their ground against His holy active force in operation. In going ahead with the temple work, Governor Zerubbabel had that spirit behind him!

¹² What, then, is a figurative "great mountain" in the way? To it Jehovah of armies says: "Before Zerubbabel you will become a level land." Before Zerubbabel and the faithful remnant that had returned with him from Babylon Jehovah had fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 40:4, 5: "Let every valley be raised up, and every mountain and hill be made low. And the knobby

11. (a) What is the divine answer to the question? (b) So what did Zerubbabel need to have behind him in the temple work, and why?
 12. That figurative "great mountain" before Zerubbabel was to become what, and how was the fulfillment of Isaiah 40:4, 5 an assurance of this?

ground must become level land, and the rugged ground a valley plain. And the glory of Jehovah will certainly be revealed, and all flesh must see it together, for the very mouth of Jehovah has spoken it." He could now do a similar thing in the case of this "great mountain" that confronted Governor Zerubbabel in that year 519 B.C.E. Let us note how He did so, by no strenuous effort on Zerubbabel's part, but by His spirit.

¹³ Just two months previously He had declared how he would deal with the enemy military hosts, saying: "I am rocking the heavens and the earth. And I shall certainly overthrow the throne of kingdoms and annihilate the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariot and its riders, and the horses and their riders will certainly come down, each one by the sword of his brother. 'In that day,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, 'I shall take you, O Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, my servant,' is the utterance of Jehovah; 'and I shall certainly set you as a seal ring, because you are the one whom I have chosen,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies." (Haggai 2:20-23) Because of what Governor Zerubbabel and his fellow workers did that day (Chislev 24, 520 B.C.E.) at the foundation of the temple in Jerusalem, the provincial governors west of the Euphrates River may have taken their appeal to King Darius I in Shushan, Persia. But certainly those provincial governors must have protested to King Darius I after Zerubbabel went forward with the temple work under the stimulation of this fifth vision that Zechariah reported to him.

¹⁴ Up till then King Darius I had let the ban as imposed by King Artaxerxes stand against the temple building. But on getting the appeal of the aroused provincial governors, what did he do?

13. (a) How had Jehovah earlier, on Chislev 24, 520 B.C.E., given Zerubbabel an assurance against enemy military force, through Haggai? (b) What would the adversaries do, certainly after Zerubbabel acted under stimulation by Zechariah's fifth vision?

14. According to Ezra 6:1-13, what did King Darius I do on getting the appeal of the aroused provincial governors?

It was then that Darius the king put an order through, and they made an investigation in the house of the records of the treasures deposited there in Babylon. And at Ecbatana, in the fortified place that was in the jurisdictional district of Media, there was found a scroll, and the memorandum to this effect was written within it:

"In the first year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king put an order through concerning the house of God in Jerusalem: Let the house be rebuilt as the place where they are to offer sacrifices, and its foundations are to be fixed, its height being sixty cubits, its width sixty cubits, with three layers of stones rolled into place and one layer of timbers; and let the expense be given from the king's house. And also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God that Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon be returned, that they may reach the temple that is in Jerusalem at its place and be deposited in the house of God.

"Now Tattenai the governor beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues, the lesser governors that are beyond the River, keep your distance from there. Let the work on that house of God alone. The governor of the Jews and the older men of the Jews will rebuild that house of God upon its place. And by me an order has been put through as to what you will do with these older men of the Jews, for rebuilding that house of God; and from the royal treasury of the tax beyond the River the expense will promptly be given to these able-bodied men without cessation. And what is needed, young bulls as well as rams and lambs for the burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine and oil, just as the priests that are in Jerusalem say, let there be given them continually day by day without fail; that they may continually be presenting soothing offerings to the God of the heavens and praying for the life of the king and his sons. And by me an order has been put through that, as for anybody that violates this decree, a timber will be pulled out of his house and he will be impaled upon it, and his house will be turned into a public privy on this account. And may the God who has caused his name to reside there overthrow any king and people that thrusts his hand out to commit a violation and destroy that house of God, which is in Jerusalem. I, Darius, do put through an order. Let it be done promptly."

Then Tattenai the governor beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues, just as Darius the king had sent word, so they did promptly.—Ezra 6:1-13.

¹⁵ Was the spirit of Jehovah of armies acting and directing in this matter? It is only to His spirit that we can assign this startling turn of events, for it was done without any military force or human power on the part of Governor Zerubbabel. The figurative "mountain" that was raised up by opposition forces in the way of Zerubbabel was made a "level land" for him. His faith in Jehovah of armies and his courage to do the temple work were amply rewarded. Foreknowing what he would accomplish by means of his invincible spirit, Jehovah went on to say in that fifth vision to Zechariah: "And he will certainly bring forth the headstone. There will be shoutings to it: 'How charming! How charming!'"—Zechariah 4:7.

THE "CHARMING" HEADSTONE

¹⁶ That "headstone" was the crowning stone of the temple to be rebuilt at Jerusalem. That headstone was the essential stone that would put the finishing touch to the temple. Governor Zerubbabel's bringing it forth would certify that he would bring the temple work through to a completion. There would be no stopping of him as Jehovah's servant *now*. Jehovah's spirit would see to that!

¹⁷ A day of boundless exultation it would be when he put that headstone into its place, to signalize the successful finishing of the temple at the city where God had put his holy name. The enraptured crowd of spectators on beholding this crowning feat would cry out in admiration of that headstone in its prominent place: "How charming! How charming!" It was beautiful in itself, for it was the same stone that was laid before High Priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak and the engraving of which Jehovah himself had engraved by means of his agent. (Zechariah 3:9) But that engraved headstone took on added beauty as it now

15. (a) To what alone can we assign that startling turn of events, and why so? (b) Foreknowing this, what did Jehovah say that Zerubbabel would do with the headstone of the temple?

16. How essential was that headstone, and what would Zerubbabel's bringing it forth certify?

17. Why would that day of putting the headstone in place be one of exultation, and why would the spectators cry out, "How charming!"?

occupied its assigned position in the temple structure and gave to the temple structure a gratifying appearance. Not only were the charmed eyes of the temple worshipers on that headstone, but Jehovah's "seven eyes" were specially upon that stone in undivided attention. Its being put in place was a vindication of his word of prophecy by Haggai and Zechariah.

¹⁸ That day of exultation and of vindication came on the third day of the lunar month Adar of the year 515 B.C.E., for this is what recorded history says: "And the older men of the Jews were building and making progress under the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo, and they built and finished it due to the order of the God of Israel and due to the order of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes the king of Persia. And they completed this house by the third day of the lunar month Adar, that is, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king."—Ezra 6:14, 15.

¹⁹ What a grand prospect that historic but prophetic occasion sets forth before all lovers of the pure, undefiled worship of the one living and true God today! It points ahead to the time when the true worship of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will be brought to its perfected state at his spiritual temple. This will be when Babylon the Great (the world empire of false religion, including sectarian Christendom) is destroyed and all the political, military and social elements of this world who are opposed to even the pure religion are destroyed, and the cleansed earth is left with only the remnant of spiritual underpriests of spiritual Israel and their fellow worshipers out of all nations and peoples and tribes. This crowning achievement will be brought about, as Jehovah says, "not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit."

²⁰ The antitypical Governor Zerubbabel will have a specially privileged part in bringing to reality the

18. According to recorded history, when did that day of exultation come?

19. What grand prospect does that prophetic religious occasion set before us today, and by what means will this be brought about?

20. What governor has a specially privileged part in that coming fulfillment of prophecy?

modern-day fulfillment of this divine prophecy. We know who he is—Jesus Christ, who now governs from his heavenly throne over the faithful remnant of his spiritual underpriests and their dedicated, baptized companion worshipers.

²¹ Zerubbabel prefigured the glorified King Jesus Christ in an aspect different from what High Priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak did. High Priest Joshua (whom Greek-speaking Jews called "Jesus") pictured Jesus Christ in his priestly functions. Zerubbabel, being appointed governor of the province of Judah, pictured the Lord Jesus Christ in his governmental capacity as of a king. These two capacities, that of high priest and that of governor, are combined in the glorified Jesus Christ, for he is also prefigured by Melchizedek, concerning whom Genesis 14:18 says: "Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine, and he was priest of the Most High God." Hebrews 7:1 calls him "Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God." —Psalm 110:1-4.

²² Zerubbabel as governor of Jerusalem and Judah would promote the rebuilding of the temple as decreed by King Cyrus. He would use his governmental power to safeguard the temple work. To him, evidently under the title of Sheshbazzar, the sacred "utensils of the house of Jehovah" were entrusted by King Cyrus, and these holy utensils Zerubbabel brought from Babylon to Jerusalem to be used in the rebuilt house of Jehovah. (Ezra 1:7 to 2:2; 5:13-16) Rightly, then, Governor Zerubbabel took the leading part in the laying of the foundation of the second temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. (Ezra 3:8-10) In this way Zerubbabel foreshadowed how the reigning King Jesus Christ would give stimulus to the work of restoring the pure worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple. He would protect the remnant of anointed spiritual underpriests now on earth in their efforts since 1919 C.E., to restore Je-

21. Zerubbabel and Joshua picture what capacities that are combined in Jesus Christ and also prefigured in Melchizedek?

22. (a) Zerubbabel used his governing power in protecting and promoting what work, under whose decree? (b) Whom did Zerubbabel prefigure in a like work and as leveling what "great mountain"?

hovah's pure worship among all mankind. The "great mountain" of opposition and difficulty in the way of their doing this he has reduced to "level land."

²³ To compare with Governor Zerubbabel in bringing forth the headstone and putting it in place in the temple in 515 B.C.E., the glorified Jesus Christ will bring the work of reestablishing Jehovah's worship at His spiritual temple to triumphant completion. By means of his invisible holy angels he will gather all the needed remnant of spiritual underpriests and will aid them in carrying out their duties in the anti-typical Holy of Jehovah's spiritual temple. He himself will fulfill the role of the "headstone" in that spiritual arrangement for Jehovah's worship. At God's due time he will take his own assigned place in that spiritual framework of worship and thus give the finishing touch to its completion. He is the Key One, like a figurative headstone, to the perfecting of that divine arrangement for worship, in which he serves as the Royal High Priest in behalf of all mankind. When he takes his place and reports to Jehovah God that he has completed the work on restoring the full-scale worship by means of all the necessary underpriests at the spiritual temple, that will result in a "charming" sight.

²⁴ At that sacred moment, when it becomes manifest that the work with regard to true worship has been perfected despite the opposition of Babylon the Great and her political patronizers, all true worshipers of Jehovah on earth will be filled with irrepressible appreciation of the part that the Greater Governor, Jesus Christ, has successfully performed. Jubilantly they will shout out to him as the Greater Headstone: "How charming! How charming!"

THE "DAY OF SMALL THINGS" NOT TO BE DESPISED

²⁵ When this work of building up the theocratic organization for Jehovah's worship began in the postwar

23. (a) How does Jesus Christ compare with Governor Zerubbabel in promoting the temple-building work? (b) How does he fulfill the picture of bringing forth the headstone and placing it?

24. When will Jehovah's worshipers cry out to the Greater Headstone, "How charming!"?

25. When the postwar work of building up the theocratic organization for Jehovah's worship began in 1919 C.E., why did it look despicable?

year of 1919 C.E., it looked despicable in the eyes of religious Babylon the Great and her military, political paramours. It looked so impossible of realization to them. Why so? Because the surviving remnant of anointed spiritual Israelites was so small and was in international disrepute. (Matthew 24:9) For example, when the general convention of the International Bible Students Association was held on September 1-8, 1919, at the resort grounds of Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A., there were only about 6,000 that attended the weekday sessions; and other thousands, who could not attend this convention so early after World War I, were scattered all around the earth, some 17,961 (according to incomplete reports) having attended the previous celebration of the Lord's Supper on April 13, 1919. What were these thousands of Jehovah's dedicated, baptized worshipers in comparison with Christendom's hundreds of millions of church members? As nothing!

²⁶ Yet, was this surviving remnant of spiritual Israelites to be despised for its smallness? Because it had no "military force"? Facts that are available today, more than fifty years later, give a resounding answer, and they prove that it was the infallible God who sent his prophet Zechariah with a message to correct all wrong ideas drawn from the early appearance of things. Listen, as Zechariah goes on to report: "And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: 'The very hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his own hands will finish it. And you will have to know that Jehovah of armies himself has sent me to you people. For who has despised the day of small things? And they will certainly rejoice and see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of Jehovah. They are roving about in all the earth.'"—Zechariah 4:8-10.

²⁷ If there had been any doubts in the minds of any of the repatriated remnant of Jews in the land of Judah, they positively knew that it was no other than

26. (a) Was the surviving remnant to be despised for its smallness? (b) Who brought a corrective message, and by whom was he sent? 27. When was the absolute proof furnished that it was Jehovah who had sent Zechariah to the people?

Jehovah who had sent Zechariah to His people—on the third day of the twelfth lunar month (Adar) of 515 B.C.E. The record of Ezra 6:14, 15 tells us: "And the older men of the Jews were building and making progress under the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo, and they built and finished it due to the order of the God of Israel and due to the order of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes the king of Persia. And they completed this house by the third day of the lunar month Adar, that is, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king." Jehovah's prophetic word was vindicated!

²⁸ Governor Zerubbabel may have had a plumb line with a plummet in his hand when he finished Jehovah's house of worship by laying that essential headstone in its place. Eyes did rejoice at seeing that sight. Especially did Jehovah's eyes. Nothing escapes His eyes. It is as if He has a complete set of eyes—seven—eyes that rove about in all the earth to observe everything done, whether done by His enemies or done by his dedicated people. His eyes did not fail to see the laying of the headstone by Zerubbabel with the plummet in his hand. His own eyes rejoiced with those of his faithful remnant who put the worship of the true God in the first place in their lives. How much more will his all-observing eyes rejoice when they behold the Greater Zerubbabel finish the work with regard to restored pure worship on earth at His spiritual temple!

"THE TWO ANOINTED ONES"

²⁹ At this point, do we remember what the angel told the prophet Zechariah when he asked what the meaning of the golden lampstand with seven lamps was? Yes, it was this: "'Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit,' Jehovah of armies has said." (Zechariah 4:6) Now we are enabled to see the fitness of this mighty statement by further details

28. (a) Why did Jehovah's eyes not fail to see it when Zerubbabel, with the plummet in hand, placed the headstone on the temple? (b) At what similar but greater event will his eyes rejoice still more?

29. When Zechariah first asked what the vision of the golden lampstand meant, what was he told, and how are we now enabled to see the fitness of that answer?

that appear in the vision, with further explanation. To satisfy us on the matter we are told:

³⁰ "And I proceeded to answer and say to him: 'What do these two olive trees on the right side of the lampstand and on its left side mean?' Then I answered the second time and said to him: 'What are the two bunches of twigs of the olive trees that, by means of the two golden tubes, are pouring forth from within themselves the golden liquid?' So he said to me: 'Do you not really know what these things mean?' In turn I said: 'No, my lord.' Accordingly he said: 'These are the two anointed ones who are standing alongside the Lord of the whole earth.'"
—Zechariah 4:11-14.

³¹ Zechariah saw good to follow up his first question immediately with a second one, in order not to miss inquiring about a feature that he had not mentioned in his first question. Those two olive trees, we recall, stood to the right and the left of the golden bowl from which seven pipes extended out to the seven lamps on the lampstand in order to deliver to them oil from the central supply. From where did the golden bowl atop the lampstand get its own supply of illuminating liquid? From the bunch of twigs of the olive tree to the right and the bunch of twigs of the olive tree to the left, and this by means of a golden tube from each bunch of twigs. The liquid thus delivered looked golden, and it could no more be turned off than those two olive trees could be turned off. The supply was constant, just as the source of it was living and constant. That illuminating liquid pictured, not a military force, nor human power, but, as Jehovah said, "my spirit." Oil was thus used to picture God's spirit.—Zechariah 4:6.

³² Just as the olive tree was created by Jehovah God and so He is the Source of its oil, likewise he is the Source of the spirit or invisible active force,

30. What did the angel tell Zechariah that the two olive trees alongside the lampstand pictured?

31. How was the supply of oil delivered to the lamps, why was the supply constant, and what did the oil picture?

32. (a) What is the source of the symbolic "olive oil"? (b) What is symbolized by the lampstand that gets such oil?

that kindles the flame of the true worship of Him. The two olive trees accordingly picture the two agents by means of which he conveys his spirit to the symbolic lampstand, that is, to his "holy nation," the anointed remnant of the spiritual Israelites. Who, then, are the two agents that are symbolized by the two olive trees?

³³ It is not going contrary to the Scriptures to say that the two olive trees picture intelligent creatures of God. In connection with the vision of the temple as reported by the Christian apostle John in the last book of the Bible, we read: "And I will cause my two witnesses to prophesy . . . dressed in sackcloth. These are symbolized by the two olive trees and the two lampstands and are standing before the Lord of the earth." (Revelation 11:3, 4) The two olive trees of Zechariah's vision are explained to be the "two anointed ones [literally, two sons of oil] who are standing alongside the Lord of the whole earth." Whom, then, do these picture? Not the inspired prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, but two individuals to whom Zechariah was commanded to transmit the word of Jehovah of armies, namely, High Priest Joshua the son of Jehozadak and Governor Zerubbabel.

³⁴ By means of the inspired prophets Haggai and Zechariah Jehovah's spirit was imparted to Joshua and Zerubbabel. These, in turn, were to take the lead in the building of the second temple of Jehovah and to impart Jehovah's spirit to the Israelite remnant in that behalf. These two "anointed ones" were to imbue the whole restored nation with Jehovah's spirit constantly, by sticking to the work to the finish and by encouraging on the temple workers both by words of exhortation and by personal example. They could do this if they constantly stood alongside Jehovah, "the Lord of the whole earth." They must stand on His side as respects the issue of the only true worship,

33. How does Revelation 11:3, 4 use olive trees to symbolize God's living creatures, and so whom do the two olive trees in Zechariah's vision symbolize?

34. (a) How did the high priest and the governor impart the symbolic oil to the symbolic lampstand? (b) How did Zerubbabel and Joshua themselves keep constant in their supply of God's spirit?

and they must constantly attend upon Him in favor of that worship of Him exclusively. In this way the sacred work would be accomplished by Jehovah's spirit. Being "Lord of the whole earth," he fulfills his will toward it.

³⁵ In the fulfillment of this vision in the present "time of the end," whom do the "two olive trees," the "two anointed ones," picture? Since, in the first fulfillment of the vision in Zechariah's own day, they pictured High Priest Joshua and Governor Zerubbabel, they must picture just the one personage, namely, Jehovah's Anointed One, Messiah or Christ, Jesus who was anointed with the holy spirit of God.—Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:1.

³⁶ Yes, indeed, Jesus the Messiah was prefigured by both High Priest Joshua and Governor Zerubbabel. Before he left his loyal apostles on earth he promised to send them the spirit, which proceeds from the Heavenly Father. (John 14:16, 17; 15:26; 16:13, 14) Then, on the festival day of Pentecost of 33 C.E., he served like the two olive trees of Zechariah's vision. On that day Jehovah God began to use him to channel and pour out the holy spirit upon the "holy nation" of spiritual Israel. (Acts 1:5; 2:1-35; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7, 8; Luke 3:16) Like the "two anointed ones" or "two sons of oil" in Zechariah's fifth vision, Christ Jesus stands "alongside the Lord of the whole earth" as High Priest and Governor and constantly attends upon Him, for he is at the right hand of God in the heavens. (Acts 2:34-36; 7:56) In this position he can be the channel of a constant supply of the spirit of the Lord God to the symbolic "lampstand" on earth, the faithful remnant of spiritual Israel.

³⁷ Not by a military force, but by the unfailing spirit of God Almighty, the anointed remnant work on under

35. In the modern-day fulfillment of the vision, whom do the two olive trees symbolize?

36. (a) How has Jesus Christ acted like Joshua the high priest and Governor Zerubbabel in connection with God's spirit? (b) How has he, like the two olive trees, kept in constant supply of the spirit, and to what symbolic lampstand has he imparted it?

37. (a) Energized by what and under whose leadership do the remnant keep on in the temple work? (b) To whom, therefore, will the complimentary praise and credit go for success in the temple work?

their heavenly Governor and High Priest, Jesus Christ. Stimulated and energized by holy spirit they will carry on the temple work until it is fully accomplished. Accordingly, the compliments, praise and credit for the final, crowning success will go, not to the remnant of spiritual underpriests, but to Jehovah God the Source of the spirit and through Jesus Christ as His loving channel.

CHAPTER 12

AN END TO PERMISSION OF WICKEDNESS

THE ANCIENT nation of Israel had at Jerusalem the beautiful symbol of the pure worship of the only living and true God. It was his sacred temple, rebuilt. But the nation should be doing more than merely going through routine ceremonial performances at that center of worship. The chosen nation of Israel, with its rebuilt temple of Jehovah's worship at Jerusalem, should be living that religion daily throughout its God-given land. Then their religion would not be just a mere pious formality, but would be a living experience. It would not result in profaning the sacred house of Jehovah's worship. It would not bring ridicule and reproach upon the name of God. Then he could gladly bless the worshipful inhabitants of the land in accord with the promise of his solemn covenant with the nation. He would not be obliged to send a death-dealing curse upon those not living up to the covenant.

1. Instead of going through mere religious formalities at his temple, what should the nation of Israel do to have Jehovah's blessings according to his covenant?

² On the part of His sincere worshipers, there must be a genuine hatred of wickedness. To that effect the inspired psalmist exhorts them: "Oh you lovers of Jehovah, hate what is bad. He is guarding the souls of his loyal ones; out of the hand of the wicked ones he delivers them. Light itself has flashed up for the righteous one, and rejoicing even for the ones upright in heart." (Psalm 97:10, 11) There should be no tolerating of wickedness where the lovers of Jehovah reside, in their God-given estate. In his own time, to which he strictly adheres, he will put an end to all wickedness throughout the whole earth, together with all its terrible consequences. He will no longer permit wickedness. Hail that happy time for all righteously disposed mankind!

³ In harmony with this delightful prospect is the theme of the sixth vision given to the prophet Zechariah on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh lunar month (Shebat) in the year 519 B.C.E. That it might be preserved for our encouragement in this time of its complete fulfillment, he was inspired to record it.

THE SIXTH VISION

⁴ Zechariah writes: "Then I raised my eyes again and saw; and, look! a flying scroll. So he [the angel of interpretation] said to me: 'What are you seeing?' In turn I said: 'I am seeing a flying scroll, the length of which is twenty cubits, and the breadth of which is ten cubits.'"—Zechariah 5:1, 2.

⁵ The scroll is unrolled. With flat surface it is skimming through the air as with the wings of an airplane. It is a large scroll, for it is twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad, to total up an area of two hundred square cubits, or around four hundred and fifty square feet. And if both sides of the scroll were used for writing, that would amount to nine hundred square feet of

2. (a) On the part of Jehovah's worshipers there should be a hatred of what, according to Psalm 97:10, 11? (b) In harmony with what purpose of God should they tolerate no wickedness in their God-given estate?

3. In harmony with that theme, what vision was now given, and for whose encouragement was it recorded?

4, 5. (a) To the interpretative angel, what did Zechariah report seeing? (b) How was that scroll proceeding through the air, and how much writing surface did it have, for what kind of message?

writing surface. It did prove to be written on both sides. This would enable it to convey an impressively large message. Was the message favorable for the land, or unfavorable? That would indicate what the flying scroll meant. Zechariah wanted to know. So do we.

⁶ What did the interpreting angel say? "Then he said to me: 'This is the curse that is going forth over the surface of all the earth, because everyone that is stealing, according to it on this side, has gone free of punishment; and everyone making a sworn oath, according to it on that side, has gone free of punishment.'" —Zechariah 5:3.

⁷ What, then, is to happen to these evildoers who have thus far got off scot-free? According to what is written on the one side of the scroll, what curse is to be executed upon the hitherto-unpunished stealer? And according to what is written on the other side of the scroll, what curse is to be executed upon the guilty maker of a sworn oath? Even we today are interested in knowing, because all the earth at present abounds with stealers and with persons who do not live up to their sworn oath. What does the interpreting angel have to tell us? This:

⁸ "'I have caused it to go forth,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, 'and it must enter into the house of the thief and into the house of the one making a sworn oath in my name falsely; and it must lodge in the midst of his house and exterminate it and its timbers and its stones.'" —Zechariah 5:4.

⁹ The thief and the maker of a sworn oath in Jehovah's name falsely were cursed to destruction. Not alone were their houses to be exterminated, timbers, stones and all, but the thief and false oath swearers were to be exterminated. The very place of their residence was to be blotted out of the land, and they along with their living quarters. A terrible curse, indeed! Drastic!

6. What did the interpreting angel explain the flying scroll to mean?

7, 8. What questions arise as regards the thief and the swearer of a false oath in Jehovah's name, and what does Jehovah say that the curse will do?

9. To what extent was the extermination to proceed—to the houses alone?

¹⁰ We must bear in mind that this applied to the land occupied by the remnant of once exiled Jews who had been liberated from Babylon and had returned to the land of Judah for the purpose of rebuilding Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem. That made matters all the more serious. Under the Ten Comandments, as given through the prophet Moses, those natural, circumcised Jews were under divine command not to steal, not to swear falsely or bear false witness. Hence, in stealing from God's chosen people, the thief was really stealing from Jehovah. In swearing falsely in Jehovah's holy name, the false swearer was lying, not only to the one for whom the sworn oath was to be an assurance or guarantee, but also to Jehovah. It was a misuse of His name, the use of His name in a worthless way. (Exodus 20:7, 15, 16) Although the thieves and false swearers escaped for a time punishment at the hands of those who should enforce God's law, yet His curse would apply to those violators and would in due time take effect upon them.

KINDS OF THIEVERY

¹¹ No matter what the motive for stealing might be and how excusable the theft might seem to be under the circumstances, yet it was a sin and deserved to be punished according of God's law. Said the inspired wise King Solomon: "People do not despise a thief just because he commits thievery to fill his soul when he is hungry. But, when found, he will make it good with seven times as much; all the valuables of his house he will give." (Proverbs 6:30, 31) The proverbialist Agur the son of Jakeh did not desire to get into circumstances where he felt obliged to steal, for he saw that his God was involved or was affected. Hence he prayed to God: "Untruth and the lying word put far away from me. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Let me devour the food prescribed for me, that I may not become satisfied and I actually deny you and say: 'Who

10. To what land did this matter apply, and why did this fact make the stealing and the false swearing all the more serious?

11. Did hunger make thievery excusable, or what consequences did such stealing bring according to Solomon and proverbialist Agur?

is Jehovah?" and that I may not come to poverty and I actually steal and assail the name of my God." (Proverbs 30:1, 8, 9) How would he by thievery be assailing the name of his God?

¹² Because thievery is an expression of idolatry. The thief idolizes himself or the thing he steals. He covets that to which he has no right but which belongs to another. To escape punishment for thievery, he takes the coveted thing when the owner or enforcers of the law are not watching. Since the commandment against thievery was given over God's name Jehovah, the thieving person is disregarding God's name and assailing it as being of no force or importance. Wrote the Christian apostle Paul to Christian heirs of God's heavenly kingdom: "No fornicator or unclean person or greedy person—which means being an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God." (Ephesians 5:5) He also wrote: "Deadens, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." (Colossians 3:5) Paul may have had in mind the prophecy of Zechariah when he wrote: "Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work, that he may have something to distribute to someone in need."—Ephesians 4:28, 25.

¹³ If a dedicated, baptized Christian renews any stealing that he did before his conversion or he takes up stealing, he is assailing the name of his God. Since he as a stealer cannot inherit God's Messianic kingdom, he comes under the divine curse. This will mean his destruction, for if he fails to gain entrance into the kingdom to which he is called, there is nothing else left for him. To be a thief, we do not necessarily need to steal material things from another person. Of more serious consequence is one's stealing the words of God. God is against such stealing.

12. (a) How, in the light of the Ten Commandments, is the stealing, even for hunger's sake, an assailing of God's name? (b) What does the apostle Paul say on this?

13. (a) How does the "curse" affect the dedicated, baptized Christian who takes up stealing? (b) What stealing is more serious than stealing some creature's material property?

¹⁴ “‘Therefore here I am against the prophets,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘the ones who are stealing away my words, each one from his companion.’ ‘Here I am against the prophets,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘the ones who are employing their tongue that they may utter forth, “An utterance!”’ ‘Here I am against the prophets of false dreams,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘who relate them and cause my people to wander about because of their falsehoods and because of their boasting.’ ‘But I myself did not send them or command them. So they will by no means benefit this people,’ is the utterance of Jehovah.”—Jeremiah 23:30-32.

¹⁵ Stealing Jehovah's words from one's companion is a serious matter. How do we do this? Do we steal Jehovah's words from the prophet when we quote the words of the one whom He inspired to say them? No, for we give due credit to the inspired prophet whose words we are quoting for our support or for proof of a teaching. We refer people to the Bible book, chapter and verse from which we quote. We do not do like the false prophets in Jeremiah's day. These prophets would take the prophecy of the man whom Jehovah inspired to utter the prophecy and then would palm this prophecy off as being their own. And, of course, when they enlarged upon this prophecy that they had stolen, they would not have the divine guidance in doing so. This would result in their not explaining it correctly or in making unauthorized additions of their own or adulterating, distorting, watering down the prophecy. In this way they would use the purloined prophecy to their own selfish ends.

¹⁶ They put on an appearance of being a prophet by saying, as if under inspiration: “An utterance!” Then they really steal the name of Jehovah by attaching it to their own “utterance” to which it does not belong.

14. What does Jehovah say, in Jeremiah 23:30-32, about those who steal His words?

15. (a) What must be said as to whether we are stealing our companion's words when we make Bible quotations to others? (b) How did the false prophets in Jeremiah's days steal God's words from their companion?

16. How did those who pretended to be inspired prophets or who related mere dreams steal God's name?

They dream up false dreams for the future so as to influence the people against Jehovah's true mouth-pieces. Because of their false dreams and their boasting regarding the future, they cause the people to go astray religiously and spiritually and leave them unprepared for the real things to come. Jehovah did not send them or command them, for which reason they have no right to steal God's name from its rightful place and use it for their deceptive purposes. Such thieves benefit no one.

¹⁷ "For who has stood in the intimate group of Jehovah that he might see and hear his word? Who has given attention to his word that he might hear it? Look! The windstorm of Jehovah, rage itself, will certainly go forth, even a whirling tempest. Upon the head of the wicked ones it will whirl itself. The anger of Jehovah will not turn back until he will have carried out and until he will have made the ideas of his heart come true. In the final part of the days you people will give your consideration to it with understanding. I did not send the prophets, yet they themselves ran. I did not speak to them, yet they themselves prophesied. But if they had stood in my intimate group, then they would have made my people hear my own words, and they would have caused them to turn back from their bad way and from the badness of their dealings."
—Jeremiah 23:18-22.

¹⁸ The foregoing corresponds with what is said to dedicated, baptized Christians in the last book of the Bible: "If anyone takes anything away from the words of the scroll of this prophecy, God will take his portion away from the trees of life and out of the holy city, things which are written about in this scroll." (Revelation 22:19) In teaching that the book of Revelation has no prophetic value or that the Bible is full of myths and legends and impossibilities, the clergy of Christendom have certainly taken away much from God's Word,

17. What did Jehovah forewarn was approaching, and how were the prophets that did not stand in His intimate group responsible for the people's conduct?

18. How have Christendom's clergymen done what Revelation 22:19 warns against, and how have they stolen the words of their companion?

and so are withholding it from the unsuspecting people. How often during political campaigns and in wartime the clergy of Christendom have appropriated to their own selfish use a text from the Bible and employed it as a pretext to talk to their congregations about worldly politics, social reform schemes and war propaganda! Is that not stealing Jehovah's word from one's companion?

¹⁹ In contrast with stealing away any of the Word of God from those who deserve to hear it, we should imitate the example of the apostle Paul who said: "I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house. But I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus. Hence I call you to witness this very day that I am clean from the blood of all men, for I have not held back from telling you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:19-21, 26, 27) Like Paul, we do not want to be cursed for spiritual stealing.

MAKING A SWORN OATH IN GOD'S NAME FALSELY

²⁰ Zechariah and the rest of the restored Jews of his day could well remember an outstanding case in history that showed how strongly God felt about one's swearing falsely with an oath in His name. This case was that of their last king on the throne of Jerusalem, namely, that of King Zedekiah the son of Josiah. He died blind in a prison in Babylon before the faithful Jewish remnant were liberated from Babylonian exile. Why? The record at 2 Chronicles 36:12, 13 explains why, saying: "He continued to do what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah his God. He did not humble himself on account of Jeremiah the prophet at the order of Jehovah. And even against King Nebuchadnezzar he rebelled, who had made him swear by God; and he kept stiffening his neck and hardening his heart so as not to return to Jehovah the God of Israel."

19. How can we, like the apostle Paul, avoid God's curse for stealing God's words from those needing them?

20. The prophet Zechariah and his fellow Jews could well remember what outstanding case of swearing falsely by God's name in Judah?

²¹ With regard to the oath with which King Zedekiah swore to King Nebuchadnezzar in the name of Jehovah, Ezekiel 17:16-20 sets forth this decision of Jehovah:

“‘As I am alive,’ is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, ‘in the place of the king [Nebuchadnezzar] who put in as king the one that despised his oath and that broke his covenant, with him in the midst of Babylon he will die. . . . And he has despised an oath in breaking a covenant, and, look! he had given his hand and has done even all these things. He will not make his escape.’ Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: “As I am alive, surely my oath that he has despised and my covenant that he has broken—I will even bring it upon his head. And I will spread over him my net, and he will certainly be caught in my hunting net; and I will bring him to Babylon and put myself on judgment with him there respecting his unfaithfulness with which he acted against me.”’”

²² Since King Zedekiah had sworn with an oath to King Nebuchadnezzar in the name of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, he owed it to God to live up to his oath and carry out his covenant to be a vassal king to the king of Babylon. In disregard of the inspired counsel of the prophet Jeremiah, he perjured himself, forswore himself and rebelled and turned to Pharaoh of Egypt for military help.—Ezekiel 17:11-15, 17; Isaiah 31:1-3.

²³ Similar to King Zedekiah, who was in the Law covenant with God through the mediator Moses, the nations of Christendom have gone down to symbolic Egypt for help, yes, to the world with its military equipment. The religious clergymen of Christendom have gone along with their respective nations and have blessed and prayed for their armies, their military weapons and their war procedures. In this manner the nations of Christendom and their clergy, who claim to be in the new covenant with God through Christ as mediator, have broken their covenant with God. The religious clergy have violated the neutrality toward world conflicts that is binding on all Christians.

21. According to Ezekiel 17:16-20, what decision did Jehovah make concerning unfaithful King Zedekiah?

22. How did King Zedekiah forswear himself, and against whose counsel?

23. Similar to Zedekiah, how have the nations of Christendom and their clergy gone for help and broken their covenant?

²⁴ Whatever vows or sworn oaths the sectarian clergy of Christendom have made to God when being ordained to the ministry of their respective religious denominations, they have broken. They have done so by their worldly course, well knowing that "the friendship with the world is enmity with God" and that "whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (James 4:4) What about the "curse" that was represented by the unusually large flying scroll that was going forth over all the surface of the earth? Will it enter into the houses of those spiritual or religious thieves? Will it exterminate them and all their religious houses in the time of God's executing that curse? Without fail, yes! Those clergymen and their professed Christian nations are "false to agreements" respecting God, although they should know full well "the righteous decree of God, that those practicing such things are deserving of death." (Romans 1:31, 32) Woe to them in the coming "great tribulation" when that curse on the "flying scroll" is executed by God.—Matthew 24:21, 22.

²⁵ As in the vision to Zechariah the curse was to put an end to thievery and false swearing in Jehovah's name throughout the land of His people, so an end must be put to such things in all the earth. Especially so now in the spiritual estate of Jehovah's restored remnant of spiritual Israel. Such kinds of wickedness are no longer to be permitted, tolerated, and allowed to go unpunished in this earth, which belongs to its Creator, the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. To escape the coming extermination all fully dedicated, baptized Christians are under Scriptural obligation to be "no part of this world," to stick inseparably to theocratic neutrality toward the selfish disputes of this world. Because the restored remnant of spiritual Israelites do this, there is fulfilled to them what is foretold in Revelation 22:3-5:

24. (a) How have Christendom's clergymen acted toward vows or oaths taken when they were ordained as ministers? (b) How will they fare when God executes the flying scroll "curse" in the coming "great tribulation"?

25, 26. (a) Where finally must an end be put to those kinds of wickedness specified on the flying scroll? (b) By what course of action will dedicated, baptized Christians escape the "curse" of the flying scroll?

²⁶ "And no more will there be any curse. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his slaves will render him sacred service; and they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. Also, night will be no more, and they have no need of lamplight nor do they have sunlight, because Jehovah God will shed light upon them, and they will rule as kings forever and ever."

WICKEDNESS REMOVED TO BABYLON

²⁷ Since there is to be no curse from God, there is to be no wickedness any longer. That wickedness was to be permitted no longer in and on the property that belongs to the divine Creator, the seventh vision to the prophet Zechariah indicates with interesting symbols. Let us fix our mental eyes on the word picture that Zechariah draws for us: "Then the angel who was speaking with me went forth and said to me: 'Raise your eyes, please, and see what this is that is going forth.' So I said: 'What is it?' In turn he said: 'This is the ephah measure that is going forth.' And he went on to say: 'This is their aspect in all the earth.'" (Zechariah 5:5, 6) According to the language used by the angel, that is to say, the Hebrew, the expression "their aspect" is literally "their eye." Similarly to here, in Numbers 11:7 "its eye" (that is, of the newly found manna) is translated as "its look." However, in the Greek *Septuagint Version* of Zechariah 5:6 it reads differently: "This is the unrighteousness of them in all the earth." Will the "aspect" or "look" of them all be unrighteous?

²⁸ Well, we shall have to see what is inside that flying ephah measure, which, we are to find, has a leaden lid upon it. An ephah contained more than half a bushel (.62 bushel), or twenty-two liters. Since it measures off what is contained in it, it appears to say that it measures off or takes the measure of what is inside the symbolic ephah and thereby presents the "aspect" or

27. (a) In the seventh vision, what did Zechariah see going forth?

(b) What question is raised regarding "their aspect in all the earth"?

28. What does the fact that the container was a definite measure of volume indicate as regards those "in all the earth"?

“look” of all those in the land or earth. Is it unrighteous, as the rendering of the Greek *Septuagint Version* suggests?

²⁹ “And, look!” says Zechariah, “the circular lid of lead was lifted up; and this is a certain woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. So he said: ‘This is Wickedness.’ And he proceeded to throw her back into the midst of the ephah, after which he threw the lead weight upon its mouth.”—Zechariah 5:7, 8.

³⁰ So the wickedness of all the inhabitants of the land is symbolized by a woman. But now this “wickedness” has been confined like the woman inside the ephah measure. It itself has been measured off, and the time for its permission in the land has also been measured off by the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. And to keep it confined, a heavy circular lid of lead has been put upon the ephah measure’s mouth. The ephah in being a measure used in trading might suggest something commercial and, correspondingly, contain commercial wickedness, bad business dealings. But not necessarily so! A measure can be taken also of all fields of human relations and activities, and that appears to be how “wickedness” as symbolized here should be viewed. Wickedness of whatever kind has no place anywhere in the land or spiritual estate of Jehovah’s dedicated people. It should be put in a container and shipped out, in full measure, to where it belongs. It should not be permitted to stay.

³¹ Such a removal and transfer of “wickedness” is just what this seventh vision to Zechariah portrays. We can rejoice with him as he tells us: “Then I raised my eyes and saw, and here there were two women coming forth, and wind was in their wings. And they had wings like the wings of the stork. And they gradually raised the ephah up between the earth and the heavens. So

29. What was exposed as being inside the ephah, and what was the name given thereto?

30. (a) So what did the “woman” inside picture, and her being confined in the ephah suggest? (b) Did the container’s being an ephah used in commercial affairs limit the kind of wickedness symbolized, but in any case where did it belong?

31. What did Zechariah see next happen to the ephah measure?

I said to the angel who was speaking with me: 'Where are they taking the ephah?' "—Zechariah 5:9, 10.

³² Two symbolic women are used to transport the confined "wickedness" away posthaste as if by air-freight of modern times. This is a good use of symbolisms. This womankind is used not just to symbolize wickedness; wickedness is not confined to women, but they too can be virtuous and useful in Jehovah's service. And here in this vision they are used to symbolize agents employed by the Sovereign Lord God, who hates wickedness. Like Him, these two symbolic women hate wickedness and are glad to be used by him to rid the land of it. So here we have a nice balance in the use of women as symbols. And since "wind was in their wings," it shows they had heavenly help to make speedy riddance of wickedness.

³³ We observe that their wings are the "wings of the stork." How appropriate such kind of wings for these two symbolic women, for the Hebrew word for "stork" (*hha-si-dah'*) is evidently derived from the Hebrew word (*hhe'sed*) that means "loving-kindness" and "loyalty," qualities that mark womankind. The stork is known to be markedly tender toward its brood of young and also loyal to its mate throughout life. But, of course, there is to be no tenderness in the treatment of "wickedness." Storks being migratory birds and having an instinctive awareness of the times for their migration, these two symbolic women with stork wings would know Jehovah's appointed time for the removal of "wickedness." (Jeremiah 8:7) Since storks have a wingspread of up to seven feet (2.1 meters), they can fly high and also lift heavy loads. With stork wings the two symbolic women should be able to lift and carry off the heavy load of "wickedness." (Job 39:13; Psalm 104:17) With Zechariah we ask: "Where are they taking the ephah?"

³⁴ The angel who was speaking with Zechariah tells

32. How are these two women set in contrast with the woman inside the ephah, and what does having the wind in their wings suggest?

33. What features about the stork made it appropriate for these two symbolic women to have stork wings in this connection?

34. Where did the angel say that the winged women were taking the loaded ephah?

us: "In turn he said to me: 'In order to build for her a house in the land of Shinar; and it must be firmly established, and she must be deposited there upon her proper place.'"—Zechariah 5:11.

³⁵ Why was the depositing of "wickedness" in the "land of Shinar" a putting of it in its own "proper place"? Because it was there, even in the prophet Zechariah's day, that the city of Babylon was located. It was there that Babylon was founded by Nimrod, the "mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah." It was there, with the city of Babylon as its center, that wicked rebellion against the Sovereign Lord Jehovah was organized. There too organized false religion was founded, so that the city of Babylon came to be the world center of false religion. It became the seat for "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion, which religious empire persists to this day. (Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Revelation 14:8; 17:1-18) So, then, in the "land of Shinar," symbolizing the location of rebellion against the universal sovereignty of Jehovah God and also the location of false Babylonish religion, there is where "wickedness" should be settled and kept, as in a house firmly established upon its "proper place" as a base.

³⁶ The God-given land of Jehovah's chosen people was, indeed, no place for wickedness of any kind, whether idolatry, stealing, crooked commercial dealings, the swearing of oaths falsely in God's name, or any other wicked thing. This should be the case especially with the rebuilding of Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem for his pure, undefiled, whole-souled worship. As the Christian apostle Paul wrote to the congregation in the pagan city of Corinth: "What fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's temple have with idols?" (2 Co-

35. What about the "land of Shinar" made it the fitting location to which to transport "wickedness" and house it on its "proper place"?

36. With the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, the God-given land of Jehovah's chosen people was not a proper place for what, even as indicated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16?

rinthians 6:14-16) None whatsoever! As regards anyone practicing what is wrong within the congregation of Jehovah's dedicated, baptized people, Paul says: "Remove the wicked man from among yourselves." —1 Corinthians 5:13.

³⁷ During this "time of the end," during this "conclusion of the system of things," let wickedness of all kinds be removed from the God-given spiritual estate of Jehovah's worshipers. Let it be kept out and confined to the realm of Babylon the Great and her political, military and commercial patrons. There let it stay fixed, as if residing in a firmly established house. We want no fellowship and association with this symbolic woman Wickedness. Leave her to her destruction along with Babylon the Great and all rebels against Jehovah's universal sovereignty "in the land of Shinar."

³⁸ Already since the restoring and rebuilding of Jehovah's pure worship at his spiritual temple was begun in 1919 C.E., this removal of wickedness as if by the two stork-winged women has been in progress. It is just as Jesus Christ foretold for this "conclusion of the system of things," saying: "The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels. Therefore, just as the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be in the conclusion of the system of things. The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will collect out from his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and persons who are doing lawlessness, and they will pitch them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be." (Matthew 13:39-42) When Babylon the Great and her worldly paramours are destroyed as with fire in the approaching "great tribulation," their weeping and gnashing of teeth will cease at their destruction. —Matthew 24:21, 22; 25:41, 46.

³⁹ All we who have left Babylon the Great and her

37. In this "time of the end," what should be done with "wickedness" as respects the God-given spiritual estate of Jehovah's worshipers?
 38. So since the beginning of the building of pure worship at Jehovah's temple in 1919 C.E., what removal has been in progress, and how did Jesus foretell such a thing in his parable of the wheat and the weeds?
 39. What, then, is the course of loyalty for us to persist in, while taking to heart Psalm 145:20?

worldly paramours in the Babylonish "land of Shinar" have no reason to go back to that "wickedness" that belongs in that place of its inception. Our course of loyalty to Jehovah as the Sovereign Lord and only true God is to persist in his pure, undefiled worship at his spiritual temple under his High Priest, Jesus Christ. We take to heart what his inspired psalmist has written: "Jehovah is guarding all those loving him, but all the wicked ones he will annihilate."—Psalm 145:20.

CHAPTER 13

CHARIOTS OF GOD SAFEGUARD CORONATION

CHARIOTS make their appearance in the eighth and final vision given to the prophet Zechariah.

These chariots are not any brought up from Egypt for the protection of the temple builders at Jerusalem in that year of the vision, 519 B.C.E., or the second year of the reign of King Darius I of Persia. The higher source of these more powerful chariots is revealed in the vision. Let us watch with Zechariah as they dash on the scene:

² "Then I raised my eyes again and saw; and, look! there were four chariots coming forth from between two mountains, and the mountains were copper mountains. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot, black horses. And in the third chariot there were white horses; and in the fourth chariot, horses speckled, parti-colored."—Zechariah 6:1-3.

1. Are the chariots seen in Zechariah's eighth vision those brought up from Egypt?

2. From between what did the chariots come forth, how many were there, and by what kind of horses were they drawn?

³ We need not make guesses as to what the differentiating colors of the horses mean. The colors of the horses served to distinguish the chariots pulled by each color group. How many horses were hitched to each chariot, Zechariah does not tell us. But those two copper mountains from between which the four chariots come forth—what do they represent? They certainly do not picture the mountain height of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives right to its east. What they stand for becomes clear from what Zechariah is now told:

⁴ “And I proceeded to answer and say to the angel who was speaking with me: ‘What are these, my lord?’ So the angel answered and said to me: ‘These are the four spirits of the heavens that are going forth after having taken their station before the Lord of the whole earth.’”—Zechariah 6:4, 5.

⁵ Aha! not material war chariots from the flatlands of Egypt are these, but they are visionary chariots, symbolizing the “four spirits of the heavens that are going forth after having taken their station before the Lord of the whole earth.” And who is that “Lord of the whole earth”? (Zechariah 4:14) It is Jehovah of armies. (Micah 4:13) And where is he located? In the heavens, in his holy spiritual temple. It is before Him that these four symbolic chariots present themselves, taking their stand respectfully before Him to receive their official commission, their assignments with respect to the earth of which He is the Lord. After that they emerge from between the two symbolic copper mountains.

⁶ These two mountains of copper must accordingly picture mountains of God. That is to say, governmental organizations of God. This is not surprising, for in the Holy Scriptures mountains are used as the symbols of royal governments, kingdoms. For example, God’s angel said to the Christian apostle John concerning

3. What do the colors of the horses serve to do, and what question comes up as to the mountains?

4. From where does the angel say that the chariots come forth?

5. Who is “the Lord of the whole earth,” and why did the four chariots take their stand before him?

6. Scripturally, what do the two copper mountains picture?

the seven-headed wild beast that carried the harlot, Babylon the Great: "The seven heads mean seven mountains, where the woman sits on top. And there are seven kings." (Revelation 17:9, 10) So the one copper mountain would picture the personal kingdom of Jehovah God in which he reigns as Universal Sovereign. The second copper mountain would represent the Messianic kingdom that Jehovah establishes in the hands of his only-begotten Son, Messiah Jesus.

⁷ This second copper mountain is the one seen in a dream by King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon just eighty-seven years before this eighth vision to Zechariah. This was at first the stone that was cut out of a large mountain without hands and that then struck and crushed the political image of Gentile domination of all mankind, after which that symbolic stone grew and became a large mountain that filled the whole earth. Explaining this mountain to be a picture of the Messianic kingdom of God's Son, Daniel said: "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." (Daniel 2:35, 44, 45) That Messianic kingdom was "cut out" in the year 1914 C.E., at the close of the Gentile Times, and in the oncoming "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon, it will clear the earth of all these Gentile governments.

⁸ Consequently, after the Gentile Times ended in early autumn of 1914 C.E., there were two symbolic "copper mountains," namely, Jehovah's royal government of His universal sovereignty and the Messianic kingdom of his royal Son Jesus Christ. So it is from between these two heavenly governments that the four symbolic "chariots" come forth. Evidently they came forth in the postwar year of 1919 C.E., when the rem-

7. (a) That second mountain was seen by Daniel in vision as coming into existence in what way? (b) When and how does the fulfillment of its work take place?

8. When did these chariots come forth from between the two symbolic mountains, and how does their being of copper comport with what they symbolize?

nant of spiritual Israel was released from Babylon the Great and went to work at building up the theocratic worship of Jehovah God at his spiritual temple. Anciently, copper was a noble metal like gold and silver, and it was used in Jehovah's sacred tabernacle of worship and also in the temple at Jerusalem. Appropriately, then, the noble quality of the copper of the two symbolic mountains represented the noble quality as well as the weighty stability of Jehovah's kingdom of universal sovereignty and of his Messianic kingdom by his Son.

⁹ How can it be that the four chariots pulled by sets of horses of different colors are "the four spirits of the heavens"? (Zechariah 6:5) It is because, in the fulfillment of the prophetic vision, they are angelic spirit forces, who have access to the presence of the heavenly "Lord of the whole earth." Jehovah is the One "making his angels spirits." (Psalm 104:1-4; Hebrews 1:7) He being "Jehovah of armies," he can use these angels as in a military capacity for the protection of his chosen people. As Jesus Christ said to the apostle Peter before a mob in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53) Since these "four spirits of the heavens" are pictured by horse-drawn war chariots, they picture bands of heavenly angels who are commissioned by their heavenly Commander in Chief to protect His people on earth during the time of rebuilding His temple of worship at Jerusalem.

¹⁰ Where, then, is it that (1) the red horses, (2) the black horses, (3) the white horses, and (4) the speckled, parti-colored horses go forth on assignment? In answer, the angel explained to Zechariah regarding the movements of the four chariots: "'As for the one in which the black horses are, they are going forth to the land of the north; and as for the white ones, they

9. How is it that the four chariots are said to be the "four spirits of the heavens," and what service do these render?

10. Where do the chariot-drawing horses go on their respective assignments?

must go forth to behind the sea [literally, 'after them'; that is, to their own rear]; and as for the speckled ones, they must go forth to the land of the south. And as for the parti-colored ones, they must go forth and keep seeking where to go, in order to walk about in the earth.' Then he said: 'Go, walk about in the earth.' And they began walking about in the earth." —Zechariah 6:6, 7.*

¹¹ The "red horses" seem to be overlooked here; but this seeming oversight may be because they have already finished their assignment of military patrol duty. The black horses go to the "land of the north," that is to say, to territory formerly that of Babylonia. The white horses go their way westward, the direction opposite from what they were facing (the sunrising). The speckled, parti-colored horses appear to have a double assignment, namely, "the land of the south" (toward Africa, including Egypt) and to reconnoiter the remaining open country, the eastern parts not covered by the other chariots. Jehovah's angel told all the chariots to go to their assignments respecting the various quarters of the earth. Obediently they did so, to safeguard God's people in Judah.

¹² What a comfort such import of this vision must have been to the temple builders in Zechariah's day! They did not have to worry about violent interference from their enemies to stop their work on the house of Jehovah's worship. How strengthening and heartening this is, too, for the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel today while they are engaged in restoring to the fullest extent the pure, undefiled worship of the Sovereign Lord of the whole earth at his spiritual temple! They confide in the divine promise: "The angel of Jehovah is camping all around those fearing him, and he rescues

* The Bible footnote on "Behind the sea" says: "By a slight change in M [the Masoretic Hebrew text]. Literally, 'after them,' LXXVg; not in the same direction, but toward the west, toward the Great Sea, the Mediterranean."

11. (a) Why do the red horses seem to be overlooked? (b) What assignments do the other horses respectively have, and in what behalf?
 12. Of what force is this vision to those restoring pure worship, and what scriptures do they have in mind?

them." (Psalm 34:7) By faith they see what the eyes of the prophet Elisha's attendant at besieged Dothan were opened miraculously to see: "The mountainous region was full of horses and war chariots of fire all around Elisha."—2 Kings 6:17.

¹³ The eighth and last vision to the prophet Zechariah closes as he sees and hears Jehovah's approval expressed as the military patrol work of the four symbolic chariots proceeds. Zechariah tells us: "And he proceeded to cry out to me and speak to me, saying: 'See, those going forth to the land of the north are the ones that have caused the spirit of Jehovah to rest in the land of the north.'"—Zechariah 6:8.

¹⁴ The expression "the land of the north" refers to Babylonia. (Jeremiah 25:8, 9) Even during the reign of King Darius I of Persia there was danger from that quarter. As indicative of this, we read in the book *"Babylon the Great Has Fallen!" God's Kingdom Rules!* page 376, the following history:

... This is, of course, not Darius the Mede, but King Darius I the Persian, who began ruling the empire in 522 B.C.

In that year Darius I had to move against Babylon and its local ruler (Nidintu-Bel), who had taken the name of Nebuchadnezzar III. Darius defeated him in battle and shortly afterward captured him and killed him at Babylon, which had tried to assert its independence. After that Darius I was recognized as king of Babylon till September, 521 B.C.E. Then Babylon revolted under the Armenian Araka, who took the name of Nebuchadnezzar IV. Thus Darius had to reconquer the Babylonians. After the city had been taken by storm that same year, he entered Babylon as conqueror. The old tradition was thus broken, namely, that Babylon's god Bel was the one to confer on a man the right to rule that part of the earth; and Darius the conqueror ceased to acknowledge such a false claim. What a blow for Bel or Marduk! This time, after the Persians took the city, they did not deal with it leniently, as Cyrus had dealt with it.—See also page 317, paragraph 1.

13. As the chariots go forth on patrol duty, what does Jehovah say about the black horses as respects his spirit?

14. How was danger shown to exist in that "land of the north" even in the days of King Darius I of Persia?

¹⁵ Thus the repatriated Jews in the land of Judah did not come again under the domination of Babylon, which had destroyed the first temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem and which "did not open the way homeward even for his prisoners." (Isaiah 14:17) After this, also, Jehovah's symbolic chariot that went to the "land of the north" kept the rebellious Babylonians from successfully revolting and from again enslaving the liberated Jews and interfering with the building of the second temple of Jehovah. That is how the chariot and horses going to the north already "have caused the spirit of Jehovah to rest in the land of the north." Their faithful safeguarding work up there quieted His spirit up north and was an assurance that all the other chariots and horses in other quarters of the earth would safeguard God's temple work.

¹⁶ How grand an assurance this is today to Jehovah's liberated worshipers at his spiritual temple. Under protection of the symbolic chariots of Jehovah they will never again be conquered by Babylon the Great and all her political paramours!

A CROWN FOR THE TEMPLE-BUILDING HIGH PRIEST

¹⁷ The series of eight visions on that memorable twenty-fourth day of the eleventh lunar month (Shebat) of the year 519 B.C.E. had now ended, and the prophet Zechariah was directed to events visible to the natural eye in the land of Judah. Look! Here come three new arrivals from Babylon and (as it seems) Josiah the son of Zephaniah takes them to his home in Jerusalem for entertainment. Who are those three men, and what are they bringing with them? The spirit of prophecy identifies them to Zechariah: "And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: 'Let there be a taking of something from the exiled people, even from Heldai and from

15. What was the chariot with the black horses sent to the "land of the north" thus preventing, and how did they thus cause "the spirit of Jehovah to rest in the land of the north"?

16. What grand assurance does this give to Jehovah's liberated witnesses?

17. Zechariah is now told to come into the house of Josiah with whom from Babylon, and to do what in that place?

Tobijah and from Jedaiah; and you yourself must come in that day, and you must come into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah with these who have come from Babylon. And you must take silver and gold and make a grand crown and put it upon the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest.'"
—Zechariah 6:9-11.

¹⁸ Likely the prophet Zechariah did not use all the silver and gold that Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, as a delegation, brought as a contribution from the Jews still in exile in Babylon. Although these three men from Babylon were not directed by the senders to give the silver and gold to Zechariah, yet there could be no objection to his taking part of it at the command of Jehovah of armies, forasmuch as the silver and gold were really contributed to Him in behalf of the restoration work under Governor Zerubbabel. With what Zechariah took, he was to perform a prophetic act, as an encouragement to the restoration work.

¹⁹ With what precious metal he took, Zechariah was to make a "grand crown" (literally, "make crowns," but evidently the plural noun being used in the sense of grandeur). What Zechariah made he was to put upon the head of High Priest Joshua. What did it mean?

²⁰ Let us listen to what Zechariah is told to say to Joshua: "And you must say to him, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: "Here is the man whose name is Sprout. And from his own place he will sprout, and he will certainly build the temple of Jehovah. And he himself will build the temple of Jehovah, and he, for his part, will carry the dignity; and he must sit down and rule on his throne, and he must become a priest upon his throne, and the very counsel of peace will prove to be between both of them. And the grand crown itself will come to belong to Helem [or, Heldai] and to Tobijah and to

18. Why was there no objection to Zechariah's taking part of the silver and gold and performing a prophetic act?

19. What was Zechariah to make and then do with it?

20. (a) What was the one called Sprout to build, and where would that one rule? (b) What was to become of the golden crown that was made?

Jedaiah and to Hen [or, Josiah] the son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. And those who are far away will come and actually build in the temple of Jehovah.””—Zechariah 6:12-15.

²¹ In the fourth vision to Zechariah he had been told to say to High Priest Joshua: “Here I am bringing in my servant Sprout!” (Zechariah 3:8) In Jeremiah 23:5 the foretold Sprout is said to be raised up to King David of the house of Judah, not to a high priest of the house of Levi. Yet it was appropriate for Zechariah to put the golden crown upon the head of High Priest Joshua instead of upon the head of Governor Zerubbabel. Why? Because, concerning Sprout, it was said: “He must sit down and rule on his throne, and he must become a priest upon his throne.” (Zechariah 6:13) Here the Greek *Septuagint Version* reads differently, saying: “And there shall be a priest on his right hand”; and a number of modern Bible translators take that reading instead of the Hebrew and Syriac. The crowning of High Priest Joshua instead of Governor Zerubbabel would not arouse the fears of King Darius I of Persia that a Jewish revolt was being set forward. No, the kingdom of David was not being restored at that time, but it had to wait until the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E.—Luke 21:20-24.

²² High Priest Joshua did have part with Governor Zerubbabel in finishing the building of the second temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem and he witnessed its inauguration. He did not, however, personally rule as a crowned Priest-King upon a throne in Jerusalem. Neither did Governor Zerubbabel do so. But the anointed High Priest Joshua was a type or prophetic figure of the Messiah, the Christ, and in this latter one the prophecy concerning Sprout is fully realized. The Messiah, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, does become a Priest-King, in heaven, at the right hand of

21. Why was it fitting that High Priest Joshua be the one crowned, and not Governor Zerubbabel?

22. Did Joshua the son of Jehozadak sit upon a throne and rule as priest-king, and, in the light of that, what is the application and fulfillment of the prophecy?

Jehovah God. He fulfills what was foreshadowed in ancient Melchizedek, who was both king of Salem and priest of the Most High God at the same time. Since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E., he reigns in the heavens as a King-Priest, like Melchizedek, and now rules and goes subduing in the midst of his enemies.—Psalm 110:1-6.

²³ The Messiah Jesus, crowned in 1914 C.E., is no imitator of the religious clergy of Christendom who meddle in worldly politics and try to boss the resentful politicians. There is no conflict between his office of heavenly High Priest and his office of Messianic King. As it is written, "the very counsel of peace will prove to be between both of them." (Zechariah 6:13) He worthily carries "the dignity" conferred upon him by the God for whom he is High Priest. (Hebrews 5:4-6) From his royal throne in the heavens he has carried forward the temple work at the earth since the year 1919 C.E. among the liberated remnant of his anointed spiritual underpriests. As in the case of High Priest Joshua in rebuilding Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem, Jesus Christ the heavenly High Priest will bring the temple work to completion. With this honor he will rightly be credited by his God.

²⁴ In that spiritual temple of the Most High God those who have contributed toward the temple work will be given due remembrance. Their part will not be allowed to be forgotten, just as the crown made from the gold brought by Helem (Heldai, in the Syriac), Tobijah and Jedaiah and, indirectly by their hospitable host, Hen (Josiah, *Syriac*), served as a "memorial in the temple of Jehovah." (Zechariah 6:14) It will linger in Jehovah's memory.

²⁵ The coming of Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah from Babylon to make or deliver a contribution in support

23. (a) Is there any conflict between Jesus' office of High Priest and his office of King? (b) For whom does he bear the "dignity" worthily, and for what work will Jehovah give him credit?

24. The use of the crown from the gold contributed by the three from Babylon and (indirectly) by Josiah indicates what for those contributing to the temple work?

25. The coming of the three men from Babylon with a contribution was, seemingly, a forerunner of what according to the next words said?

of the temple rebuilding seemed to be the forerunner of something bigger. This is indicated by Jehovah's words uttered immediately after speaking of the temple memorial of those three exiles from Babylon: "And those who are far away will come and actually build in the temple of Jehovah." (Zechariah 6:15) Doubtless, although unreported, many Jews did leave exile in Babylon and come to Jerusalem just to lend a helping hand in the second temple at Jerusalem.

²⁶ Likewise, after 1919 C.E., many who desired to worship Jehovah left Babylon the Great with a particular object in view. This object they carried out in that they dedicated themselves to Jehovah as God and got baptized in water as commanded by Jesus Christ and they joined the anointed remnant that had survived the affliction of Jehovah's people during World War I. Jehovah God accepted their dedication through Christ and begot them by his spirit, thus adding them to the remnant of spiritual Israelites engaged in temple work. They have seized this blessed opportunity before temple work is over!

²⁷ What, also, is to be said of the "great crowd" of those who do not become spiritual Israelites, but who join with the anointed remnant in the worship of Jehovah God and give support to the remnant in the temple work? The last book of the Holy Bible, at Revelation 7:9-17, foresaw an unnumbered "great crowd" of such fellow worshipers of the only living and true God. These acknowledge him as the enthroned Sovereign of the universe. They accept the sin offering of his sacrificial Lamb, Jesus Christ. In expression of this they dedicate themselves to Jehovah through Christ and testify to this by water baptism. Then they render what sacred service they are assigned to do in the earthly courtyard of Jehovah's spiritual temple. They get inside the walls that surround the courtyards and that separate those courtyards from the profane things on the outside.

26. How has this prophecy been fulfilled since 1919 C.E.?

27, 28. What may be said as to whether the "great crowd" of worshipers who are not spiritual Israelites come under the fulfillment of Zechariah 6:15?

²⁸ They do this now, before the coming "great tribulation" breaks upon Babylon the Great and all the rest of this worldly system of things. They thus get in ahead of the finishing of the temple work by that momentous time. Jehovah will not forget their part. He will memorialize it with a reward.

²⁹ At the completion of the second temple in Jerusalem in 515 B.C.E., the Jewish remnant and the proselytes in the land of Judah had finalizing proof that Zechariah was God-sent as a true prophet. Not in vain had the words been said to Zechariah: "And you people will have to know that Jehovah of armies himself has sent me to you. And it must occur—if you will without fail listen to the voice of Jehovah your God."—Zechariah 6:15.

³⁰ In our case today it is the same. It all depends upon whether we listen to the voice of Jehovah as our God. If we do, we shall be privileged to witness the triumphant finish of the temple work, with honor to the crowned Priest-King Jesus Christ. We shall come to the fullness of the knowledge that Jehovah of armies sent the prophet Zechariah and that He gave us in advance a correct understanding of Zechariah's prophecy for our benefit and joy. Jehovah's four symbolic chariots have patrolled all the earth to safeguard the spiritual estate of the worshipers at his temple. Under their safeguarding our work comes to completion!

29. What accomplishment in 515 B.C.E. proved that Zechariah had been sent by Jehovah?

30. As in Zechariah's day, if we listen to Jehovah's voice we shall witness what event and we shall come to the fullness of what knowledge?

CHAPTER
14

FASTING OVER GOD'S EXECUTED JUDGMENTS IMPROPER

IS A TIME of prosperity the proper time for fasting? Especially so when this prosperity comes from the hand of the Creator of heaven and earth? If the God worshiped is pleased with his worshipers and is rejoicing in them, is it proper for his worshipers to be mourning, even over the past? Would not the sharing in His joy be more strengthening and enlivening to his worshipers to get on with his assigned work—rather than fasting and mourning? Nehemiah, a fifth-century governor of the Persian province of Judah, once said to the people at Jerusalem: "The joy of Jehovah is your stronghold." —Nehemiah 8:10.

² The time that the above questions came up was in the fourth year of the reign of King Darius I of the Persian Empire, or in the year 518 B.C.E. Just twenty days less than two years prior to this time of inquiry, Jehovah by means of the prophet Haggai had said to the Jews who had just resumed working at the foundation of the second temple at Jerusalem: "Set your heart, please, on this from this day and forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was laid; set your heart on this: Is there as yet the seed in the grain pit? And as yet, the vine and the fig tree and the pomegranate tree and the olive tree—it has not borne, has it? From this day I shall bestow blessing." (Haggai

1. When is the propriety of fasting, even over past events, questionable, and how does fasting and mourning affect one's part in God's work?
2. In almost two years since Haggai's final prophecy, how many blessed harvests should the Jews have gathered in, and why?

2:18, 19) Since then two blessed harvests should have been gathered from the land.

³ Now, when the question of fasting and mourning is raised, this time Jehovah answers by his prophet Zechariah. The prophet tells us: "Furthermore, it came about that in the fourth year of Darius the king the word of Jehovah occurred to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month, that is, in Chislev. And Bethel proceeded to send Sharezer and Regem-melech and his men to soften the face of Jehovah, saying to the priests who belonged to the house of Jehovah of armies, and to the prophets, even saying: 'Shall I weep in the fifth month, practicing an abstinence, the way I have done these O how many years?'"—Zechariah 7:1-3.

⁴ Bethel was one of the towns that had been reestablished in the land of Israel by the Jews who returned from exile in Babylon. (Ezra 2:28; 3:1) When Sharezer and Regem-melech from there asked: "Shall I weep?" it meant every inhabitant of Bethel individually. For "O how many years" now the Bethelites had been celebrating a fast, an abstinence from food, in the fifth lunar month of each year. It was observed evidently on the tenth day of that month (Ab), in order to commemorate how on that day Nebuzaradan, the chief of Nebuchadnezzar's bodyguard, after two days of inspection, burned down the city of Jerusalem and its temple. (Jeremiah 52:12, 13; 2 Kings 25:8, 9) But now that the faithful remnant of Jews were rebuilding the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem and were about half through, should the Bethelites continue to hold such a fast?

⁵ Those Bethelites were also celebrating three other fast days. One of these was on the third day of the seventh lunar month (Tishri), to commemorate the assassination of Governor Gedaliah, who was of the royal house of King David and whom Nebuchadnezzar made governor of the land for the poor Jews who were allowed to remain after the destruction of Jerusalem.

3. When and how did the delegation of men from Bethel raise the question of the fitness of fasting?

4. Over what event were those Bethelites evidently fasting in that fifth month each year?

5. What other fasts were those Bethelites observing yearly, and to commemorate what events?

(2 Kings 25:22-25; Jeremiah 40:13 to 41:10) Another fast was observed on the tenth day of the tenth month Tebeth, to memorialize the day when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon began his long siege of Jerusalem. (2 Kings 25:1, 2; Jeremiah 52:4, 5) A fourth fast was kept on the ninth day of the fourth month (Tammuz), for that was the day when the Babylonians made a breach in the walls of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E., and made their way into the doomed city.—2 Kings 25:2-4; Jeremiah 52:6, 7; Zechariah 8:19.

⁶ The things commemorated by fasting down to the year 519 B.C.E., namely, the start of the siege of Jerusalem, the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by the armies of Babylon, were all the execution of the judgments of Jehovah. Whereas the murder of Governor Gedaliah by a treacherous Jew was not the execution of a judgment from God, it did lead up to the utter abandonment and desolation of the land of Judah just as Jehovah had decreed. All these were mournful events for the disobedient Jews. But were the judgments executed by Jehovah things over which to fast and to mourn? Should the carrying out of God's will be bemoaned? Is it an evil to be memorialized in sorrow?

⁷ God's viewpoint of the matter was given to his prophet Zechariah, not to the priests of whom Sharezer and Regem-melech had been sent from Bethel to inquire. Says the inspired Zechariah:

⁸ "And the word of Jehovah of armies continued to occur to me, saying: 'Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, "When you fasted and there was a wailing in the fifth month and in the seventh month, and this for seventy years, did you really fast to me, even me? And when you would eat and when you would drink, were not you the ones doing the eating, and were not you the ones doing the drinking? Should you not

6. The first three events as commemorated were what expressions from Jehovah, and so what question properly arises?

7, 8. (a) To whom was Jehovah's viewpoint on the question directly given? (b) Instead of there being fasting, what should have been done, and when this?

obey the words that Jehovah called out by means of the former prophets, while Jerusalem happened to be inhabited, and at ease, with her cities all around her, and while the Negeb [Southland] and the Shephelah [Lowlands] were inhabited?" "—Zechariah 7:4-7.

⁹ When the exiled Jews fasted during the seventy years of desolation of the land of Judah* and also during all these years since the remnant of them returned to their homeland, were they really fasting to Jehovah? Was it fasting that He could accept? Was it fasting that he had imposed upon them? Was it not a fasting over the destruction of things that he had condemned to destruction? These abstinences from food were just like their indulging in food and drink. They were eating for themselves. Similarly, they were fasting for themselves, because of the calamities that had come upon them for their not obeying the words that their God had called out by Jeremiah and other former prophets. Under such attitudes, how could they benefit spiritually from their fasting? How could such fasting make them more inclined to do God's will? Obedience in the first place was better than fasting over the calamities that came upon them because of not obeying God right at the start.

¹⁰ It is not fasting because of one's troubles that straightens out matters with God. What does do this is one's turning from the disobedient way and doing positive good according to God's commands. On this score, let us note what Zechariah was further told to

* The "seventy years" of observing fasts could not have begun after the first deportation of the Jews by the Babylonians in the year 617 B.C.E., for that would have been about nine years before King Nebuchadnezzar began the final siege of Jerusalem and also about eleven years before the breaching of the walls of the city (on Tammuz 9) and the destruction of the city (on Ab 10) and the assassination of Governor Gedaliah in the seventh month (Tishri), these mournful events being observed by the fast periods. Hence the "seventy years" of fasting began after these last three mournful calamities had taken place, in the year 607 B.C.E. This proves that the desolation of the land lasted for seventy years and that these "seventy years" began in 607 B.C.E. and ended in 537 B.C.E.—See Flavius Josephus' book "Antiquities of the Jews," Book 10, chapter 9, paragraph 7.

9. From what standpoint was their fasting for those seventy years and since then comparable with their own eating and drinking, and what would have been the better thing?

10. Was it fasting that would straighten out matters, and what preventive measures should have been taken by those involved?

say: "And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to Zechariah, saying: 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said, "With true justice do your judging; and carry on with one another loving-kindness and mercies; and defraud no widow or fatherless boy, no alien resident or afflicted one, and scheme out nothing bad against one another in your hearts."' But they kept refusing to pay attention, and they kept giving a stubborn shoulder, and their ears they made too unresponsive to hear. And their heart they set as an emery stone to keep from obeying the law and the words that Jehovah of armies sent by his spirit, by means of the former prophets; so that there occurred great indignation on the part of Jehovah of armies.'

¹¹ "And so it occurred that, just as he called and they did not listen, so they would call and I would not listen,' Jehovah of armies has said. 'And I proceeded tempestuously to hurl them throughout all the nations that they had not known; and the land itself has been left desolate behind them, with no one passing through and with no one returning; and they proceeded to make the desirable land an object of astonishment.'"
—Zechariah 7:8-14.

¹² That was straightforward speech to Sharezer, Regem-melech and the men with them from Bethel. Their beloved homeland had been left desolate for seventy years because of the badness and disobedience to God's law calling for justice according to truth, for loving-kindness and mercies. Now their return from Babylon had discontinued the desolation of the land. They could remain in that land by a course opposite to that of their fathers, that of obedience. Fasting in memory of calamities would not do it. In connection with obedience, they must carry on with the temple work.

¹³ Are we today going to carry on mourning or fast-

11. Because the inhabitants had refused to hear him calling to them, what did Jehovah do to them, with what effect on the land?

12. The repatriated Jews remaining on the land would now be by what course—by fasting or what?

13. Why would fasting over mournful events that befell Jehovah's people during World War I be improper, and so what is the proper course for us to take?

ing on days that are anniversaries of calamities or mournful events that befell Jehovah's worshipers during World War I? If such things were judgments executed by Him for the delinquencies of His organized people, are these executions of divine judgment not right things, proper things? Mourning or fasting over such things expressing God's righteous judgments is improper. We should not mourn or fast because we have suffered thereby. That would be self-centered—not a fasting to Jehovah, but a feeling sorry for ourselves. Learn the lessons from the past and apply them now! Then, with tears dried from our eyes, let us rejoice in Jehovah's restored favor and forge ahead with his temple work!

CHAPTER 15

MANY NATIONS GO TO THE CITY OF DIVINE FAVOR

HERE IS the good news—for the would-be fasters of almost twenty-five centuries ago, and for those of today: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth month, and the fast of the seventh month, and the fast of the tenth month will become for the house of Judah an exultation and a rejoicing and good festal seasons.'"—Zechariah 8:19.

² Such a change meant indeed a change in the mental attitude of the members of the restored "house of Judah" away back there in the sixth century B.C.E.—and of us today! As a background for such a radical change in viewpoint and conduct, there had to be a

1. For the would-be fasters, what was the good news from Jehovah through Zechariah?

2. Such a change in attitude called for what other change in the background, as in David's case according to Psalm 30:1, 11?

great change in the set of circumstances that are involved. Also, since it was predicted and thus decreed by their God, there had to be a merciful expression of divine favor toward them. It was just as King David, who captured Mount Zion and Jerusalem, stated matters in his own case: "I shall exalt you, O Jehovah, for you have drawn me up and you have not let my enemies rejoice over me. You have changed my mourning into dancing for me; you have loosened my sackcloth, and you keep me girded with rejoicing."—Psalm 30:1, 11.

³ How this was to come about was told to the prophet Zechariah, just after the question of fasting by the restored Jews had come up. On this we read Jehovah's *first* statement of a series in Zechariah's account: "And the word of Jehovah of armies continued to occur, saying: 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said, "I will be jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and with great rage I will be jealous for her."'" (Zechariah 8:1, 2) Jehovah's feelings in this regard would be like those of a man whose wife had been abused, outraged, by his enemies. Since he had not rejected Mount Zion (or, Jerusalem) in complete abandonment of her, he would be very zealous, earnestly active in recovering her from the disgraced state into which she had been brought before the eyes of the world. He would be very vigilant in safeguarding her interests and demonstrating that she had been reinstated in his favor. Whereas this meant divine favor to *her*, it meant rage against those who had disgraced her and those who were trying to hinder her complete recovery, especially as a worshiper of Jehovah. His zeal for this would equal in degree his rage upon his enemies.

⁴ For seventy years, while the deported Jews were exiles in Babylon, the city of Jerusalem and the land of Judah had lain desolate, without man or domestic

3. This change in the set of circumstances would come about because of what feeling on Jehovah's part toward his worshipers and toward their enemies?

4. Had Jehovah by that time fully returned to Jerusalem, and when was such a full return possible for Him?

animal. In 537 B.C.E. Jehovah of armies proved true to his word and brought back to their homeland the repentant remnant. But in a sense Jehovah had not then fully returned to Mount Zion or Jerusalem. He had brought them back to build a second temple for his worship at Jerusalem. For sixteen years they had permitted the enemies to suppress the building of that holy house of worship, and now, when Jehovah here spoke by his prophet Zechariah, the temple was still not completed or inaugurated into divine service. So, not until that temple had its culminating feature, its headstone, put in place and was inaugurated by his priests, yes, not until then would Jehovah have fully returned to the holy city. First then would he be taking up residence in her by taking up residence in the Most Holy of the finished temple, by His spirit.

⁵ Hence now comes the *second* divine promise introduced by the declaration "This is what Jehovah [of armies] has said," as a formal introduction: "This is what Jehovah has said, 'I will return to Zion and reside in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will certainly be called the city of trueness, and the mountain of Jehovah of armies, the holy mountain.'" —Zechariah 8:3.

⁶ The completed temple would sanctify the mountainous height of Jerusalem, and this elevation would consequently be called "the holy mountain." Because Jerusalem as the provincial capital of Judah had thus proved true to her commitment to the worship of Jehovah and had put the interests of his pure worship first and ahead of all else, Jerusalem would be correctly called "the city of trueness." The true worship would be practiced in her. The truths of the pure and undefiled worship of the true God would be spoken in her. Her mountainous location would be called "the mountain of Jehovah." How much this promise of God means to us today!

5. According to Jehovah's declaration, what was Jerusalem yet to be called as a city, and also Jehovah's mountain?

6. Why was Jerusalem's mountainous elevation to be called "the holy mountain," and she herself called "the city of trueness"?

⁷ But that was not all, for now comes a *third* promise of divine favor: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'There will yet sit old men and old women in the public squares of Jerusalem, each one also with his staff in his hand because of the abundance of his days. And the public squares of the city themselves will be filled with boys and girls playing in her public squares.'"—Zechariah 8:4, 5.

⁸ What a delightful picture this is of good physical health and peace and security and of a good population growth, unmarred by the sorrowful early death of infants! It borders on the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy as delivered more than one hundred and twenty-five years before the seventy-year-long desolation of Jerusalem and the land of Judah without man and domestic animal:

"For here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart. But exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating. For here I am creating Jerusalem a cause for joyfulness and her people a cause for exultation. And I will be joyful in Jerusalem and exult in my people; and no more will there be heard in her the sound of weeping or the sound of a plaintive cry.

"No more will there come to be a suckling a few days old from that place, neither an old man that does not fulfill his days; for one will die as a mere boy, although a hundred years of age; and as for the sinner, although a hundred years of age he will have evil called down upon him. And they will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating. For like the days of a tree will the days of my people be; and the work of their own hands my chosen ones will use to the full. They will not toil for nothing, nor will they bring to birth for disturbance; because they are the offspring made up of the chosen ones of Jehovah, and their descendants with them."
—Isaiah 65:17-23.

7. According to Jehovah's third promise, what was to indicate the life expectancy of Jerusalem's people, and what was to mark her public squares?

8. That prophetic picture borders on the fulfillment of what prophecy in chapter sixty-five of Isaiah?

⁹ In these days, since the faithful remnant of spiritual Israel was restored to its God-given spiritual estate in the year 1919 C.E., what do we find? The political nations of the earth are putting on a show of trying to maintain world peace and security by means of the United Nations with now a membership of 132 member countries, but there is little security anywhere on earth. Also, the peace of all mankind is constantly under threat of nuclear warfare by the superpowers of the nations, democratic and communistic. However, within the spiritual estate of Jehovah's worshipers there are to be found blessed peace and security. Even though the spiritual remnant has been joined, particularly since 1935 C.E., by a "great crowd" of dedicated, baptized disciples of Christ from "all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues," yet there is no international rivalry or tension or conflict among them. Instead, brotherly love, the fruitage of God's spirit, prevails among them.

¹⁰ Since the end of World War I in 1918 till now it has been well over fifty years, and yet a number of the original remnant that survived the afflictions of that trialsome period have lived on, yes, even through World War II. By now they have literally grown old physically, yes, some even using a staff or cane when walking, because of the 'abundance of their days.' And many of these have raised up children, rearing them in the worship of the one living and true God. But, when we look for a spiritual fulfillment of this charming prophecy, we can see how the 'old men and women sitting in the public squares of Jerusalem' picture the members of the remnant of spiritual Israel who passed through the persecutions and disciplining of the first world war. The "boys and girls playing in her public squares" picture those members of that remnant whom Jehovah of armies added to the spiritual remnant from the postwar year of 1919 and onward. Together both old and young grow spiritually in

9. How does the spiritual estate on earth of Jehovah's worshipers compare with the worldly nations as to peace and security today?

10. How can we see a fulfillment of Jehovah's promise in Zechariah 8:4, 5 in a physical sense and in a spiritual sense?

faith, hope and love while enjoying together the peace and security of their spiritual estate.

¹¹ At first it took tremendous faith to believe that such things would take place, and accordingly it took faith to hold fast to the newly restored organization of Jehovah's worshipers. God showed that he realized how his people felt about the matter, when he made his *fourth* statement of promise, saying to his repatriated remnant: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Although it should seem too difficult in the eyes of the remaining ones of this people in those days, should it seem too difficult also in my eyes?' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies."—Zechariah 8:6.

¹² At the beginning of the work in 1919 C.E. to restore and to expand the pure and undefiled worship of Jehovah of armies, it was indeed difficult for the restored remnant to discern and appreciate all the marvelous things that Jehovah purposed to accomplish toward them and through them during this "conclusion of the system of things," this "time of the end." But patiently, little by little he corrected their understanding of the prophecies and their attitude toward theocratic organization. He directed them and protected them in the Christian work that was to be done in this most momentous time. He helped them to discern the issues that confronted a Christian worshiper of Jehovah amid the international struggle for domination of the world. More than that, he helped them to take the Biblical stand on such issues so as to abide in His favor. A half century ago what we now see accomplished within and by means of His theocratic organization seemed too difficult of realization in the eyes of the small remnant of spiritual Israel. But did it prove to be too difficult for Jehovah of armies? Today's realities say No!

¹³ As we examine the facts of today when the mul-

11. Back there, what did it require to expect fulfillment of such a prophecy, and so what did Jehovah's fourth declaration say?

12. How did Jehovah aid the surviving remnant as to organization and discernment of issues, and according to today's realities was fulfillment of the promise too hard for Jehovah?

13. In contrast with loss of membership for Babylon the Great, what did Jehovah say in his fifth promise?

titudinous religious systems of Babylon the Great are losing members to the attractions of this modern world, we note that God has irresistibly carried out his *fifth* utterance of promise: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Here I am saving my people from the land of the sunrise and from the land of the setting of the sun. And I shall certainly bring them in, and they must reside in the midst of Jerusalem; and they must become my people, and I myself shall become their God in trueness and in righteousness.'"—Zechariah 8:7, 8.

¹⁴ In obedience to the divine commands through Jesus Christ, the restored remnant of spiritual Israelites has proclaimed the good news of God's Messianic kingdom in all the inhabited earth and for a witness to all the nations. They have endeavored to make disciples of Christ from people of all the nations, baptizing them in water according to Christ's own example and teaching these disciples what Christ commanded as the one to whom Jehovah God had given all necessary power in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20) From the Far East and from the Far West the final members of the "holy nation" of spiritual Israel have been gathered, under angelic guidance. But not to the earthly Jerusalem that stands as the capital of the Republic of Israel. To where, then? To the God-given spiritual estate of the "Israel of God" on earth, and into a unity of theocratic organization and a unity of activity and of pure worship of Jehovah at His spiritual temple.—Galatians 6:15, 16.

SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY TO BE NOTICED BY NATIONS

¹⁵ The real God proves just who are his accepted people by the way he favors them in the fulfillment of his prophetic promises. He proves that He, the Bible God, has become their God by showing trueness to his prophecies and to his covenant with them and

14. According to promise, to where has Jehovah gathered those of the spiritual remnant, and into what?

15, 16. (a) In proof that they have become his people and He their God, what does he do? (b) According to Jehovah's sixth declaration, what had been the economic condition and social state of the restored remnant?

by doing what is righteous for their sakes. Yes, he counts them as righteous in His sight, forgiving them through the ransom sacrifice of His High Priest, Jesus the Messiah. In harmony with this, He favors his restored remnant with spiritual prosperity to such an extent that peoples of the nations take notice of it and speak of it as a fine example of blessedness. So in God's *sixth* statement of promise, he tells of a change of action on his part:

¹⁶ "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Let the hands of you people be strong, you who are hearing in these days these words from the mouths of the prophets, on the day on which the foundation of the house of Jehovah of armies was laid, for the temple to be built. For before those days there were no wages for mankind made to exist; and as for the wages of domestic animals, there was no such thing; and to the one going out and to the one coming in there was no peace because of the adversary, as I kept thrusting all mankind against one another.'

¹⁷ "'And now I shall not be as in the former days to the remaining ones of this people,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies. 'For there will be the seed of peace; the vine itself will give its fruitage, and the earth itself will give its yield, and the heavens themselves will give their dew; and I shall certainly cause the remaining ones of this people to inherit all these things. And it must occur that just as you became a malediction among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I shall save you, and you must become a blessing. Do not be afraid. May your hands be strong.'"—Zechariah 8:9-13.

¹⁸ These divine words remind us that the temple of Jerusalem was not yet finished at Jerusalem. About two years before this, work had been resumed at the foundation of the temple by the remnant from all the tribes of Israel, from the "house of Judah and house

¹⁷ What change of conditions would now take place, and therefore how would the nations change their speech about the restored remnant?
¹⁸ Why would it have been inconsistent for Jehovah to bless the restored remnant while they were letting the temple work go unfinished for fear of men?

of Israel." Such work had been taken up anew under the stimulation and encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. (Haggai 2:10-19; Zechariah 1:1-7; Ezra 4:23 to 5:2) Up till that time the temple work had lain dormant for about sixteen years. If Jehovah had blessed them and prospered them materially during all those years of neglect of his temple, it would have appeared that it did not matter with him whether his house of worship was brought to completion and into use or not. He had prophesied that that second temple would be constructed at Jerusalem. He had liberated the remnant of Jewish exiles from Babylon that they might return to their homeland specifically to rebuild His temple. (Isaiah 44:26 to 45:6) How could he bless them when they feared men and ceased from building His house of worship and took up materialism?

¹⁹ During those years when the restored exiles were neglecting their commission from God and were not seeking to magnify Jehovah of armies by completing a temple to His name, conditions in Jerusalem and the province of Judah were bad, not only spiritually but also materially, economically. There was unemployment for man and domestic animal. Weather conditions hurt their growing crops and cut down on their harvests. Hostile neighbor nations interfered with their affairs religiously and otherwise. There was no peace among themselves as fellow Israelites because of their pursuing each one his own selfish, materialistic aims. Evidently God's indignation was against them. In repentance they needed to return to Him that he might return to them with favor.

²⁰ Mercifully God called their shortcomings to their attention, by his prophets Haggai and Zechariah. Assured that Jehovah of armies was with them although all the Persian Empire might be against them, they took courage and, defiant of all likely human interference, they resumed God's assigned work at the tem-

19. Why was there no peace from outside nor peace inside, and what did the remnant need to do in behalf of a change?

20. With what command did Jehovah open and close his sixth statement of promise, and why?

ple foundation, with a determination to push through to the end of the work. "From this day I shall bestow blessing," said Jehovah of armies by his prophet Haggai (2:19). That was in the second year of the reign of King Darius I of Persia. Now, when Jehovah made his ten statements of promise through Zechariah, it was the fourth year of King Darius. The divine blessings upon the nation of temple builders had now begun. But there was yet much work to do in order to finish that house of worship despite the displeasure of those who hated Jehovah. The temple builders needed to work on. Appropriately he opened and closed his *sixth* statement of promise with the command that their working hands be strong. "Do not be afraid," he said. Fear not men, but God.

²¹ At the completing of the temple divine favor and blessing would be upon them to the full. During the many years of their indifference to building the temple, their condition had become so bad as regards peace, security and material well-being that the surrounding nations felt that the land of Judah and its restored exiles were under a curse. And so, when cursing others, those nations would call upon such ones to be cursed with a malediction such as rested upon those Israelites in the land of Judah. But no longer would this be true when Jehovah's temple was finished. Then the astonished nations would observe that restored Israel had come into a blessed condition under the favor of their God. Accordingly, when calling down blessings upon others, those nations would use the blessedness of Israel as an example.

²² So, too, in this twentieth century C.E., in this "conclusion of the system of things." Until the restored remnant of spiritual Israel got down to sincere hard work at restoring and extending, first of all in their own lives, the pure, undefiled worship at Jehovah's spiritual temple, there were difficulties from without

21. When the surrounding nations would call down a malediction or a blessing upon others, whom would they use as an illustration, and why?

22. How has it been similar in this twentieth century, and, after five decades of work, how do Jehovah's witnesses compare with Christendom in a spiritual sense?

and within. Religious opposers of Christendom cursed them, interfered with them, feverishly tried to stamp them out or suppress their temple work. But after five decades of undeviating attention to the worship of Jehovah and to the interests of his Messianic kingdom, how does the anointed remnant of the Christian witnesses of Jehovah compare with Christendom? Who is it that is prospering in a Christian spiritual sense? Who is it that has the divine blessing because of sticking strictly to the Holy Bible and doing God's work as set out therein? Even the clergymen of Christendom express the wish that their church members had the zeal, faith, courage and knowledge of the Bible that Jehovah's Christian witnesses had and prospered religiously as such witnesses did.

GOD'S CHANGE OF MIND TOWARD HIS PEOPLE

²³ Further strengthening encouragement comes to God's obedient remnant as He makes his *seventh* statement of promise, saying: "For this is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Just as I had in mind to do what was calamitous to you people because of your forefathers' making me indignant,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'and I felt no regret, so I will again have in mind in these days to deal well with Jerusalem and with the house of Judah. Do not be afraid.'" —Zechariah 8:14, 15.

²⁴ Jehovah here admits that he had had in mind to do what was calamitous to the nation of Israel because the forefathers of the faithful remnant had made him indignant. But this did not mean any sort of ill-temper and fuming vexation on His part. The calamity that he had in mind to bring upon the nation or to let come upon the nation was strictly in harmony with the calmly stated set of warnings against the curses that they would suffer for breaking their part of their national covenant with Him. In all fairness he had

23. Because of what change of mind on God's part did the remnant now not need to be afraid?

24. Why was Jehovah's having in mind to bring calamity upon their forefathers not a case of ill-temper on His part?

warned them long previously through the prophet Moses:

"Jehovah will raise up against you a nation far away, from the end of the earth, just as an eagle pounces, a nation whose tongue you will not understand, a nation fierce in countenance, who will not be partial to an old man or show favor to a young man.

"And it must occur that just as Jehovah exulted over you to do you good and to multiply you, so Jehovah will exult over you to destroy you and to annihilate you; and you will simply be torn away from off the soil to which you are going to take possession of it.

"And Jehovah will certainly scatter you among all the peoples from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth, and there you will have to serve other gods whom you have not known."—Deuteronomy 28:49, 50, 63, 64; see also Leviticus 26:27-43.

²⁵ It was therefore only a just enforcement of His part of the national covenant with Jehovah, when he let the lawbreaking Israelites be "torn away from off the soil" by the Assyrians and by the Babylonians and then let the land of Judah lie utterly desolate for seventy years. But now, after he had disciplined the nation according to the terms of His covenant with them, he had the opposite things in mind to do to them in mercy. He started by bringing the repentant faithful remnant back to Jerusalem and the land of Judah. Their fear-induced holding back from building the temple could not and did not have His blessing. But now, "in these days," in the days when they trustfully took up the temple work anew and courageously went ahead with it, Jehovah appreciatively had in mind "to deal well with Jerusalem and with the house of Judah." So if Jehovah of armies was for them and with them for their wholehearted worship of Him, they should not fear men.

²⁶ In modern times Jehovah has been true to this promise which applies equally as much to the faithful remnant of spiritual Israel. For delinquencies, they were scattered from their God-given spiritual estate

25. (a) Why was it no injustice when Jehovah let those curses take effect? (b) What divine change of mind was now in effect, and why?

26. In this twentieth century, how has this seventh statement of promise been seen to apply equally as much to the spiritual remnant?

during World War I. But today they can look back over the many years since their restoration in 1919 C.E. and can see how marvelously well the God whose name they bear has dealt with them for their work at restoring his pure worship.

²⁷ However, there are vital things for those who have mercifully been restored to divine favor to do. What Jehovah tells them to do is in agreement with the two greatest commandments of the Law, namely, to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We read: "These are the things that you people should do: Speak truthfully with one another. With truth and the judgment of peace do your judging in your gates. And calamity to one another do not you scheme up in your hearts, and do not love any false oath; for these are all things that I have hated," is the utterance of Jehovah." —Zechariah 8:16, 17.

²⁸ The things that Jehovah of armies hates the restored remnant must not do, in order to remain in His favor. Justice must be executed in their gates or law courts. There no false oath should be resorted to in order to bring undeserved calamity upon one's fellowman. One should be honest in what one says to a fellowman or swears to in court, always speaking the truth and not saying one thing with one's mouth but having another thing in one's deceptive heart. In settling any matter of dispute in a judicial way, the aim should be to bring about peace among those going to law; and this peace objective can be reached only if truth and justice are upheld in the court. We should love what God loves, not what he hates.

²⁹ Does this apply to the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel? Most certainly it does. When writing to the believers in Ephesus, Asia Minor, in behalf of

27. What did Jehovah now have in mind for the restored remnant to do, and in harmony with what two commandments was this in agreement?

28. Hence, how were truth and justice to be upheld in their "gates" or law courts, and what was the object of judging with the "judgment of peace"?

29. How did the apostle Paul show that Zechariah 8:16 applies to the Christian remnant, and how do they thus speak the truth?

Christian unity, the apostle Paul said: "Speaking the truth, let us by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ. Wherefore, now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, because we are members belonging to one another." (Ephesians 4:15, 25) Evidently the apostle was here quoting part of Zechariah 8:16 and was properly applying it to Christians who were the "Israel of God." (Galatians 6:15, 16) Speaking truthfully or speaking the truth with one another would also mean telling the Bible truths to one another, and not the religious falsehoods of Babylon the Great. In that way we promote pure worship of God at his spiritual temple.

FROM FASTING TO FEASTING

³⁰ Just because seven is a Scriptural number denoting perfection in a spiritual way, God does not stop with the above seventh statement of promise. He carries on to an *eighth*, just as we now read: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth month, and the fast of the seventh month, and the fast of the tenth month will become for the house of Judah an exultation and a rejoicing and good festal seasons. So love truth and peace.'"—Zechariah 8:19.

³¹ Here was a direct and positive answer to Sharezer and Regem-melech, who were sent from the city of Bethel to ask whether they should continue observing an abstinence from food, together with mourning, during the fifth month. (Zechariah 7:1-3) Now that the building of the second temple at Jerusalem was going on to grand completion, it was not the time to bemoan the past destruction of Jerusalem and its temple back there in 607 B.C.E., or more than eighty years ago. It was His will for them to rejoice in his present goodness to them and to exult in the undoing of all the destructive work that the Babylonians had

30. According to Jehovah's eighth statement of promise, the hitherto times of fasting were to become what kind of occasions?

31. Whose question about fasting did that answer, and why was it now not proper to continue such fasts with mourning?

done in Jerusalem and the land of Judah. Away with mournful fasts! Enjoy good festal seasons!

³² How grandly this divine promise uttered to ancient Israel has been fulfilled in Christian spiritual Israel! The anointed remnant today do not observe any of the fasts and mournful seasons of ancient Israel. Not even the annual *Yom Kippur* or Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh lunar month (Tishri). (Leviticus, chapter 16) They rejoice in the true Atonement Day as carried out by Jehovah's High Priest, Jesus Christ, by means of his perfect atoning sacrifice, the merit of which Jesus Christ presented to Jehovah in heaven in 33 C.E. in behalf of all mankind. (1 John 1:7 to 2:2) The only day that the remnant of spiritual Israel observe each year is the day of Christ's sacrificial death on Passover Day, Nisan 14, in obedience to Christ's own command to his disciples. Thus, when the surviving remnant observed the Lord's Supper after sundown of April 13, 1919, there were upward of 17,961 that came together world wide to observe his atoning death. But on Friday, April 9, 1971, after sundown, there were 3,453,542 who attended, 10,384 of these partaking of the emblematic unleavened bread and wine.—Luke 22:7-20.

³³ From where did all those more than 3,400,000 observers come, in addition to the 10,384 partakers, on this latter observance of the Lord's Evening Meal? This worldwide phenomenon of the year 1971 is explained by the fulfillment of Jehovah's *ninth* statement of promise, as recorded in Zechariah 8:20-22: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'It will yet be that peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will come; and the inhabitants of one city will certainly go to those of another, saying: "Let us earnestly go to soften the face of Jehovah and to seek Jehovah of armies. I myself will go also." And many peoples and mighty nations will actually come to seek Jehovah

32. How has this divine promise been fulfilled in Christian spiritual Israel, and what one day each year does the remnant observe in obedience to Christ's command?

33. That large attendance at the Lord's Supper in 1971 world wide is explained by what prophecy in Jehovah's ninth statement of promise?

of armies in Jerusalem and to soften the face of Jehovah.' ”

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING TO GOD'S CITY

³⁴ No whole “peoples” and whole “nations” were thus to come to Jehovah’s center of worship and to appease him to gain his favor. Individual persons from those peoples and nations were to do so. World conversion to Judaism was by no means meant here. So, when we examine the *1972 Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses* we learn that these Christian witnesses of Jehovah are found in 207 lands and islands. The list of these lands and islands includes “many peoples and mighty nations.” And as for the “inhabitants of many cities,” the *1972 Yearbook* reveals that, by the time of August 31, 1971, there were 27,154 congregations of Jehovah’s Christian witnesses around the globe. New York city alone had 212 of those congregations in a number of languages. All together, the Bibles and Biblical literature of these Christians who worship Jehovah is printed in 165 languages. They worship Jehovah as Jesus Christ himself did.

³⁵ No, they do not go to the present-day earthly Jerusalem, where a Mohammedan mosque, the Dome of the Rock, sits on the location where the temple of Jerusalem used to stand. They recognize the existence of what Hebrews 12:22 calls “a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem.” They exult and rejoice in the fact that at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E., God’s Messianic kingdom was established on that Mount Zion, and there Jesus Christ, “son of David, son of Abraham,” is enthroned. (Matthew 1:1) No longer therefore is the God-given right of the royal family of David to reign in God’s city being trampled upon by the Gentile nations. (Luke 21:20-24) They give their allegiance to this Messianic kingdom, which, shortly now, will destroy all Gentile governments on earth and will reign forever for the

34. (a) In what way do “peoples” and “nations” now come to Jehovah’s center of worship? (b) Does this gathering include individuals from “many peoples and mighty nations” and “many cities”?

35. Why is it that they do not go to the present-day earthly Jerusalem, and so where do they worship Jehovah?

vindication of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah of armies. In the earthly courtyards of His spiritual temple they worship Him and enjoy his favor.—Psalms 84:2, 10; 116:18, 19.

³⁶ Marvelous indeed is the modern-day fulfillment of that *ninth* statement of promise by the Sovereign Lord God. But there is yet a culminating utterance of promise, a *tenth* one, to this grand series of divine promises. So in the closing verse (23) of this eighth chapter of Zechariah's prophecy we read: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'It will be in those days that ten men out of all the languages of the nations will take hold, yes, they will actually take hold of the skirt of a man who is a Jew, saying: "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people."'"—Zechariah 8:23.

³⁷ In order to understand aright this prophecy about the "skirt of a man who is a Jew," we have to consider the guiding rule set forth by a man who was "circumcised the eighth day, out of the family stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born from Hebrews; as respects law, a Pharisee"; namely, the apostle Paul, who was aforetime, "as respects zeal, persecuting the congregation." (Philippians 3:5, 6) When writing the Christian congregation of the first century in Rome, this natural-born Jew or Israelite said: "He is not a Jew who is one on the outside, nor is circumcision that which is on the outside upon the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one on the inside, and his circumcision is that of the heart by spirit, and not by a written code. The praise of that one comes, not from men, but from God."—Romans 2:28, 29.

³⁸ For this reason the fulfillment of Zechariah 8:23 does not rest upon any racial superiority according to the flesh. The "skirt of a man who is a Jew" is

36. According to Jehovah's culminating statement of promise, how many were to take hold of the skirt of a Jew, and what were they to say to him?

37. To understand who is meant here by the term "Jew," what guiding rule stated by a natural Jew do we need to consider?

38. (a) So, if racial extraction does not count in this matter, what does, even with natural Jews? (b) Till when was the Christian congregation made up exclusively of natural Jews and proselytes, and then what choice did Cornelius have to make?

not taken hold of because he is a Jew according to natural birth. One's fleshly connection does not count at all in this matter. What counts is, Whom does he worship? Or, if he is a professed worshiper of God, Is God really with him? It is true that, during the second half of the seventieth week of years of the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, namely, from Pentecost of 33 C.E. to the autumn of 36 C.E., the Christian congregation was made up exclusively of natural Jews and circumcised Jewish proselytes. But what distinguished such natural Jews comprising the Christian congregation? During that time there were natural Jews *and* natural Jews. God was definitely not with both kinds. God was not divided. Hence, at the end of the seventieth week of years in early fall of 36 C.E., with what kind of Jews did the Gentile, the Italian centurion Cornelius, go to join with them in worship? What does Acts 10:1-48 show?

³⁹ This Cornelius of Italian language ceased to go along with the worship of the natural Jews and make "many gifts of mercy" to the natural Jews who had Jesus Christ put to a violent death as a blasphemer of God and as a false Christ. Cornelius and his fellow Gentile converts went with only those natural Jews who had become disciples of Jesus Christ and upon whom God poured out his holy spirit through Jesus Christ, thereby manifesting that He (God) was with the Christian congregation. (Acts 2:1-47; 11:1-18) That Christian congregation was made up of spiritual Jews, spiritual Israelites, in the new covenant with God through Christ as mediator. The Italian Cornelius was just as much a spiritual Jew or Israelite as those believing natural Jews. Cornelius saw that the Christian congregation was made up of spiritual Jews and that God was with those people. Hence he decided to go with spiritual Jews.

⁴⁰ Could the destruction of Jerusalem and its material temple by Roman legions be interpreted as a proof that

39. With which group of natural Jews did Cornelius decide to go?
40. How can we determine whether, especially since Jerusalem's destruction by the Romans, there is any basis for applying Zechariah 8:23 to non-Christian natural Jews?

God was with the Jews caught in that awful calamity, just because they were Jews according to their circumcised flesh? How could any honest reasonable person accept such an interpretation? Today there is no Jewish temple in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah for any of the Gentiles to go up there and worship with the Jews. Nor are the Jewish religious leaders and political leaders imitating High Priest Joshua and Governor Zerubbabel and rebuilding the temple upon its historical location, even though the Jews took over the old walled city of Jerusalem in the six-day war of 1967. What basis, therefore, is there to apply Zechariah 8:23 to the non-Christian natural, circumcised Jews today or even in the foreseeable future? None whatsoever!

⁴¹ Well, then, is the prophecy's fulfillment being realized in religious Christendom today, which has long held to the idea of world conversion to her multi-sectarian religious organization? Are ten non-Christians of all peoples and nations taking hold of the skirt of a church member of Christendom and saying, "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people"? And by "God" the prophecy means "Jehovah of armies." Certainly the pagan world is not being converted to the sects of Christendom at the rate of ten pagans to one church member. Christendom estimates her church membership today as being 924,274,000 and ten times that would mean more than twice the present world population.

⁴² Just as there were natural Jews *and* natural Jews in the days of Christ's apostles, so today there are professed spiritual Jews *and* professed spiritual Jews. Christendom has more than 900 million such professed spiritual Jews who are supposed to be in the new covenant through Christ as mediator. But of all these two kinds of professed spiritual Jews, we ask: Which kind is really worshiping and serving Jehovah of armies at his true spiritual temple? To which kind are the peoples of all nations, big and small, saying

41. Is Zechariah 8:23 being fulfilled upon Christendom today?

42. To determine which ones of all the professed spiritual Jews of today Zechariah 8:23 applies to, on what questions must we get the facts?

that they will go with them because they have heard, not that some nameless "God" is with them, but that Jehovah God is with them? In this case only the facts should be relied upon. Let these speak for themselves.

⁴³ According to worldwide evidences, it is the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites whom Jehovah God began to liberate from Babylon the Great, that world empire of false Babylonish religion. These are engaged in spiritual work like that of building the second temple of Jehovah in the days of High Priest Joshua and Governor Zerubbabel. They are wholeheartedly promoting the worship of Jehovah of armies world wide, by persons of all nations, tribes, peoples and languages. Annually they meet on Passover Day to celebrate the sacrificial death of Jehovah's Son, the Messiah Jesus, and on that occasion they eat the unleavened bread and drink the wine just as Jesus Christ commanded. From this eloquent testimony on their part, they seem to number today only around ten thousand anointed spiritual Israelites. Much less than the remnant in Zechariah's day.

⁴⁴ Who, though, are joining themselves to these spiritual Jews in worship of the one living and true God at his spiritual temple? Just as was foretold in Revelation 7:9-17, it is a numberless "great crowd" "out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues." These also are becoming disciples of Jehovah's Messiah. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Just in the year 1971 alone there were 149,808 of these baptized as dedicated disciples of Jehovah's Messiah. During that same year there was an average of 1,510,245 who reported joining together in obeying the Messiah's command to preach "this good news" of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom everywhere down to the approaching end of this system of things. (Matthew 24:14) How remarkable already the fulfillment of Zechariah 8:23!

43. What things today distinguish those spiritual Israelites to whom Zechariah 8:23 applies, and how many of them are there now?

44. Who is it that join themselves to these true spiritual Israelites, and in what numbers, according to reports?

CHAPTER
16

**PRESENTATION
OF THE KING
BRINGS RELEASE
TO PRISONERS**

TODAY the countries of Syria and Lebanon and the Gaza Strip figure prominently in the news. Cities that are associated with these lands are named in the ninth chapter of Zechariah's prophecy. However, what the prophet Zechariah said away back there in the sixth century before our Common Era has no application to these lands today in their relations with the Republic of Israel. Aside from any initial fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy in the first century of our Common Era, and in a literal way, the prophecy has its final fulfillment today, in this twentieth century C.E., in only a spiritual or figurative way. By acquainting ourselves with the first fulfillment nineteen centuries ago, we can discern its spiritual fulfillment today.

² If we turn to our map of the Land of Palestine during the Reign of the Persian Kings, we note Damascus, the capital of Syria, also the city of Hamath about 120 miles (193 kilometers) to the north of Damascus; also the ancient Phoenician (now Lebanese) cities of Tyre and Sidon on the Mediterranean seacoast; also the Philistine cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron, Ashdod and Gath; also the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria. The "land of Hadrach" does not appear on all maps because its location and precise limits are not exactly known, but the prophecy associates this once mentioned land with Damascus. The *Atlas of the Biblical World*

1. What kind of application does Zechariah's prophecy, when speaking of lands and cities in the news today, have now, and what helps us to determine a fulfillment today?
2. At a map of what period of time do we look, and are the places mentioned in connection with the "land of Hadrach" Jewish?

LAND OF PALESTINE

DURING THE REIGN OF THE PERSIAN KINGS



by Baly and Tushingham (copyrighted 1971), page 199, calls the "land of Hadrach" simply "a region in Syria near Damascus." The Revised Edition (1956) of *The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible*, page 124, speaks of the Land of Hadrach as a "district of Syria north of Hamath," hence north of Damascus. Whether the expression "the land of Hadrach" is a symbolic one to mean the collective territory in which all the above-mentioned Syrian, Phoenician, Philistine cities are located matters little. They were *all* non-Israelite, non-Jewish.

³ The closing verses (20-23) of the eighth chapter of Zechariah's prophecy tell of how people of all the languages of the nations and from many cities will go up to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah, even taking hold of the skirt of a Jew to go along with him to worship his God. What happens to people who do not do so? Very nicely the opening eight verses of the succeeding chapter (nine) informs us of some of the consequences for not doing so. So let us now read that section, Zechariah 9:1-8:

⁴ "A pronouncement: "The word of Jehovah is against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is where it rests; for Jehovah has an eye on earthling man and on all the tribes of Israel. And Hamath itself will also border upon her; Tyre and Sidon, for she is very wise. And Tyre proceeded to build a rampart for herself, and to pile up silver like dust and gold like the mire of the streets. Look! Jehovah himself will dispossess her, and into the sea he will certainly strike down her military force; and in the fire she herself will be devoured. Ashkelon will see and get afraid; and as for Gaza, she will also feel very severe pains; Ekron also, because her looked-for hope will have to experience shame. And a king will certainly perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon herself will not be inhabited. And an illegitimate son will actually seat himself in Ashdod, and I shall certainly cut off the pride of the Philistine. And I will remove his blood-

3. How do the closing verses of Zechariah, chapter eight, stand in contrast with the opening verses of chapter nine?

4. According to Zechariah 9:1-8, who is it that takes a hand in the affairs of those mentioned, and in behalf of whom?

stained things from his mouth and his disgusting things from between his teeth, and he himself also will certainly be left remaining for our God; and he must become like a sheik in Judah, and Ekron like the Jebusite. And I will encamp as an outpost for my house, so that there will be no one passing through and no one returning; and there will no more pass through them a taskmaster, for now I have seen it with my eyes.' ”

⁵ Ancient Syria of the sixth century B.C.E. worshiped false gods and kept up its enmity toward the restored land of Judah. It refused to worship Jehovah at his rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. Good reason there was, then, for Jehovah's word to be, not favorable, but against the “land of Hadrach” as a part of Syria. His unfavorable word would rest upon the capital of the whole country, namely, Damascus; and as the territory of Hamath bordered upon Damascus, Hamath would also have Jehovah's unfavorable word pronounced against her. So all of Syria was under divine disfavor.

⁶ The country of Phoenicia borders on Syria, and it too had turned against the land of Judah in its time of direst distress. Psalm 83:5-8 includes the Phoenician cities of Gebal and Tyre in the international conspiracy against Jehovah's people, saying: “Against you they proceeded to conclude even a covenant, the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, Philistia together with the inhabitants of Tyre. Also, Assyria itself has become joined with them; they have become an arm to the sons of Lot [Moab and Ammon].” Tyre was really a colony of Sidon; and Zechariah 9:2-4 mentions them, saying:

⁷ “Tyre and Sidon, for she is very wise. And Tyre proceeded to build a rampart for herself, and to pile up silver like dust and gold like the mire of the streets. Look! Jehovah himself will dispossess her, and into the sea he will certainly strike down her military force; and in the fire she herself will be devoured.”

5. Why did Jehovah's disfavor rest upon Damascus, the “land of Hadrach” and Hamath?

6. Why was Jehovah's word against cities of Phoenicia?

7. With whom does Zechariah 9:2-4 link Tyre, and what is foretold to happen to Tyre?

⁸ From those words it is certain that the "word of Jehovah" was pronounced also against all of Phoenicia as represented by her world-famous cities of Tyre and Sidon. The city of Tyre here named is the island city, for King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed the mainland city in his Palestinian campaign. (Ezekiel 29:17-20) The Tyrian survivors fled to their offshore island and built up a powerful city thereon. According to Ezekiel 28:1-19, Tyre had devilishly turned traitor toward its former friend, Israel, and Sidon became associated with Tyre in this course. (Ezekiel 28:20-26) Following the restoration of the land of Judah in 537 B.C.E. after seventy years of lying desolate, Tyre and Sidon did not change their heart attitude toward Jerusalem with her second temple. How unwise!

⁹ Tyre, as well as Sidon, continued to follow the wisdom of this world, increasing her wisdom for the amassing of wealth, piling up gold and silver here on earth where marauders can despoil. The mighty rampart that Tyre built for her protection as a seafaring, commercial power did not withstand the strategy of the Grecian conqueror, Alexander the Great, in 332 B.C.E. Her land-based military forces as well as those aboard her many ships failed her then. Jehovah, by means of his earthly instrument of execution, struck down Tyre's military force into the sea, where she had established her stronghold. Jehovah dispossessed her by turning over her possessions of tremendous wealth to the conqueror. Her then being devoured in the fire brought about her complete ruin.

¹⁰ Years later Tyre was rebuilt, but neither she nor Sidon regained the strong commercial position that she had held before the "word of Jehovah" pronounced against her was fulfilled. In the first century of our Common Era many individuals came from Tyre and Sidon to hear and observe Jesus and get cured by him. (Mark 3:7, 8; Luke 6:17; Matthew 15:21-29) Accord-

8. Which Tyre was the one mentioned by Zechariah, and why was this so?

9. How did Tyre enrich and fortify herself, but how did Jehovah's prophecy concerning her work out?

10. What interest did people from Tyre and Sidon display in Jesus Christ, and what was reported as established in Tyre?

ing to Jesus' own words in Matthew 11:20-22 and Luke 10:13, 14, there should have been many persons in Tyre and Sidon disposed to listen to and act upon the message of God's kingdom. There was a Christian congregation in Tyre at the time of the third missionary tour of the apostle Paul. (Acts 21:2-7) These Tyrians were not trusting in military forces, nor storing up treasures on earth, but storing them up in heaven.

PRIDE OF THE PAGAN ENEMY CUT OFF

¹¹ What, now, is the "word of Jehovah" as pronounced against Philistia? Anciently, the five-city league of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath and Gaza dominated the land of Philistia. For some reason Gath fails to be mentioned in Jehovah's word here against the Philistines. Zechariah 9:5-7 continues the prophecy and says:

¹² "Ashkelon will see and get afraid; and as for Gaza, she will also feel very severe pains; Ekron also, because her looked-for hope will have to experience shame. And a king will certainly perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon herself will not be inhabited. And an illegitimate son will actually seat himself in Ashdod, and I shall certainly cut off the pride of the Philistine. And I will remove his bloodstained things from his mouth and his disgusting things from between his teeth, and he himself also will certainly be left remaining for our God; and he must become like a sheik in Judah, and Ekron like the Jebusite."

¹³ So the city of Ashkelon was to see the destruction of Tyre, and get afraid and then finally become uninhabited. As for Gaza, she felt very severe pains evidently for the same reason; and because of that painful event and its consequences, she experienced a change of rulership and her native king perished from her. The city of Ekron evidently looked to Tyre as her hope for protection and relief against an invading enemy. Hence, when Tyre was reduced to ruins after a seven-

11, 12. (a) What intercity alliance anciently dominated Philistia? (b) Whose pride would Jehovah cut off, and how?

13. (a) How was Tyre's destruction in 332 B.C.E. to affect Ashkelon, Gaza and Ekron? (b) What change was Ashdod to experience?

month siege by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.E., Ekron also writhed with very severe pains, because her hope had been disappointed, shamed. But what about the fourth city mentioned, Ashdod? Apparently a change of population was to take place in her, for Jehovah said: "an illegitimate son will actually seat himself in Ashdod." The legitimate native population was not to remain in it. Strangers, foreigners, were to take over the city, not only in the rulership but also in the population.

¹⁴ Admittedly, then, the "word of Jehovah" was against Philistia. The Philistines had been very proud, arrogant, especially toward Jehovah's people, even after the restoration of these to their homeland. However, their pride preceded their crash. By doing the above-stated things to the four leading cities of Philistia, Jehovah would "cut off the pride of the Philistine." No Philistine could boast any longer when comparing himself with Jehovah's people. Jehovah would also cut off their false religious worship.

¹⁵ In their worship to their false gods, they ate sacrifices that were disgusting to Jehovah and to his people. Also, the animal victims from which they ate in their sacrificial meals were not drained of their blood. A halt was to be called to such loathsome worship of idolatrous gods, for the "word of Jehovah" went on to say: "And I will remove his [the Philistine's] bloodstained things from his mouth and his disgusting things from between his teeth, and he himself also will certainly be left remaining for our God." How such bloodstained and disgusting things will be removed from the mouth and teeth of the Philistine is not explained. But from among all those Philistines who will refuse to observe God's commandment and break off from idolatry with its abominable sacrifices and rites, there will be left a remnant that will do so voluntarily, in obedience. That remnant will be "for our God," for Jehovah of armies.

14. Of what attitude toward Israel had Philistia been guilty, and how would Jehovah cut this off?

15. (a) What will be done with the "bloodstained things" and the "disgusting things" of the Philistines? (b) What course will be taken by a remnant of the Philistines?

What a lifesaving transformation this! But Zechariah 9:7 continues on further to say regarding this remnant: "And he must become like a sheik in Judah, and Ekron like the Jebusite."

¹⁶ Of course, the Philistines in being Hamites could not become sheiks in the tribe of Judah, which was Shemite and Hebrew. (Genesis 10:6, 13, 14, 21-25) But the obedient remnant that were proselyted to the worship of "our God," Jehovah, could become "like a sheik in Judah." Thus the remnant would have a distinguished position in association with Jehovah's chosen people and would not be considered as of little or no importance. Like a sheik of a clan, they would be given responsibilities. However, these responsibilities will be subservient to those of the Judeans themselves. This is indicated by the statement that Ekron will become "like the Jebusite." Like the Philistines, the Jebusites were Hamites, not through Ham's son Mizraim but through his son Canaan, and so were Canaanites. (Genesis 10:6, 15, 16) The Jebusites were early occupants of Jerusalem, which therefore used to be called Jebus.

¹⁷ In 1070 B.C.E. King David captured the city from the Jebusites and called it Jerusalem. (Judges 1:21; 2 Samuel 5:4-9) Later the subjugated Jebusites were used as slave labor by David's son, King Solomon, in various public works of construction, including the magnificent temple at Jerusalem. (1 Kings 9:15-23; 2 Chronicles 8:1-10) What a privilege it was for those Jebusites to have a share in the building of Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem and also building fine facilities for the typical Messianic kingdom of God in ancient Israel! So, in becoming "like the Jebusite," Ekron and its inhabitants who turned to the worship of "our God," Jehovah, were brought into a favored position, though subservient.

¹⁸ In the first century of our Common Era the good

16. (a) How would the remnant of the Philistines become "like a sheik in Judah"? (b) Becoming "like the Jebusite" indicated what level of society for those of Ekron?

17. Why in becoming "like the Jebusite" was a favored position indicated for those of Ekron?

18. What experience with Christianity did the Philistines have in the first century C.E.?

news of God's Messianic kingdom was preached to the Philistines. We recall how the evangelizer Philip preached to an Ethiopian eunuch as they were riding in his chariot on the "road that runs down from Jerusalem to Gaza" in Philistia. After baptizing this Ethiopian convert to Christianity, Philip left him and was found up at Ashdod (*Greek*, Azotos; modern Isdud), around thirty-four miles north of Gaza. Doubtless many Philistines responded to Philip's evangelizing. (Acts 8:26-40) After the conversion of the Italian centurion Cornelius in 36 C.E., Philistines could be converted, and then could receive the holy spirit of God through Christ.

¹⁹ In our own modern twentieth century many religionists have been like the ancient Philistines in worshiping false gods and in fighting against Jehovah's people. As ancient Ashdod, the chief city in the five-city confederation of the Philistines, underwent a change of population as if by illegitimate sons, so these antitypical Philistines of today have undergone a change of personality. By dedicating themselves to God through Jesus Christ and getting baptized in water, they cease to be a part of this Philistine world and become 'strangers,' unnatural, to it and out of place. They do not go after selfish commercialism as ancient Tyre did, nor do they depend upon it and hope in it in the way that Ekron looked to Tyre; nor do they trust in a military force, as ancient Syria did. They abstain from the worship and service of the bloodlusting gods of this modern world. They devotedly take their stand for "our God," Jehovah of armies.

²⁰ In consideration of this course, these transformed modern Philistines are given a share with the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites or Jews in promoting the worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple. Just "like a sheik in Judah," they are given assignments and responsibilities in connection with that temple ac-

19. How is the prophetic picture of 'an illegitimate son actually seating himself in Ashdod' fulfilled in the case of modern antitypical Philistines?

20. These transformed Philistines of today are given what share with the remnant of spiritual Israelites?

tivity. The crowd of these dedicated, baptized servants of Jehovah God has already grown "great," and it is still increasing. This unnumbered "great crowd" who become associated with the spirit-anointed remnant was foretold in Revelation 7:9-17.

²¹ Ancient Philistia, Phoenicia and Syria were violent enemies of the restored remnant of former Jewish exiles. To mark a contrast between his dealings with those enemies and his dealings with his chosen people, the house of Israel, Jehovah of armies continued on to say: "And I will encamp as an outpost for my house, so that there will be no one passing through and no one returning; and there will no more pass through them a taskmaster, for now I have seen it with my eyes."—Zechariah 9:8.

²² Encamping as an outpost, Jehovah of armies could prevent the attacking enemies from getting near His "house" and from invading them and then retiring. As an "outpost" he would prevent a slave-driving "taskmaster" from passing through their midst anymore and enslaving them. Similarly to this, the same Jehovah of armies has protected his "house" of spiritual Israelites in this "time of the end," when the enemies have massed together as never before in opposition to Jehovah's worship at his spiritual temple. Strengthened by his mighty spirit, Jehovah's "house" of spiritual Israel successfully resist all efforts of worldly "taskmasters" to pass through their spiritual estate and become their religious taskmaster. In imitation of Christ's apostles, they obey God as ruler rather than men.—Acts 5:29.

²³ Jehovah of armies is aware of the threats and efforts of the enemies against his worshipers at his temple. As he says, "Now I have seen it with my eyes." This corresponds with what he said earlier in his "pro-

21, 22. (a) Of what benefit was it to his people for Jehovah to be an outpost for them, and why would no taskmaster pass through them? (b) How has Jehovah fulfilled this prophecy toward his remnant of spiritual Israel today?

23. (a) What does Jehovah's expression, "Now I have seen it with my eyes," mean as regards the situation of his people amid all mankind? (b) How is this true today with respect to the spiritual remnant and the "great crowd" of fellow worshipers?

nouncement," in these words: "The word of Jehovah is against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is where it rests; for Jehovah has an eye on earthling man and on all the tribes of Israel." (Zechariah 9:1) He has his observing eye not only on "all the tribes of Israel" but also on earthling man. That is to say, on all humankind aside from his chosen people. That is why he made his pronouncement against the traditional enemies like Syria, Phoenicia and Philistia who had abused the twelve tribes of Israel. This "pronouncement" is prophetic and has its spiritual application today to the enemies of Jehovah's spiritual Israel and the "great crowd" of fellow worshipers. The difference between how Jehovah of armies treats all these worshipers of His and how he treats the modern-day counterparts of Syria, Phoenicia and Philistia can already be seen. The full difference will be observable during the approaching time of "great tribulation" when he frees his loyal worshipers completely of all their ungodly enemies. —Matthew 24:21, 22; Revelation 7:14, 15; 19:11-21.

"LOOK! YOUR KING HIMSELF COMES"

²⁴ A king was to perish from the Philistine city of Gaza, but what was to take place with regard to the object of Philistine hostility, Jerusalem, poetically called Zion? Is she, like Gaza, to "feel very severe pains" because of seeing the overthrow of the stronghold of greedy commercialism and untheocratic military force? Is she to cry out in extreme pain and terrifying fear? Cry out she will, but not in harmony with Gaza! For, after making his pronouncement against Syria, Phoenicia and Philistia, Jehovah proceeds to say: "Be very joyful, O daughter of Zion. Shout in triumph,* O daughter of Jerusalem. Look! Your king himself comes to you. He is righteous, yes, saved; humble, and riding upon an ass, even upon a full-grown animal the son of a she-ass. And I shall certainly cut off

* Compare Zephaniah 3:14; Isaiah 44:23; Psalm 41:12; Job 38:7.

24. (a) In view of Gaza's experience, what questions are asked about the object of her hostility, Jerusalem? (b) Why will Jerusalem's crying out differ from that of Gaza?

the war chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem. And the battle bow must be cut off. And he will actually speak peace to the nations; and his rulership will be from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."—Zechariah 9:9, 10.

²⁵ At the fulfillment of that glorious promise, why would not Jerusalem have all good reason in the world to be very joyful and to "shout in triumph"? For at the time that this divine promise was given through the prophet Zechariah, Jerusalem was without a king of her own. She merely had a provincial governor whom the emperor of Persia, Darius I, had appointed, namely, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel of the royal family line of David. The kingdom of David had been overturned by the Babylonians about ninety years earlier, in 607 B.C.E., at the total destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of her king Zedekiah to Babylon. Although Jerusalem's seventy years of lying utterly desolate had now passed, yet the Gentile Times of 2,520 years for the non-Jewish nations to trample upon Jerusalem's right to a Davidic kingship had to continue on until the year 1914 C.E. So in Zechariah's day the "daughter of Jerusalem" was longingly looking forward to the coming of the true Messiah King in the line of David, a Messiah prefigured by Governor Zerubbabel.—Haggai 2:23.

²⁶ We today, who are interested in the true Messiah, not in a false Christ, do not have to guess uncertainly as to the initial fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy. It is recorded and described for us by at least three eyewitnesses thereof, namely, Matthew Levi a tax collector, John Mark an inhabitant of Jerusalem, and John the son of Zebedee, besides a first-century historian who investigated the facts of the case, the physician Luke of Asia Minor. It occurred on Sunday, Nisan 9, 33 C.E. Matthew Levi tells us:

25. Why has the "daughter of Jerusalem" every reason to shout in triumph and be very joyful at the approach of the king?

26. Why do we not have to guess uncertainly as to the initial fulfillment of this prophecy of Zechariah?

Well, when they got close to Jerusalem and arrived at Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent forth two disciples, saying to them: "Be on your way into the village that is within sight of you, and you will at once find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. And if someone says anything to you, you must say, 'The Lord needs them.' At that he will immediately send them forth."

This actually took place that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Look! Your King is coming to you, mild-tempered, and mounted upon an ass, yes, upon a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden.'"

So the disciples got on their way and did just as Jesus ordered them. And they brought the ass and its colt, and they put upon these their outer garments, and he seated himself upon them. Most of the crowd spread their outer garments on the road, while others began cutting down branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. As for the crowds, those going ahead of him and those following kept crying out: "Save, we pray, the Son of David! Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah's name! Save him, we pray, in the heights above!"

Now when he entered into Jerusalem, the whole city was set in commotion, saying: "Who is this?" The crowds kept telling: "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee!"

And Jesus entered into the temple and threw out all those selling and buying in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. And he said to them: "It is written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a cave of robbers." Also, blind and lame persons came up to him in the temple, and he cured them.

When the chief priests and the scribes saw the marvelous things he did and the boys that were crying out in the temple and saying: "Save, we pray, the Son of David!" they became indignant and said to him: "Do you hear what these are saying?" Jesus said to them: "Yes. Did you never read this, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have furnished praise'?"—Matthew 21:1-16.

²⁷ And the Jewish physician Luke adds this detail:

However, some of the Pharisees from the crowd said to him: "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." But in reply he said: "I tell you, If these remained silent, the stones would cry out."—Luke 19:39, 40; see also Mark 11:1-18; John 12:12-19.

27. If the disciples had not cried out, how would the prophecy have been fulfilled?

²⁸ Thus, instead of on a war-horse, Jesus Christ peacefully rode an ass into Jerusalem, unlike Herod the Great, who, after three months of besieging Jerusalem in the year 37 B.C.E., took Jerusalem by storm and dethroned Hasmonaean (Maccabean) king, Antigonus of the tribe of Levi. Jesus was indeed "humble," as Zechariah 9:9 had foretold. He was no false Christ or false Messiah, but was "righteous," the Messiah vindicated by his heavenly Father Jehovah. He was in fact "righteous" by being perfect in the flesh, sinless, unblemished, and therefore able to offer himself as a perfect human sacrifice for taking away the sin of the whole unrighteous world of mankind. (Acts 7:52; Hebrews 7:26; 1 John 2:1) He was indeed "saved," just as his ancient ancestor King David was saved by being given the victory over his enemies. (2 Samuel 22:1-4; 8:6, 14) Not in vain did the great crowd cry out as Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem: "Hosanna to the Son of David," or, "Save, we pray, the Son of David!" Seven days later Almighty God saved Jesus out of death by resurrecting him to immortal life in heaven.—Hebrews 5:7-10.

²⁹ He is the one who was to be called "Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6, 7) The Jewish disciples of him came from all the tribes of Israel, including Ephraim and Judah, and he united them in peaceful Christian brotherhood; among his disciples he even broke down the enmity between those who were natural circumcised Jews and those who were Gentiles. (Ephesians 2:11-20) In this way he has already spoken "peace to the nations." But Christendom has refused to listen to his speech and continues warring within herself to this day. In the oncoming "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon, Jehovah God will use his Messianic King to destroy war chariots and bows and all violent war equipment found today inside and outside of Christendom. (Revelation 16:14-16; 19:

28. How, on his triumphal ride into Jerusalem, was Jesus peaceful, "humble," "righteous," and "saved"?

29. (a) As regards his spiritual disciples, how did Jesus Christ "speak peace to the nations"? (b) How does he destroy all war equipment inside and outside of Christendom, and what will be the result of his speaking peace to the "great crowd" of today?

11-21) He will destroy all promoters of violent warfare among mankind, in all nations. But to the "great crowd" of peace-loving worshipers at Jehovah's spiritual temple, who have come out of all nations, the victorious King Jesus Christ will speak peace and in peace, and they will be preserved.—Revelation 7:14.

³⁰ When in 1914 C.E. the 2,520 years of the Gentile Times ended for the Gentile nations to trample on Jerusalem's right to a Messianic kingship in the royal line of David, the Most High God Jehovah installed the Messiah Jesus on the heavenly throne in order to reign and go subduing among his enemies. (Psalm 110: 1-6; Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 10:12, 13) During World War I (1914-1918 C.E.) the dedicated, baptized remnant of spiritual Israelites publicly proclaimed that the Gentile Times had ended and that the Most High God had made his Son Jesus Christ reigning King in the heavens. Thus Jehovah's Messianic King was being presented especially to Christendom, which was prefigured by Jerusalem of the first century C.E. But did Christendom, who professed to be made up of disciples of Christ, receive him as King, whose "rulership" was to be "from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth"?

³¹ Not according to what Christendom did to the anointed remnant of his spiritual "brothers," which was the same as doing it to Jesus the Messiah himself. (Matthew 25:40, 45; Mark 9:37) Three and a half years after the end of the Gentile Times, war-embattled Christendom brought her persecution and suppression of the remnant of Christ's spiritual brothers to a grand climax, in the spring of 1918 C.E. (Revelation 11:2-10) First after doing that did Christendom bring her first world war to an end, on November 11, 1918. In imitation of Jerusalem of the first century C.E. Christendom refused to receive Jehovah's Messianic King. In the following month (December, 1918), Christendom went

30. How, after the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E., was Jesus Christ formally presented to antitypical Jerusalem as King, but what question arises as to his reception?

31. Down to December of 1918, what proves whether Christendom received Jehovah's Messiah as her King?

on public record as favoring the proposed League of Nations as being "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth."

³² Were there, however, none to receive the Messianic King whom Jehovah of armies presented? Yes, there were! Just as on Sunday, Nisan 9 of 33 C.E. there was a remnant of the Jews, namely, the disciples of Jesus Christ, that hailed him and welcomed him on his kingly ride into Jerusalem, so there was a remnant of spiritual Israelites that did likewise after the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E. By the persecution and repressive measures of Gentile governments of Christendom, these were scattered and broken up, just as Jesus' disciples were after his betrayal and arrest, on the fifth day after his triumphant ride into Jerusalem. But in the first postwar year of 1919 C.E. when they were revived by God's life-giving spirit and reinstated actively in his service, they rejected the League of Nations, which was adopted and put into effect that year. Instead of accepting such a counterfeit Christ's kingdom, they caught up the spirit of Zechariah 9:9 and became "very joyful" and began to "shout in triumph," because their King, the true Messiah-Christ, had come to them.

³³ They let their joy be known world wide. They let their shouting be heard world wide. How? By initiating in 1919 C.E. the greatest campaign for proclaiming God's Messianic kingdom that the world of mankind has ever known. (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6) They have let the proclamation of the good news of God's Messianic kingdom be heard as far as Messiah's "rulership" is foretold to extend: "from sea to sea and from the River [Euphrates] to the ends of the earth." (Zechariah 9:10; Psalm 72:8) Already 207 countries and island groups have heard, and this in 165 languages. In God's unchangeable due time—soon now—all Christendom and all other elements of this worldly

32. In view of Christendom's course, were there none to receive Jehovah's Messianic King, and what would they have to do, according to prophecy?

33. (a) How, since 1919 C.E., have these receivers of the King let their joy be known and their shouting be heard? (b) When and how will the Messiah-Christ cease to ride the peaceful ass and on his ride whereto?

system of things must be cleared off all this territory in the fast-nearing "great tribulation" such as the world of mankind has never before known. In Revelation 19:11-21 the Messiah-Christ is pictured, no longer as riding on a peaceful ass, but on a white war-horse, charging into battle to clear off all opposers who have been squatting on his earthly domain since 1914 C.E.

THE TURNING OF PRISONERS TO THE STRONGHOLD

³⁴ Jesus the Messiah, when on earth as a perfect human being, was sent to "proclaim liberty to those taken captive." (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:16-21) He not only proclaims this, but after his proclamation thereof he bestows it upon the captive ones. Jehovah's pronouncement through Zechariah foretells this, as it goes on to say: "Also, you, O woman, by the blood of your covenant I will send your prisoners out of the pit in which there is no water. Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of the hope." (Zechariah 9:11, 12) Who is the one here addressed as a woman, who are the "prisoners" and what is the "stronghold"?

³⁵ The one addressed as if a woman is the organization that is in a covenant with Jehovah God by the precious blood of life. No, it is not earthly Jerusalem nor the earthly nation of natural circumcised Israel. True, the ancient nation of Israel was in a national covenant with Jehovah through the blood of the animal victims sacrificed by the mediator Moses at Mount Sinai in Arabia. (Exodus, chapter 24) According to that national compact validated with such animal blood, the remnant of Israelites had been released from their prison of exile in Babylon in 537 B.C.E. But what Jehovah was now speaking of through Zechariah was a liberation in the distant future, long after that release from Babylonian exile. It is a freeing from the waterless pit that follows the presentation of Jehovah's Messianic King. It follows Jesus' triumphant ride into Jeru-

34. (a) Did Jesus the Messiah merely proclaim liberation for the prisoners? (b) Jehovah's announcement to the "woman" in Zechariah 9:11, 12 raises what questions?

35. The "woman" here addressed is in a covenant the blood of which was shed on what occasion?

saalem five days before the Jewish Passover of 33 C.E. On that Passover Day sacrificial blood was shed.

³⁶ Whose blood? Messiah's blood, whose blood had been typified by the blood of all the Passover lambs sacrificed annually by the Jews since that first Passover down in Egypt in 1513 B.C.E. (1 Corinthians 5:7; John 1:29, 36; 1 Peter 1:18, 19) By virtue of Messiah's blood, more precious than that of all the animal victims sacrificed by Israel, a new covenant was put into force. With whom? Not with earthly Jerusalem or with natural Israel, who rejected the Messianic King and brought about his death. But with spiritual Israel, circumcised in heart, Jewish in an inward sense. (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:7 to 9:15) The Mediator of this new covenant between Jehovah and spiritual Israel is the Messiah Jesus. So it is spiritual Israel that is addressed as a woman in a covenant by blood at Zechariah 9:11.

³⁷ Where, then, were those "prisoners" of this symbolic woman? Down here in this twentieth century and in this "conclusion of the system of things" these "prisoners" are the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites. The history of this century records that during World War I these did come into the bondage of religious Babylon the Great and her political and military patronizers. In that condition they were as in a "pit in which there is no water." No spiritual refreshment therein, no hope of their getting out! But by the shed blood of Christ as a ransom sacrifice their sins in this condition were forgiven them and they were restored to Jehovah's favor and to their rightful spiritual estate on earth, as no longer exiles from Him. But the waterless pit may also picture that larger unfavorable condition of being under the general condemnation of sin and under its penalty of death, as inherited from our sinful first human parents, Adam and Eve. It did really require Christ's redemptive blood to get those who

36. Whose blood is here meant, and with whom is the covenant by blood made, and who is the one addressed as "woman" in Zechariah 9:11?

37, 38. (a) Who are the woman's "prisoners," and what is the waterless pit in this twentieth century? (b) What larger meaning might be given to the waterless pit, and what covenant does the blood put in force?

make up this spiritual remnant out of that condition. His blood was that which was applied to put the new covenant into effect. Jesus said:

³⁸ "This means my 'blood of the covenant,' which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:28) "This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf."—Luke 22:20; Hebrews 13:20.

³⁹ Thus by the application of the blood of the new covenant made with spiritual Israel Jehovah of armies sent forth the imprisoned remnant out of the waterless "pit" of the condemnation of sin and death. (Hebrews 12:24) Religious Babylon the Great did not offer these "prisoners" any hope; they could entertain "hope" only as they trusted in the loving promises of Jehovah God and his Messiah. To these in spiritual exile under Babylon the Great, Jehovah of armies issued the call in 1919 C.E.: "Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of the hope."—Zechariah 9:12.

⁴⁰ That divine call meant for those "prisoners of the hope" to get out of Babylon the Great! (Revelation 18:1-4) The word "stronghold" reminds us of the words of 2 Samuel 5:7-9: "David proceeded to capture the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. . . . And David took up dwelling in the stronghold, and it came to be called the city of David." But King David's capital became enlarged to include more than Mount Zion, and it came to be called Jerusalem. So Jerusalem is the "stronghold," not so much in itself as a strongly fortified city, but in what it represented. What did it represent? The Messianic kingdom of God, for its human king was anointed with holy oil to be ruler and this anointed ruler sat on "Jehovah's throne."—2 Samuel 5:1-3; 1 Chronicles 29:23.

⁴¹ In 537 B.C.E. the remnant of exiles in Babylon re-

39. Only hope from what source could those "prisoners" in the waterless pit entertain, and what call did Jehovah issue to them in 1919 C.E.?

40. (a) What did that divine call mean for the "prisoners" to do? (b) What is the "stronghold" to which the prisoners must return?

41. (a) This return of the "prisoners" was typified by what in 537 B.C.E.? (b) Why was it to the kingdom that the "prisoners" were able to return in 1919 C.E.?

turned to the land of Judah and rebuilt the city of Jerusalem, thus returning to the earthly stronghold. Their course of action was typical of the course of the modern remnant of spiritual Israel. In obedience to Jehovah's call, the anointed remnant got out of Babylon the Great in 1919 C.E. and returned to the spiritual "stronghold." What could be a more impregnable stronghold than the unshakable Messianic kingdom of God? As the earthly stronghold of Jerusalem stood for Jehovah's Messianic kingdom, likewise the spiritual stronghold pictures what ancient Jerusalem had the divine right to, namely, Jehovah's kingdom of the true Messiah seated at the right hand of God in heaven. The Gentile Times for the nations to trample on that divine right to Kingdom ended in 1914 C.E., and immediately the Messianic kingdom was born in the heavens. (Revelation 12:1-9) So the anointed remnant, on being released in 1919 C.E., could "return" to that stronghold-like Kingdom, which they had been proclaiming since 1914 C.E. They showed that they did so by renewing their Kingdom preaching as never before.

⁴² There was excellent reason for the anointed remnant to "return to the stronghold," for Jehovah of armies went on to say to spiritual Israel as to a woman: "Also, today I am telling you, 'I shall repay to you, O woman, a double portion.'" (Zechariah 9:12) And has not Jehovah of armies done so? Yes. As the anointed remnant of liberated spiritual Israelites today look back, they are obliged to admit that what they had to endure during World War I at the hands of Babylon the Great and her world paramours was nothing in comparison with the spiritual blessings that they are enjoying now in their rightful spiritual estate. Especially so since the end of World War II! It has been more than they expected at the hands of their Liberator, Jehovah of armies. It has been like a "double portion." What blessings they enjoy!

42. What can the remnant of spiritual Israel say today as to fulfillment of Jehovah's promise to the "woman": "Today I am telling you, 'I shall repay to you, O woman, a double portion'?"

SPIRITUAL WAR AGAINST THE SEVENTH WORLD POWER

⁴³ Jehovah of armies foresaw the future assailants against his people, his worshipers. What action would he take? Both offensive and defensive. As to his offensive action, he said: " 'For I will tread as my bow Judah. The bow I will fill with Ephraim, and I will awaken your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and I will make you [that is to say, Zion] as the sword of a mighty man.' And over them Jehovah himself will be seen, and his arrow will certainly go forth just like lightning. And on the horn the Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself will blow, and he will certainly go with the windstorms of the south. Jehovah of armies himself will defend them, and they will actually devour and subdue the slingstones. And they will certainly drink—be boisterous—as if there were wine; and they will actually become filled like the bowl, like the corners of the altar."—Zechariah 9:13-15.

⁴⁴ In that figurative warfare, Jehovah's worshipers are to be victorious, for they will be boisterous with joy, just as if their hearts had been made to rejoice with wine. (Psalm 104:15) So, in Zechariah's day, the restored Israelites had nothing to fear from the 'sons of Greece,' when Alexander the Great led these to the position of world domination as the Fifth World Power. Babylon the destroyer of Jerusalem had now fallen as the Third World Power. Medo-Persia was then dominating the earth as the Fourth World Power. And in 332 B.C.E. Greece was to take her place as the Fifth World Power and to govern the land of Judah.

⁴⁵ However, according to Daniel 8:8-25, there was to be an outgrowth from the Grecian Empire into the Roman Empire as the Sixth World Power and then on into the symbolic 'small horn,' the Anglo-American

43. In Zechariah 9:13-15, how did Jehovah say he would use his people in a spiritual offensive warfare?

44. The joy of God's victorious people was to be as joy occasioned by what means, and so what coming world power did they not need to fear?

45. (a) With what indirect outgrowth of the Grecian World Power has the anointed remnant had to carry on spiritual warfare, and over what issue? (b) How have the 'sons of Zion' prevailed?

dual world power as the Seventh World Power. With this reputedly Christian Seventh World Power the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel has had to contend, especially during World Wars I and II. It is a spiritual warfare that they have had to wage in an effort to keep neutral toward the controversies of the worldly political powers and to obey God as ruler rather than nationalistic men. (Acts 5:29-32) The spiritual 'sons of Zion' have prevailed by faith in God's Word and by their faithfulness to Jehovah's Messianic kingdom. This has not been true of the Zionist Movement of the natural, circumcised Jews up till now.

⁴⁶ When the Seventh World Power proposed and worked for the League of Nations in 1918-1919 as the "political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth," Jehovah's Messianic kingdom as established in the heavens in 1914 C.E. and as pictured by ancient Zion stood in opposition to the man-made counterfeit. Jehovah will use his kingdom as the "sword of a mighty man." The "sons of the kingdom" (Zion's spiritual sons) proclaim world wide the Kingdom message, which also is as a spiritual sword. (Matthew 13:38, 43; Ephesians 6:17) Like ancient Judah (the bow) and like Ephraim (the arrow), Jehovah uses the older surviving part of the anointed remnant to propel the newer part like an arrow in declaring the judgment message of the Sovereign Lord God against the enemies of the Messianic kingdom. Jehovah's symbolic "arrow" speeds "just like lightning" to the Kingdom proclamation, the declaring of the "day of vengeance on the part of our God." (Isaiah 61:1, 2) Through the present-day explanations of his Holy Word the Bible, Jehovah sounds the spiritual "horn" to call his anointed remnant to the spiritual warfare.

⁴⁷ He himself is seen over them, for since 1931 C.E.

46. How does Jehovah use his anointed remnant on earth like bow and arrow, how speedily does his arrow go, how does he blow his symbolic "horn," and what does he use as the "sword of a mighty man"?

47. (a) Especially since when has Jehovah been seen over his people, and in what respects has he defended them? (b) How have they subdued the figurative "slingsstones," and at what are they filled with joy as with wine?

they have specifically been called by his name, Jehovah's Christian witnesses. Against the enemies of his Messianic kingdom he will go as "with the windstorms of the south," which are notably violent in the Middle East. But his faithful remnant of spiritual Israelites he will defend, preserving their faith and spirituality and their God-given spiritual estate. The enemies hurl many stunning deterrents against the restored remnant, but such symbolic "slingstones" the remnant show a capacity to receive without being stunned out of action and they really subdue such "slingstones," nullifying their effect. Just as the temple bowls were filled with the blood of animal victims and splashed against the side of the copper altar of sacrifice, drenching its corners, so Jehovah's pouring out of the lifeblood of his enemies in destruction will fill the defended remnant with joy, as if the blood of the enemies were wine that was lawful to drink, to make their hearts rejoice.

⁴⁸ Instead of being like an assailing warrior against his remnant of spiritual Israelites, Jehovah will be tender toward them like a peaceful shepherd. So he brings his "pronouncement" to a high point, saying: "And Jehovah their God will certainly save them in that day like the flock of his people; for they will be as the stones of a diadem glittering over his soil. For O how great his goodness is, and how great his handsomeness is! Grain is what will make the young men thrive, and new wine the virgins."—Zechariah 9:16, 17.

⁴⁹ In the days of Zechariah, that was a heart-strengthening prophecy. Today, this late in the "time of the end" of the Seventh World Power and all the rest of this militarized system of things, the prophecy has become an experience that now nears a grand climax.

⁵⁰ Since the publication of the leading article, "Who Will Honor Jehovah?" in the January 1, 1926, issue of *The Watch Tower*, Jehovah has outstandingly been declared world wide to be the God of the anointed rem-

48. With what kind of tenderness did Jehovah promise to treat his dedicated people, and like what kind of stones have they glittered? 49, 50. (a) Since when did Jehovah honor those honoring his name? (b) How does Jehovah act as a Savior of his flock, and how precious are these to Him?

nant of spiritual Israelites. Just as He had long ago said by a prophetic "man of God," "Those honoring me I shall honor," he did honor that Jehovah-honoring remnant. (1 Samuel 2:30) He saved them through the persecutions and perils of the worst war of all human history, World War II (1939-1945 C.E.), because these honorable spiritual Israelites were dear to him, just as a flock of sheep is to its Middle Eastern shepherd. How precious the stones of a royal diadem are to its wearer, whose appearance is made awesome by their glitter! Just as precious as those glittering stones in a royal headdress are the faithful ones of the spiritual "flock of his people." He will yet save them from the enemy's final assault.

⁵¹ How great Jehovah's goodness to them has proved to be! How handsome their mental picture of Him has become to them! As with abundant harvests of grain he has fed them with spiritual food from his revealed Holy Word. As with new wine, their hearts have been gladdened. All this has caused them to thrive spiritually.

51. How has the mental picture of Jehovah become to the remnant, and as with what provisions has he caused them to thrive spiritually?

CHAPTER 17

IN THESE days ominous warnings are being sounded of overpopulating the earth—population explosion!—and of world famine as early as the year 1975 C.E. It seems strange, therefore, to be speaking predictively of young men and virgin girls thriving on

UNIFICATION IN SPITE OF FALSE PREDICTIONS

1. Bringing back scattered peoples to their own land to the capacity of its territory suggests what problems in these days of population explosion and impending world famine?

the grain of the field and the luxury wine of the vineyards. Yes, and of bringing in more population to the point of having no more room for more. For the rapidly multiplying populations of some nations it seems that more room has to be found at the expense of territory outside the national borders, taken from neighboring lands. More food has to be grown; more land has to be put to raising crops. Why, then, regather the scattered people of a nation within their national borders, to the utmost capacity of the territory? How can its food problem be solved?

² Food problem? For human governments, yes! But for the Planter of mankind's paradise, No! No such problem exists even today for Him of whom it was written under inspiration more than twenty-three centuries before the present world situation: "He is watering the mountains from his upper chambers. With the fruitage of your works the earth is satisfied. He is making green grass sprout for the beasts, and vegetation for the service of mankind, to cause food to go forth from the earth, and wine that makes the heart of mortal man rejoice, to make the face shine with oil, and bread that sustains the very heart of mortal man. The trees of Jehovah are satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted."—Psalm 104:13-16.

³ Let self-reliant men make what predictions they dare to make about solving the world problem by combined human efforts, there is only the one direction in which to look for relief. In that direction the pronouncement that comes from a source superior to that of man and devils and that is written down in Zechariah 10:1, 2 points all of us, saying: "Make your request of Jehovah for rain in the time of the spring rain, even of Jehovah who is making the storm clouds, and who gives a downpour of rain to them, to each one vegetation in the field. For the teraphim themselves have spoken what is uncanny; and the practitioners of divination, for their part, have visioned false-

2. In contrast with human governments, for whom is there no food problem, according to Psalm 104:13-16?

3. In what direction does Zechariah 10:1, 2 turn us to look for relief?

hood, and valueless dreams are what they keep speaking, and in vain they try to comfort. That is why they will certainly depart like a flock; they will become afflicted, because there is no shepherd."

⁴The ability of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, the Creator, to give rain on a world scale was demonstrated in the year 2370 B.C.E., when, at the close of a week during which Noah and his family were told to get the animal and bird specimens into the mammoth ark (chest), it began to rain earth wide for forty days, this flooding the whole face of the earth for a year. (Genesis, chapters 6-8) Another occasion that he brought rain at a specific time, and this in answer to prayer, was when, at the end of three and a half years of drought over the land of the Ten Tribe Kingdom of Israel, the prophet Elijah prayed. The start of this answer to the prayer of a righteous man was a "small cloud like a man's palm ascending out of the [Mediterranean] sea," after which "the heavens themselves darkened up with clouds and wind and a great downpour began to occur."—1 Kings 18:43-45; James 5:16-18; Luke 4:25, 26.

⁵To the faithful remnant restored to the land of Judah it was promised that Jehovah would give them an excellent ecology or environmental conditions. He said: "I will make them and the surroundings of my hill a blessing, and I will cause the pouring rain to descend in its time. Pouring rains of blessing there will prove to be." (Ezekiel 34:26) However, the remnant was not to take this for granted. During the years that they neglected the rebuilding of God's temple at Jerusalem, they experienced scorching heat over the land, and "the heavens kept back their dew, and the earth itself kept back its yield. And I [Jehovah] kept calling for dryness upon the earth, and upon the mountains, and upon the grain, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon what the ground

4. How was the Creator's ability to give rain at a specified time demonstrated in Noah's day and in Elijah's day?

5. What experience during the neglect of temple building proved to the restored Jews that "pouring rains of blessing" (Ezekiel 34:26) were not to be taken for granted?

would bring forth, and upon earthling man, and upon domestic animal, and upon all the toil of the hands." (Haggai 1:10, 11; 2:16, 17; Zechariah 8:10-12) Then they found it necessary to pray to the One "who is making the storm clouds, and who gives a downpour of rain."—Zechariah 10:1.

⁶ To the faithful remnant who directed their prayers to Him, along with obedience to his commandments, he gave "to each one vegetation in the field." Each faithful individual's plot of ground was blessed with needed vegetation for food. The false gods of pagan, superstitious people are not the ones to whom to look and pray. In an address to the heavenly Rainmaker, the earlier prophet Jeremiah said: "Do there exist among the vain idols of the nations any that can pour down rain, or can even the heavens themselves give copious showers? Are you not the One, O Jehovah our God? And we hope in you, for you yourself have done all these things." (Jeremiah 14:22) All of today's ecologists or environmental experts, who do not take Jehovah God into consideration, will yet find the inspired Bible statement about Jehovah's rainmaking true.

⁷ At the present time the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel, who are giving their attention foremost to reestablishing the pure worship of Jehovah at his spiritual temple, are not praying for literal rain upon the earth in the hope of preventing world famine. They remember that Jesus Christ predicted that during this "conclusion of the system of things," "famines," "food shortages," would add to the sufferings of the worldly nations and peoples. (Matthew 24:7, AV; NW) They know that more important for surviving the coming great world "tribulation" and gaining life in God's new system of things are the spiritual blessings—an increasing understanding of the Holy Bible and its prophecies, favorable relationship with God, more of his holy spirit or active force, regular meetings

6. Are the false gods of pagan, superstitious people rainmakers, and what statement about rainmaking will ecologists yet find to be true?

7. Why does the anointed remnant not pray for literal rain to avert world famine, and what do they know to be more important for survival?

with his dedicated people, a share in the preaching of the good news of his Messianic kingdom, divine guidance and protection in all our endeavors to do His will. For a downpour of such blessings the God-fearing remnant have prayed. Hence their spiritual estate has yielded much "vegetation." It has become a spiritual Paradise.—2 Corinthians 12:4.

⁸ Contrary to her "form of godly devotion," Christendom looks for her blessings to the false gods of this world, commercialism, militarism, evolutionistic schooling, patriotism, modern science and technology, and the United Nations. Her political leaders even consult astrologers and spirit mediums. What have we noticed to be the results? Exactly what Zechariah 10:2 foretold: "For the teraphim themselves have spoken what is uncanny; and the practicers of divination, for their part, have visioned falsehood, and valueless dreams are what they keep speaking, and in vain they try to comfort. That is why they will certainly depart like a flock; they will become afflicted, because there is no shepherd."

⁹ In their independence of the Holy Bible, the peoples of Christendom look to their "teraphim," that is, their household gods, their *Penates*, as the superstitious ancient Romans did. They trust to their own private opinions, each one having his own brand of personal religion. They look to the predictions of the military, economic and political specialists; also, to the priests and clergymen who pray heaven's blessing upon such worldly leaders and spokesmen. They rebel against the Word of God that Jehovah's Christian witnesses have proclaimed to them, and they push ahead presumptuously with their own ideas of how to do things. To them the words of the prophet Samuel apply, when speaking to disobedient King Saul of Israel: "Rebelloisness is the same as the sin of divination, and pushing ahead presumptuously the same as using uncanny power and teraphim."—1 Samuel 15:23.

8. To what as gods has Christendom looked for her blessings, but with what foretold result?

9. How have the people of Christendom been guilty of using "teraphim" and "divination"?

¹⁰ From Jehovah's standpoint, not just the so-called pagan world, but even Christendom is involved with idolatrous teraphim and uncanny power and demonistic divination. The private opinions of men have therefore proved to be in error. The predictions made by public figures regarding an improvement of world conditions by all the man-made means that have been put to use have proved to be merely fond dreams, falsehoods. How has this affected the deceived, misled people? They are certainly departing like a flock of sheep, each one going his own way, like sheep not knowing where to go. They have gone astray and are the prey for the vicious elements of human society. They have consequently come into great affliction, with no remedy available from human sources. No political ruler, no political organization, is able to shepherd them, to protect them and guide them to peaceful pastures or quiet waters.

¹¹ The political rulers, even of professedly Christian Christendom, have refused to follow the example of King David, who shepherded the flock of the nation of Israel in 1077-1037 B.C.E. In Psalm 23:1, 2 the former shepherd-boy David said: "Jehovah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing. In grassy pastures he makes me lie down; by well-watered resting-places he conducts me." Could the Supreme Shepherd Jehovah be pleased with the conduct of the political rulers who as shepherds of their peoples are guided and supported by the religious clergy of Christendom? Not according to Zechariah 10:3-7:

¹² "Against the shepherds my anger has grown hot, and against the goatlike leaders I shall hold an accounting; for Jehovah of armies has turned his attention to his drove, the house of Judah, and has made them like his horse of dignity in the battle. Out of him [Judah] is the keyman, out of him is the supporting ruler, out of him is the battle bow; out of

10. Have Christendom's predictors proved true, has relief come and has the flock been kept together under a shepherd?

11, 12. (a) How have the rulers of Christendom not followed the example of King David the psalmist? (b) According to Zechariah 10:3-7, is Jehovah pleased with the political "shepherds" who are guided by the religious clergy?

him goes forth every taskmaster, all together. And they must become like mighty men stamping down in the mire of the streets in the battle. And they must get engaged in battle, for Jehovah is with them; and the riders of horses will have to experience shame. And I will make the house of Judah superior, and the house of Joseph I shall save. And I will give them a dwelling, for I will show them mercy; and they must become like those whom I had not cast off; for I am Jehovah their God, and I shall answer them. And those of Ephraim must become just like a mighty man, and their heart must rejoice as though from wine. And their own sons will see and certainly rejoice; their heart will be joyful in Jehovah."

¹³ Even in Christendom the political "shepherds" do not appreciate that Jehovah's anger has grown hot against them. Do not the religious clergy pray for them and call down heaven's blessing upon them? Likewise, Christendom's headstrong "goatlike leaders" do not believe and fear that Jehovah of armies will hold an accounting with them. Do they not go to Christendom's churches and so will not the priests and preachers act as mediators for them with God and straighten out matters for them with God? So they do not expect to feel the heat of Jehovah's hot anger in the foretold "war of the great day of God the Almighty." They show no concern about his holding an accounting with them at Har-Magedon, the battle-field of that "war." However, although their own religious clergy have left these political "shepherds" and "goatlike leaders" in ignorance and self-complacency, Jehovah of armies certainly has not done so. He has served notice upon them, doing this well in advance and repeatedly. By what means?

¹⁴ By means of his anointed Christian witnesses, the antitypical "house of Judah." These have not followed the misleading political "shepherds" and "goat-

13. The clergy have left the political "shepherds" and the "goatlike leaders" in ignorance of whose attitude toward them, and how so?
14. By means of whom has Jehovah served such notice well in advance, and how has he transformed these from being like sheep into being like a majestic war-horse?

like leaders" of Christendom. Jehovah is their Shepherd, and since 1919 C.E. He has turned his favorable attention toward them as his "drove" of sheep. During World War I they were indeed like sheep, not taking part in military combat along with Christendom, but were subjected to the beastlike political, military exploiters of mankind who had the approval and backing of the religious clergy. But since that first world conflict the great Heavenly Shepherd has regathered his "drove," the spiritual "house of Judah." From being like sheep, He has transformed them to be like "his horse of dignity in the battle." He has imparted to them by means of his Word and holy spirit a courage like that of a majestic battle horse. —Zechariah 10:3.

¹⁵ This ought to be so. For, at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E., Jehovah God enthroned in the heavens the "Lion that is of the tribe of Judah" and commanded him: "Go subduing in the midst of your enemies." (Revelation 5:5; Genesis 49:9, 10; Psalm 110:1, 2) As is the Leader of the spiritual "house of Judah," so the other members of the "house" should be. Respecting this "house of Judah" Jehovah goes on to say: "Out of him is the keyman, out of him is the supporting ruler [literally, peg], out of him is the battle bow; out of him goes forth every taskmaster, all together."—Zechariah 10:4.

¹⁶ In Zechariah's day Governor Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel of the tribe of Judah was the "keyman." In our day, since the birth of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom in 1914 C.E., the glorified Jesus Christ who descended from David of the house of Judah is the "keyman." Things are centered in him; responsibilities of royal weight converge upon him. Like a "peg" from which the royal interests hang and draw their support, the Messianic King is the "supporting ruler." In the almighty hand of his God, Jehovah of armies,

15. Why ought this transformation to be so with the spiritual "house of Judah" since 1914 C.E.?

16. (a) Who was the "keyman" in Zechariah's day, but who is such in our day? (b) How is he the "supporting ruler," the battle "bow" and the "taskmaster"?

he is the "battle bow," to wound and strike down the enemies from far off. He is the Chief Taskmaster, who assigns the royal tasks to all the members of the "house of Judah," some of whom he appoints as undertaskmasters, and all of whom must work together with him as their Chief and Leader. With him at their head, all the "house of Judah" has reason to be courageous.

¹⁷ The times call for Christlike courage. We dare not let the world situation smite us with a paralysis of fear. We have plainly been forewarned that this would be a time of warfare against the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel, inasmuch as Satan the Devil and his demon angels have been cast out of heaven by the Messianic kingdom, and concerning this dragon-like adversary it stands written for us to read today: "And the dragon grew wrathful at the woman [God's heavenly organization], and went off to wage war with the remaining ones of her seed, who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Revelation 12:17) So, with the help of their God, the remnant of the spiritual "house of Judah" have had fulfilled in them the divine promise: "And they must become like mighty men stamping down in the mire of the streets in the battle. And they must get engaged in battle, for Jehovah is with them; and the riders of horses will have to experience shame."—Zechariah 10:5.

¹⁸ The picture here is of victorious warriors who have invaded the enemy stronghold, the streets of which run red with the blood of the slain defenders. So the invaders must stamp down in the mire formed from blood mingled with dust. But for the anointed remnant of the spiritual "house of Judah" the warfare today is spiritual, with weapons that are "powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things." (2 Corinthians 10:4; Ephesians 6:14-18) In

17. Why do the times call for courage on the part of the spiritual "house of Judah," as in warfare?

18. (a) Why did the spiritual "house of Judah" have to get engaged in the battle, and with whom on their side? (b) Because of what have the "riders of horses" had to experience shame?

this "wicked day," when the dragon Satan the Devil and his demons have been cast down to this earth, the anointed remnant could not escape being involved in battle. They have courageously undertaken it, "for Jehovah is with them." Their still being engaged in the battle to now near the close of the "time of the end" denotes spiritual triumph for them. But as for those enemies who trust in "horses," that is, in the world's way of carrying on a fight against Jehovah's worshipers, they have indeed experienced shame, disappointment. All the opposition, interference and persecution by these "riders of horses" have failed to stop the remnant of the spiritual "house of Judah."

A UNIFIED NATION

¹⁹ In the day of the prophet Zechariah during the sixth century before our Common Era, the nation of Israel was unified by the releasing of the faithful remnant from Babylon and the restoring of them to the land of Judah. In the year 997 B.C.E. there had been a breakup of the nation. Ten tribes revolted against the further rulership of the royal family of David; only the tribes of Benjamin and Judah stuck true to David's royal line. The ten-tribe kingdom of Israel was under the leadership of its most populous tribe, that of Ephraim, the younger son of the patriarch Joseph. The tribe of Manasseh, the firstborn son of Joseph, lined up with its brother tribe of Ephraim. The ten-tribe kingdom of the north lasted only till 740 B.C.E., when its then capital, Samaria, was destroyed by the Assyrians and the survivors were deported to Assyrian territories. But about 632 B.C.E., Babylon overthrew Assyria and absorbed its territories and its Israelite exiles. So when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. and deported its survivors to Babylonia, all tribes became exiles.

²⁰ Since the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph,

19. (a) What breakup in the twelve-tribe nation of Israel took place in 997 B.C.E.? (b) How did the survivors of both resulting kingdoms become exiles together in Babylonia?

20. (a) Why were the exiles of the ten-tribe kingdom spoken of as the "house of Ephraim" or the "house of Joseph"? (b) How did Jehovah indicate there would be a unification of both houses?

dominated the ten-tribe kingdom, its exiles were spoken of as the "house of Ephraim" or "the house of Joseph," whose chief representative was Ephraim. Indicating that all twelve tribes of Israel would be reunified in the land of Judah by the return there of a faithful remnant of exiles, Jehovah now speaks of both houses and goes on to say: "And I will make the house of Judah superior, and the house of Joseph I shall save. And I will give them a dwelling, for I will show them mercy; and they must become like those whom I had not cast off; for I am Jehovah their God, and I shall answer them. And those of Ephraim must become just like a mighty man, and their heart must rejoice as though from wine. And their own sons will see and certainly rejoice; their heart will be joyful in Jehovah."—Zechariah 10:6, 7.

²¹ The Sovereign Lord God was the One who made the "house of Judah," that specially represented the Messianic kingdom of David, "superior" to its enemies. Exiles of the "house of Joseph" were also saved, that is to say, given the victory over their enemies. Jehovah of armies gave them a dwelling with their fellow tribesmen in the Persian province of Judah, after he delivered them from the exile into which Assyria had taken them. Like the house of Judah, these also became "just like a mighty man" in Jehovah's service. Upon them he had mercy even as upon the other exiles, and all the restored exiles together became as a people whom he had never cast off because of their disobedience. This fact was especially plain for all to observe when the repatriated exiles finally completed the building of the second temple at Jerusalem, to worship him unitedly there as the God of the whole nation. He demonstrated that he heard their prayers by answering them.

²² The stimulation of their heart to rejoice was stronger than that induced by drinking wine. Their

21. (a) Over whom did Jehovah make the "house of Judah" superior, and in what way did He save the "house of Joseph"? (b) How did they become like those whom Jehovah had never cast off?

22. (a) Why is the stimulation to joy on their part stronger than that induced by wine? (b) In what way do their "sons" share in that joy?

stimulation was a spiritual one. Their heart was joyful in their God, Jehovah, because of what he had done for them, because of the mercy that he had displayed to them. Their sons, born to them in their regained homeland, would share in this divine mercy and goodness. They too see it, experience it and would rejoice with their parents because of it.

²³ In the final fulfillment of the prophecy in our twentieth century concerning the "house of Judah" and the "house of Joseph" (Ephraim) there are two parts of the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel to be taken into account. There was the original part that came through the hard experiences of World War I and was restored to divine favor and liberated in 1919 C.E. And there was the newer part that was delivered from Babylon the Great since 1919 C.E. and that was joined to the original anointed remnant. The unification of them all as one "people for special possession" of Jehovah took place in the spiritual estate into which he brought them together from 1919 C.E. onward. Thus they could unitedly work together for the reestablishment and expansion of the worship of the only living and true God at His spiritual temple. By his invincible spirit he caused this "drove" of sheeplike disciples of His Messiah to become like a dignified war-horse not afraid to charge into the battle.

²⁴ Thus they became more courageous than ever in the proclamation of the Messianic kingdom of God, the kingdom reigning in the heavens since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E. Yes, they continued to distribute free Bible tracts, by the hundreds of millions of copies, to the homes of the people. But now they did not leave the brunt of the work to some hundreds of full-time "colporteurs," for now they all undertook to knock at the doors of the people and interview the householders and place with them Bible study helps in the form of booklets and bound books on a nominal

23. In the final fulfillment, what corresponds with the "house of Judah" and the "house of Joseph" (Ephraim), and where and since when has Jehovah united them?

24. How did the united remnant now show courage like that of a horse charging into the battle? That is, in Kingdom proclamation?

contribution toward the work. They engaged hundreds of radio stations to broadcast the Kingdom message throughout the earth, even organizing some of the largest broadcasting chains on occasions to reach the homes and ears of as many listeners as possible. When the mounting religious, political, judicial opposition made it difficult to carry on the radiocasting of the Kingdom message freely, sound cars topped by loudspeakers were sent out to herald the message afield. Portable phonographs were carried from door to door to play the message recorded on phonograph disks.

²⁵ During the seven years, 1922-1928 C.E., a series of seven general or international assemblies were held by the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites. At each of these in succession a fearless judgment message from God's Holy Bible was declared, also being supported by an appropriate public address direct to visible audiences and to invisible audiences by radio. These judgment message proclamations and their supporting speeches were issued in the form of free tracts for free distribution in many languages, and hundreds of millions of these were placed in the hands of the people in many lands. These annual messages by speech and printed page were like the sounding of a series of seven trumpets to blast Jehovah's modern-day judgments for all the world to hear. This is how they are pictured in the apocalyptic book of Revelation, chapters eight and nine and eleven.

²⁶ Regarding the sounding of the fifth such trumpet message under angelic guidance, note how Revelation 9:7-11 pictures the remnant as released from Babylon the Great under the symbol of locusts and describes them: "And the likenesses of the locusts resembled horses prepared for battle; and upon their heads were what seemed to be crowns like gold, and their faces were as men's faces, but they had hair as women's hair. And their teeth were as those of lions; and they

25. How was courageous proclamation made of the judgment messages issued during the years 1922-1928?

26. How does the Revelation presentation of the fifth trumpet picture the anointed remnant, after release from Babylon the Great, as being warlike?

had breastplates like iron breastplates. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running into battle. Also, they have tails and stings like scorpions; and in their tails is their authority to hurt the men five months. They have over them a king, the angel of the abyss. In Hebrew his name is A-bad'don, but in Greek he has the name A-pol'lyon." This pictures the remnant as warlike.

²⁷ The apocalyptic picture of the effects of the sounding of the sixth trumpet (beginning in 1927 C.E.) shows the remnant as riding hundreds of millions of publicity vehicles for announcing Jehovah's judgments. Look at the description: "The number of the armies of cavalry was two myriads of myriads: I [John] heard the number of them. And this is how I saw the horses in the vision, and those seated on them: they had fire-red and hyacinth-blue and sulphur-yellow breastplates; and the heads of the horses were as heads of lions, and out of their mouths fire and smoke and sulphur issued forth. By these three plagues a third of the men were killed, from the fire and the smoke and the sulphur which issued forth from their mouths. For the authority of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with these they do harm." (Revelation 9:16-19) So these symbolic visions are in harmony with Zechariah 10:3-7 in likening the restored remnant to Jehovah's "horse of dignity in battle" and to "mighty men."

MIGHTY OBSTACLES OVERCOME

²⁸ As we can clearly see now, nothing has proved to be an insurmountable obstacle to Jehovah of armies in realizing his stated purpose. How he would treat such obstacles he stated in Zechariah 10:8-12, saying: "I will whistle for them and collect them together; for I shall certainly redeem them, and they must

27. How is the Revelation presentation of the sixth trumpet in agreement with Zechariah 10:3-7 in showing the remnant to be warlike, as "mighty men"?

28. In Zechariah 10:8-12, how did Jehovah speak of his overcoming obstacles when regathering his people as from Egypt and Assyria?

become many, just like those who have become many. And I shall scatter them like seed among the peoples, and in the distant places they will remember me; and they must revive with their sons and return. And I must bring them back from the land of Egypt; and from Assyria I shall collect them together; and to the land of Gilead and Lebanon I shall bring them, and no room will be found for them. And he must pass through the sea with distress; and in the sea he must strike down the waves, and all the depths of the Nile must dry up. And the pride of Assyria must be brought down, and the very scepter of Egypt will depart. And I will make them superior in Jehovah, and in his name they will walk about,' is the utterance of Jehovah." —Zechariah 10:8-12.

²⁹ In this divine utterance the term Assyria would take in the territories to which the Assyrians deported the survivors of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel in 740 B.C.E. But the "pride" of Assyria was humbled by Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar. In turn, the "pride" of this conqueror and disposessor of Assyria was brought down by Jehovah's earthly instrument, Cyrus the Great of Persia, in 539 B.C.E. Thereafter Jehovah could "whistle" to the scattered exiles of his people in the northern lands of the Babylonian Empire. Where he scattered them they multiplied like seed sown. In the lands of their exile, no matter how distant, they would hear his "whistle" and remember him. This would have a reviving effect upon them and upon their sons whom they had brought forth in exile. Alive and responsive to his inviting "whistle," they would return to their desolated homeland.

³⁰ Many of the exiles had been taken into exile or had fled for refuge into Egypt to the south. (2 Kings 23:31-34; 25:22-26) So Jehovah 'whistled' in that direction also. From there he collected members of the remnant to worship him at his temple in Jerusalem.

29. (a) When did Jehovah humble the pride of Assyria, as foretold? (b) When did He whistle for his people who were scattered like seed, and what response was there to this?

30. What obstacles are suggested as to gathering his exiled people from Egypt, and how would Jehovah deal with those obstacles?

The scepter wielded by the ruler of Egypt could not prevent this. Jehovah's will was accomplished just as if the Egyptian scepter of authority had departed, did not exist. The "whistle" of the Most High God had more authority than Egypt's scepter. If the waters of Egypt's deified Nile River were an obstacle to His people he could treat them as if they had dried up for his people. If the Red Sea hindered, he could pass through that sea with "distress" to its waters. He could strike down its waves, that His returning exiles might pass through to his place of worship at Jerusalem. He could do again what he did before in 1513 B.C.E.

³¹ There was no fear of overpopulating the land. The Owner of all the earth would merely enlarge the borders of the land for his restored exiles. Their borders would take in the "land of Gilead" to the east of the Jordan River. Yes, also the land of Lebanon to the west along the Mediterranean Sea. In this enlarged area of occupancy they must "become many, just like those who have become many." Their rate of population growth will not be behind that of any other populous land. They will be just as many as ever. The Most High and Almighty God would make them "superior" to all foreign efforts to oppress, suppress and diminish them. In His name, or as a people called by His name, they would walk about. Wherever they walked, they would have His name in mind and seek to honor it, doing nothing to downgrade it.

³² In the year 537 B.C.E. Jehovah began to "whistle" to his exiled people by the decree of liberation issued by Babylon's conqueror, the Persian Cyrus the Great. (Ezra 1:1 to 3:2) That decree did not apply to Egypt, but later the way was opened for the exiles in Egypt to return to their God-given land.

³³ Likewise in the year 1919 C.E. Babylon the Great experienced a great fall at the hands of the Greater Cyrus, the triumphant enthroned King Jesus Christ.

31. (a) How would Jehovah take care of any tendency toward overpopulating the land, and still allow for growth? (b) In what sense would they walk about in His name?

32. When did Jehovah begin to "whistle" to his exiles, and how?

33. When did Jehovah begin to "whistle" to the exiles of spiritual Israel, and by what means?

Did Jehovah then begin to “whistle” to his exiled remnant? Evidently, Yes! How? Notably by means of that semimonthly magazine that today is known world wide as *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah’s Kingdom* and that bears the front-cover subscription “‘You are my witnesses,’ says Jehovah.” (Isaiah 43:12) It conveyed to the members of the anointed remnant throughout the earth the call to reunite and gather to the support of God’s Messianic kingdom. As a step in that direction, it announced the arrangements for the holding of a general convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A., for September 1-8, 1919, and invited all readers to attend.

⁸⁴ About six thousand found it possible or convenient to share in this significant regathering and spiritual feast. They rejoiced at being restored to their rightful spiritual estate on earth. They learned of the arrangements to enlarge the means of publicizing God’s Messianic kingdom by starting a companion magazine, then called *The Golden Age* but now *Awake!* The first issue of this was dated October 1, 1919. It has since served as a powerful vehicle for proclaiming the Messianic kingdom and the age of life, peace, happiness and prosperity that this kingdom will shortly usher in. It was in the year 1940 C.E. that this magazine began to be offered publicly on the streets to the general public. Today more than seven million copies of each semimonthly issue are printed in more than twenty-five languages, and the number of recipients and readers of it goes on increasing.

⁸⁵ From that start in the liberation year of 1919 C.E. the regathering of the remnant went forward. As the faithful surviving remnant courageously took up the Kingdom message with great joy and enthusiasm and spread it farther and farther, the “whistle” of Jehovah sounded out more widely. Many seekers of the true God, both inside and outside of Christendom, heard

34. (a) How many attended that general gathering in 1919 C.E., and what did they learn about enlarging Kingdom preaching? (b) How has that enlarging of Kingdom publicity resulted today?

35. (a) How was Jehovah’s “whistle” sounded out more and more widely, and with what effect? (b) How were obstacles to responding to the “whistle” overcome?

that "whistle" inviting them to the pure worship of the one living and true God at his spiritual temple. They put forth their best efforts to respond. Were there obstacles in their way, things like the Nile River or the Red Sea or political powers of oppression like Assyria and ancient Egypt? The God whom they sought to worship at the true spiritual temple opened his written Word to them and pointed out to them how to overcome and surmount those imposing obstacles. Obedience to God's "whistle" must come first!

³⁶ Fear they must cast aside. They must heed the call from heaven to come out of Babylon the Great, that world empire of false religion that includes not only Christendom but also pagandom. (Revelation 18: 1-4) They must not let the "pride" of militarized, nationalistic governments like that of Assyria swell their heads. They must put Jehovah's Messianic kingdom ahead of all man-made governments. In their personal case the interests of all high and mighty human rulerships must be brought down low before the interests of Jehovah's universal sovereignty and its Messianic instrument. The symbolic "scepter of Egypt" as wielded by the political powers of this world should not be considered as supreme in power and authority. They should think on the scepter wielded by God's Messianic King, to whom Jehovah said, in 1914 C.E.: "The rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of [the heavenly] Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'" (Psalm 110:1, 2) The comparing of this Messianic scepter with the "scepter of Egypt" makes this latter human scepter "depart."

³⁷ Instead of their recognizing the political State as supreme and rendering worship to the man-made State, recognition must be given by them to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah as the God Ruler or Theocrat. Help for them to see this requirement was given to the

36. How, in their personal case, must the "pride of Assyria" be brought down, and the "scepter of Egypt" be made to "depart"?

37, 38. (a) Instead of State worship, recognition must be given to Jehovah as being what, and how was help to see this requirement given? (b) What did that book *Government* say, in part, under "Theocracy" and "Jehovah King"?

people in the book entitled "Government," which was released to the public in the year 1928 at the general convention of the International Bible Students Association in Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A., July 30 to August 6, 1928, at which the symbolic seventh trumpet began to be blown. (Revelation 11:15-18) On pages 247-250 this book discussed "Theocracy" and "Jehovah King" and said, in part:

³⁸ "What form of government will then control the peoples of earth? That government will be a pure theocracy. For centuries the whole creation has groaned and suffered in pain, waiting for the manifestation of that government. (Rom. 8:19) Now the time has come for its establishment, and both the rulers and the ruled of the earth should learn the truth and rejoice. . . . A theocracy is a government of which the chief ruler is Jehovah God. He is the Maker and Executor of its laws through his duly constituted agencies. While it is true that supreme power has always resided in Jehovah, with the overthrow of Israel's last king he permitted man to take his own course and has not interfered until his time has come to set upon his throne him 'whose right it is.' He it is whom God has appointed and anointed to rule under and in harmony with Jehovah. . . . The great theocracy, when seen and appreciated by the people, will be the joy of the whole earth."

³⁹ It will be through the coming Theocracy that Paradise will be restored to mankind. At present a spiritual Paradise obtains among the restored remnant, among whom the Great Theocrat has established a theocratic organization. This spiritual remnant, thus organized, puts Jehovah God above all human rulers, autocratic or democratic, and says, in the words of Isaiah 33:22: "Jehovah is our Judge, Jehovah is our Statute-giver, Jehovah is our King; he himself will save us." They take the theocratic position taken by

39. (a) By what form of government will Paradise be restored to mankind, and what kind of organization has Jehovah established in the spiritual Paradise of his remnant? (b) Those who would join the remnant in their theocratic spiritual estate must cut through what obstacles?

the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ when before the Supreme Court of Jerusalem: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men. . . . And we are witnesses of these matters, and so is the holy spirit, which God has given to those obeying him as ruler." (Acts 5:29-32) Hence those who would join the anointed remnant in their theocratic spiritual estate must cut across the democratic flow and current of the symbolic Nile River and the changing tides of the symbolic Red Sea of humankind and must submit to Jehovah's theocratic arrangement. For the willing and obedient ones He can make those water obstacles as not existing.

⁴⁰ In regathering and reuniting his anointed remnant of spiritual Israel the Almighty God has indeed 'made them superior' to all the obstacles and the adversaries. In their case it has indeed been, "not by a military force, nor by [human] power," but by his spirit or invisible active force. It is just as He said: "I will make them superior in Jehovah." Should they not, therefore, honor His sacred name and strive to act in harmony with the prayer that Jesus Christ taught them to pray: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified"? They add dignity to his name and they make known that "his name alone is unreachably high." (Psalm 148:13) Thus in all lands where members of the anointed remnant are found today it is true just as foretold in Zechariah 10:12: "In his name they will walk about," is the utterance of Jehovah." Continuing to do this down to the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon, they will have part with the Messianic kingdom in forever vindicating the greatest Name in all the universe.

40. (a) With respect to what has God made the remnant "superior in Jehovah," and how? (b) How has the prophecy come true, "In his name they will walk about," and what will they have a part in doing with the Messianic kingdom?

CHAPTER
18

**CONSEQUENCES
OF REJECTING
GOD'S
SHEPHERD RULER**

THE GREATEST Ruler of all repeatedly compared himself to a shepherd.

Take, for example, this beautiful comparison that He makes when foretelling how tenderly he would lead his exiled people back to their homeland: "Look! The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself will come even as a strong one, and his arm will be ruling for him. Look! His reward is with him, and the wage he pays is before him. Like a shepherd he will shepherd his own drove. With his arm he will collect together the lambs; and in his bosom he will carry them. Those giving suck he will conduct with care." (Isaiah 40:10, 11) It would not be strange, then, that he should compare lesser rulers on earth to shepherds.

² He also likened outstanding rulers to trees, tall in stature. The royal Pharaoh of ancient Egypt is thus compared to a stately tree. (Ezekiel 31:1-18) Even the exiled remnant whom Jehovah uses his Messiah or Anointed One to liberate and lead out of symbolic Babylon back to their God-given native land he compares to trees. He does so when he speaks of the assignment of work that He gives to his Messiah, namely: "To comfort all the mourning ones; to assign to those mourning over Zion, to give them a headdress instead of ashes, the oil of exultation instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of the downhearted spirit; and they must be called big trees of righteousness, the

1. Why is it not strange that Jehovah should compare rulers lesser than Himself with shepherds?

2. To what plants does Jehovah liken outstanding worldly rulers, and to what does he similarly liken the remnant liberated from Babylon?

planting of Jehovah, for him to be beautified."—Isaiah 61:1-3.

³ Those symbolic "big trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah," are referred to in the preceding tenth chapter of Zechariah's prophecy, verses 3-12. How great a contrast is now drawn between them and the symbolic trees on elevated levels of our oppressive world! In Zechariah's day the majestic mountains of Lebanon were clothed with forests of its world-famous "cedars of Lebanon" and other fragrant evergreen trees. How sad to think of such forests being ravaged by an inextinguishable conflagration! It is enough to make one howl. A suchlike howling by the world must yet come, for, almost like a sequel to chapter ten of Zechariah's prophecy, chapter eleven opens up with the divine command to give vent to such howling. We read:

⁴ "Open up your doors, O Lebanon, that a fire may devour among your cedars. Howl, O juniper tree, for the cedar has fallen; because the majestic ones themselves have been despoiled! Howl, you massive trees of Bashan, for the impenetrable forest has come down! Listen! The howling of shepherds, for their majesty has been despoiled. Listen! The roaring of maned young lions, for the proud thickets along the Jordan have been despoiled."—Zechariah 11:1-3.

⁵ No fire-prevention doors are provided for Lebanon. When Jehovah's fixed time comes for his consuming fire to sweep through the majestic land, the doors of symbolic Lebanon must open up at His command to admit the fire. Even the tremendous cedars of Lebanon must fall before the divinely kindled flames, and that is why the associated juniper tree needs to howl. The massiveness of the tree does not make it fire resistant. That is why there must be a howling on the part of the impenetrable forests of massive trees on the highlands of Bashan to the east of the Jordan River and the Sea

3, 4. (a) How does Zechariah draw a contrast between those "big trees of righteousness" and worldly "trees"? (b) According to Zechariah 11:1-3, why is there to be a howling and roaring?

5. When must such plantations of symbolic trees burn down, causing whom to howl?

of Galilee. These too must burn down in the world conflagration during the coming "great tribulation," the tribulation of all tribulations for mankind. This will be a time of howling for shepherd rulers.

"If we listen in by faith to the clear-sounding message of Bible prophecy we can hear the howling of those worldly shepherd rulers. In the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at the battleground of Har-Magedon, they will be despoiled of their majesty of appearance and of office. (Revelation 16:14-16) They themselves are pictured by those majestic trees of Lebanon and massive trees of Bashan. They are also, symbolically, the "maned young lions." Just as the maned young lions roar because there has been a burning down of the proud thickets along the banks of the Jordan River, in which these lions used to lurk, so will these lionlike shepherd rulers roar in consternation as they find themselves deprived of lurking places from which they used to pounce upon their unwary victims, the public, the people.

"The time of fiery consumption that will despoil these worldly shepherds of their imposing dignity, stature and powerful position was also foretold by the prophet Malachi, who came on the scene some decades after Zechariah. Likening the presumptuous and wicked ones to plants, Malachi (4:1) says: "'Look! the day is coming that is burning like the furnace, and all the presumptuous ones and all those doing wickedness must become as stubble. And the day that is coming will certainly devour them,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'so that it will not leave to them either root or bough.'" These political shepherds have claimed to rule because, by means of a democratic election, they have received a "mandate from the people" or because they have been born into the line of descent of some royal family, or because the clergy of Christendom have assigned to them the "divine right of kings." However, this does not

6. Why will the shepherd rulers howl because of the consuming of symbolic "trees," and also roar like lions of the Jordan thickets?

7. How does Malachi 4:1 refer to the same fiery day, and what will be the outcome of it to the shepherd rulers?

make them theocratic shepherds, or rulers appointed by the Great Theocrat through his Messiah. Hence the coming fiery day for executing God's judgment will devour all their false claims. Neither root nor bough of them will remain.

DIVINELY APPOINTED SHEPHERD

⁸ Since the governmental rulers are compared to shepherds, then their subjects, the people, are compared to a flock of sheep. The shepherdlike rulers have treated the sheep as if they belonged to them and have been willing to sell them into the hands of those selfish persons who could exploit and misuse the sheeplike people. They have, in effect, delivered them over to be killed, slaughtered for the sake of ambitious men who pay the price to get control or the advantage of the people. More than that, the governmental shepherds have led the people in a course that will at last result in their being slaughtered in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at the world situation called Har-Magedon. (Revelation 16:14-16; 19:11-21) Is there, however, no real "shepherd" who really has the interests of all the people at heart, and who is willing to expend *himself* rather than to exploit the sheep? Who can raise up such a shepherd, so that the individual sheep can put themselves under his care and guidance and be spared from the terrible killing? It is Jehovah.

⁹ To picture this fact, the prophet Zechariah was used in enacting an allegory or prophetic drama. The prophet Zechariah himself describes it, in these words: "This is what Jehovah my God has said, 'Shepherd the flock meant for the killing, the buyers of which proceed to kill them although they are not held guilty. And those who are selling them say: "May Jehovah be blessed, while I shall gain riches." And their own shepherds do not show any compassion upon them.'"—Zechariah 11:4, 5.

8. How have the shepherd rulers sold the "sheep" to be killed or slaughtered, and who is it that can raise up an unselfish shepherd?
9. In enacting a prophetic drama, what flock is Zechariah told to shepherd?

¹⁰ How pitiful the state of the "flock meant for the killing"! Back there this "flock" was the nation of Israel. The psalmist addressed the One who really owns this flock, saying: "O Shepherd of Israel, do give ear, you who are conducting Joseph just like a flock." Acknowledging the ownership of that One, the psalmist said: "He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand." (Psalm 80:1; 95:7) In view of His ownership, he had the right to appoint a faithful shepherd over them. This he did, by appointing the prophet Zechariah. This new earthly shepherd did not get a "mandate from the people," democratically. He was theocratically appointed by the God Ruler, Jehovah. This heavenly Owner had in mind the saving of some individuals of this "flock meant for the killing." He had already said: "Jehovah their God will certainly save them in that day like the flock of his people; for they will be as the stones of a diadem glittering over his soil." (Zechariah 9:16) In furtherance of that purpose the Great Theocrat appointed Zechariah to shepherd the flock.

¹¹ Zechariah was unlike the shepherd rulers who felt authorized to sell Jehovah's sheep for personal gain. By thus enriching themselves, they felt that God was making them rich. After the heartless sale, these traitorous shepherd rulers hypocritically said: "May Jehovah be blessed, while I shall gain riches." By so doing the shepherds to whom the sheeplike people entrusted themselves did not "show any compassion upon them." Those shepherds knew that the buyers to whom they sold the "sheep" would kill them off in pursuit of ambitious, self-seeking schemes. Worse still, these buyers would not be "held guilty" for such slaughter. At least the shepherds who did the selling would not hold the buyers guilty. They were in that way accomplices in the slaughter. To them the sheep were merely a "flock meant for the killing."

10. Who are the symbolic "flock," to whom does the ownership belong, and why was Zechariah appointed to be the shepherd of the "flock meant for the killing"?

11. In what way did the "shepherds" selling them show no compassion for the sheep, and how were they accomplices in the slaughter of them?

¹² All this calls to mind a similar situation existing in Christendom in this twentieth century. The people, professing to be Christians, claim to be God's sheep. They will apply to themselves Psalm 95:7 (quoted above) and recite in unison at church Psalm 23:1 (*Authorized Version*): "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." But these church people also look to earthly "shepherds." In a religious sense especially, the clergymen of Christendom claim to be the shepherds of these sheep, each one of the hundreds of religious sects having its own flock. However, these shepherds are not theocratically appointed like Zechariah, for they are ordained each one by the ruling group of his own sect or denomination, or by a bishop or other ranking church dignitary, or by a congregation. Do such clergymen imitate those shepherds of Zechariah's day?

¹³ It has been courageously pointed out that the clergy of Christendom, with their hundreds of millions of church members under their spiritual control, could have prevented world war in the year 1914 C.E. But they did not do so.* Without protest they surrendered

* See *The Bible Students Monthly*, Volume VI, No. 7, which said under the title "Rabbi Wise Blames Churches for War," the following: "Failure of the churches and synagogues to maintain leadership over the people was the cause of the present war," said Rabbi Stephen S. Wise at the Free Synagogue in Carnegie Hall yesterday. Rabbi Wise characterized the present attitude of the churches as 'feeble, faltering, halting and timid.' He said the State has conquered the church and that the latter has become a follower instead of a leader of public opinion.

"They have enthroned a war devil," he said, 'in the place of God. The churches do not take themselves seriously. They are satisfied to be a mere item of the social organization and to defend their countries and rulers—just or unjust. The church is muzzled and throttled into submission. It is like a dumb dog, old and toothless, that can no longer bite.

"Many of us expected the Socialist power to avert such a war as this, and were bitterly disappointed in the Socialists of Europe when they failed to do so. But we never looked to the churches, mosques and synagogues to prevent war. None of us expected such a thing from them, and we know what would happen to any leader of the Church of England who would dare raise his voice against his country's part in the present strife.

"Franz Josef goes through the empty form of washing the feet of a dozen pilgrims every Easter and the [continued on next page]

12. Whose sheep do people of Christendom claim to be, and are their earthly religious shepherds appointed theocratically?

13. How have such clergymen imitated the shepherds of Zechariah's day in selling the "sheep" to be slaughtered?

their flocks to more than four years of the most brutal warfare till then in all human history. They, in fact, sold their flocks, in order that they might escape persecution for insisting on strict Christianity, and in order to gain favor with the military and the governmental shepherds. This was no less the case with World War II, which, like the first, started right in the heart of Christendom. The "killing" in this second world combat was still more horrible than that of the first one. Moreover, the religious clergy have catered to the commercial profiteers and to the politicians. They have meddled in politics and have sold their flocks to office-seekers who have no conscientious qualms about exploiting the people.

¹⁴ By gaining riches in this way, as far as material goods and popularity with the ruling class of this world is concerned, they feel that God has blessed them. And so they piously say: "Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich." (Zechariah 11:5, AV) Because the "buyers" of the poor sheep have the blessing of the religious clergy they have no sense of guilt at exploiting the sheep or even causing the violent, mass slaughter of the sheep. "They are not held guilty" by the clergy of Christendom, but continue to be retained as full church members in good standing. It is very manifest, therefore, that the "shepherds," religious and governmental, "do not show any compassion" upon the "sheep" of Christendom.

[continued from page 307] church is satisfied with him. The Czar is the head of his church on Sunday and the head of his army during the week.

"And when the nations were preparing for this war they never consulted the churches because they knew that just as they relied upon their ambulance corps and their commissaries they could rely upon the churches to uphold them.

"It would be better for missionaries to teach Christianity at home first."

"The rabbi concluded:

"Our souls are wounded when we read of the destruction of cathedrals at Rheims and elsewhere, yet these cathedrals were destroyed long ago and it is only their outer walls that have now fallen.

"War gods, money gods and power gods have been destroying these edifices century after century."—*New York American*, October 12, 1914, page 4.

14. Who do the "shepherds" claim has thus enriched them, and why do the buyers of the sheep have no conscientious qualms at exploiting the sheep or causing their slaughter?

¹⁵ In spite of all that, it has been just as God said, in Jeremiah 5:31: "The prophets themselves actually prophesy in falsehood; and as for the priests, they go subduing according to their powers. And my own people have loved it that way; and what will you men do in the finale of it?" And how do we know that those who profess to be God's people "have loved it that way"? By observing that God's professed people have not followed the leading of the faithful shepherd whom God has raised up, as pictured by the prophet Zechariah. They continue to let the traffickers in "sheep," the buyers and the sellers, lead them on to the "killing." Hence, when they have the consequences of their course come upon them, do they deserve any compassion?

¹⁶ The divine answer is given to the prophet Zechariah, the theocratic shepherd: "'For I shall show compassion no more upon the inhabitants of the land,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'So here I am causing mankind to find themselves, each one in the hand of his companion and in the hand of his king; and they will certainly crush to pieces the land, and I shall do no delivering out of their hand.'"—Zechariah 11:6.

¹⁷ So, too, with reference to modern-day Christendom. The time must come when Jehovah will cease to show compassion upon the "flock meant for the killing." He will let the loveless sheeplike people prey upon one another, the shepherds (religious and governmental) upon the sheep, the king or royal shepherd upon the sheep, and the sheep upon one another. It will be a state of anarchy. What could result from this but a general state of collapse for organized human society? The system of things will no longer hold together, things not being done systematically any longer according to worldly wisdom. Symbolically speaking, the anarchistic, chaotic victimizers of one another will unavoidably "crush to pieces the land," that is, their organized

15. As to being exploited by traitorous shepherds, how do we know that the people have loved to have it that way?

16. As to that question about compassion, what is the divine answer in Zechariah 11:6?

17. To what self-seeking, loveless state will Jehovah let the "flock meant for the killing" come, and why will their calling out be in vain?

earthly estate. Call as loudly and as long as they then will, Jehovah will “do no delivering out of their hand.” Why should he? They had repeatedly refused to follow his own appointed shepherd.

THE SHEPHERD'S WAGES—THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER

¹⁸ To what extent do those who merely claim to be God's people appreciate the spiritual “shepherd” whom he has raised up and sent to them? This is prophetically pictured for us in the experience of the prophet Zechariah. Not by a popular mandate, but by a theocratic appointment he was sent to “shepherd” the flock of Israel. How much was he appreciated? How highly were his services valued? He is very frank in telling us:

¹⁹ “And I proceeded to shepherd the flock meant for the killing, in your behalf, O afflicted ones of the flock [or, possibly, ‘in behalf of the tradesmen of the flock,’ *margin*]. So I took for myself two staffs. The one I called Pleasantness, and the other I called Union [literally, Binders], and I went shepherding the flock. And I finally effaced three shepherds in one lunar month, as my soul gradually became impatient with them, and also their own soul felt a loathing toward me. At length I said: ‘I shall not keep shepherding you. The one that is dying, let her die. And the one that is being effaced, let her be effaced. And as for the ones left remaining, let them devour, each one the flesh of her companion.’ So I took my staff Pleasantness and cut it to pieces, in order to break my covenant that I had concluded with all the peoples. And it came to be broken in that day, and the afflicted ones of the flock who were watching me got to know in this way that it was the word of Jehovah.”—Zechariah 11:7-11.

²⁰ As a shepherd, Zechariah took as part of his equipment two staffs, the one for guiding the sheep and the other for protecting them. The former shepherd boy

18. What kind of appointment was Zechariah's appointment to shepherd the “flock” of Israel, and what question arises as to his services?

19. How many staffs did Zechariah take, how many shepherds did he efface in one month, and how did he show that he was breaking his covenant with the people?

20. What was the use for the staffs, and what did Zechariah name the staffs respectively, and why?

David makes reference to these in Psalm 23:1-4, saying: "Jehovah is my Shepherd. . . . Even though I walk in the valley of deep shadow, I fear nothing bad, for you are with me; your rod and your staff are the things that comfort me." The one staff, evidently the one for guiding the sheep, Zechariah called Pleasantness, this referring to the favor that was shown to the sheep. The other staff, evidently the rod for beating off attackers of the sheep, he called Union (literally, Binders, for keeping a unity). It was a favor from Zechariah's God, Jehovah of armies, toward the sheep that Jehovah assigned Zechariah to act as shepherd of the sheep. So one staff was named Pleasantness.

²¹ However, Jehovah's prophet was not made a shepherd over literal sheep. They were symbolic sheep, namely, the house of Israel, made up then of a remnant from the kingdom of Judah and a remnant made up of members from the ten-tribe northern kingdom of Israel, the principal tribe of which was Ephraim. Accordingly Zechariah was theocratically appointed to take a spiritual supervision over the remnant of all the house of Israel, like a ruler or governor. In this office he really represented Jehovah, the heavenly Shepherd.

²² The prophet Zechariah was not to do shepherding for nothing. For services rendered he was entitled to a wage. At the termination of his services he could rightly demand his pay. Inasmuch as he was the shepherd appointed by the Great Theocrat Jehovah, his shepherding was something obligatory upon the remnant of Israel to accept and to show appreciation for by the value that they placed upon it. Was there a specific contract or engagement made with the house of Israel that would allow for such shepherding? That there was such a contract or covenant is implied by what Zechariah tells us when explaining his resigning from the

21. Of what kind of sheep was Zechariah made the shepherd, and of what nationalities were these made up, and whom did Zechariah represent as shepherd?

22. Was Zechariah obliged to do shepherding for nothing, why was his shepherding obligatory upon the Israelites, and what shows whether a contract was involved?

work, saying: "So I took my staff Pleasantness and cut it to pieces, in order to break my covenant that I had concluded with all the peoples." (Zechariah 11:10) That is, with "all the peoples" of Israel.

²³ Whose "covenant" or solemn contract was it, then? Seemingly, it was Zechariah's personal covenant. But let us remember that it was Jehovah who said to him: "Shepherd the flock meant for the killing." (Zechariah 11:4) This is what Jehovah did because the acting shepherds were selling for slaughter or killing the sheep of the flock that really belonged to Jehovah God. This meant that it was Jehovah's covenant that was here involved; it was in the discharging of his covenant with Israel that he made this appointment of a prophet to be the nation's shepherd. In harmony with this basic fact, the footnotes of *Biblia Hebraica* (*Hebrew Bible*), by Rudolf Kittel, Stuttgart, West Germany, says that, instead of "my covenant that I had concluded," we should probably read: "the covenant of Jehovah that Jehovah had concluded." This is because here the pronominal endings in the Hebrew text that are generally translated as "my" and "I" are really abbreviations for the divine name Jehovah.—See the footnotes on the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, 1971 edition.

²⁴ There were other shepherds working at the time. It appears that they resented the intrusion of Jehovah's prophet into their field of activity. Zechariah worked as a shepherd for at least one month, for he tells us: "I finally effaced three shepherds in one lunar month, as my soul gradually became impatient with them, and also their own soul felt a loathing toward me." (Zechariah 11:8) Just who these three shepherds were, we are not told. But because he had been appointed by the Most High God, Zechariah had the superior authority among them, so that he could dismiss the three of them. How much longer after effacing those three shepherds he continued shepherding, we do not know. Why he

23. Whose contract with Israel was it that was here involved, and why so?

24. (a) How long did Zechariah shepherd the flock, and how do we know? (b) In whose behalf did he shepherd the flock?

tended the flock at all, at Jehovah's command, was just as he explained: "I proceeded to shepherd the flock meant for the killing, in your behalf, O afflicted ones of the flock." (Zechariah 11:7, NW; AV; Yg) This was more compassionate on Zechariah's part than for him to "shepherd the flock meant for the killing in behalf of the tradesmen of the flock." (NW, margin; JB; RS; AT; Ro) These sheep had in effect been abandoned to the tradesmen. (Mo) How heartless!

²⁵ Zechariah did not become impatient with the flock of afflicted sheep. His "soul," his whole being, became impatient with the three delinquent shepherds. Because he was faithful and compassionate in shepherding the flock, those shepherds loathed Zechariah. He did not work along with their schemes. It was only after effacing them as shepherds that, at Jehovah's due time, Zechariah gave up his job. Thus the "covenant" that had been "concluded with all the peoples" of Israel was broken. That this came about, not at his own inclination, but according to the Great Shepherd's own direction and decision, Zechariah indicates. For, after cutting to pieces his staff called Pleasantness as an act symbolic of breaking the covenant, he goes on to say: "And it came to be broken in that day, and the afflicted ones of the flock who were watching me got to know in this way that it was the word of Jehovah." —Zechariah 11:10, 11.

²⁶ What did this breaking of the covenant mean for the flock of peoples of Israel? Just what Zechariah said on discontinuing his shepherding: "I shall not keep shepherding you. The one that is dying, let her die. And the one that is being effaced, let her be effaced. And as for the ones left remaining, let them devour, each one the flesh of her companion." (Zechariah 11:9) When Jehovah's appointed shepherd was ordered to withdraw, who, then, would take care of the flock? Those who sought to make capital of the flock would let the dying

25. (a) What feeling developed between Zechariah and the three shepherds, and why? (b) At whose instance was the "covenant" with the flock broken, and how do we know?

26. What did the breaking of the covenant mean for the flock of Israel as regards their welfare and unity?

ones die off, the ones being effaced or disappearing go without attention in order to bring them out of their lost condition, and the ones left remaining fight among themselves, devouring one another by showing no love but by taking selfish advantage of one another.

²⁷ So, then, did the breaking of the covenant result from mercilessness on Zechariah's part? No, but it resulted because Jehovah's time for showing compassion had run to its limit and had come to its end. That is why Zechariah was previously told: "'For I shall show compassion no more upon the inhabitants of the land,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'So here I am causing mankind to find themselves, each one in the hand of his companion and in the hand of his king; and they will certainly crush to pieces the land, and I shall do no delivering out of their hand.'" (Zechariah 11:6) Because of the peoples not heeding God's appointed shepherd, whom he sent to them in his compassion, what *anarchy* was to result! What a clash of self-interests! What oppression! What insecurity! What ruin to the system of things under the crushing activities of the lawless, disorderly ones! What a terrible experience awaited the flock of Jehovah's professed sheep when this divine determination went into effect!

WAGES AND THE VALUE PLACED UPON THE SHEPHERD

²⁸ Zechariah was enacting a prophetic picture or allegory. He pictured a greater shepherd in the fulfillment of the prophecy. This one was Jehovah's Messiah, Jesus the descendant and permanent heir of King David. (Matthew 1:1-6) After this one had worked as a carpenter in Nazareth of Galilee until he was thirty years of age, he was sent to be a spiritual shepherd of the nation of Israel. The rulers of the land, political and religious, did not ask him to become such. His shepherd appointment was not by a "mandate from the people,"

27. The covenant was broken due to a lack of further compassion on whose part, and what would be the result when the determination to break off compassion took effect?

28. Whom did Zechariah here picture, and what kind of appointment did that one get, and what sign of it was given?

but it was a theocratic appointment and it ranked him higher than all man-made "shepherds." At Nazareth itself, his hometown, he pointed to his being anointed with Jehovah's spirit to be the Messiah and hence to act as shepherd of the flock of God's people. The prophet, John the Baptist, saw this Jesus being anointed with the holy spirit by a visible manifestation. This happened right after John had baptized Jesus in the Jordan River according to Jehovah's will.—John 1:19-36.

²⁹ John the Baptist, as the forerunner of the Messiah Jesus, acted as a "doorkeeper" to the sheepfold of Israel. Jesus Christ referred to this when he spoke in a parable and said: "Most truly I say to you, He that does not enter into the sheepfold through the door but climbs up some other place, that one is a thief and a plunderer. But he that enters through the door is shepherd of the sheep. The doorkeeper opens to this one, and the sheep listen to his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has got all his own out, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. A stranger they will by no means follow but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers. . . . The thief does not come unless it is to steal and slay and destroy. I have come that they might have life and might have it in abundance. I am the fine shepherd; the fine shepherd surrenders his soul in behalf of the sheep."—John 10:1-11.

³⁰ Confining his own efforts exclusively to the flock of Israel, he sent out his twelve apostles and said to them: "Do not go off into the road of the nations, and do not enter into a Samaritan city; but, instead, go continually to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" (Matthew 10:5-7) Before he considered the request of a Phoenician woman to heal her badly demonized daughter, Jesus reminded her: "I was not sent forth to any but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 15:22-24) This was in accord with

29. How did Jesus, in a parable, show how the sheep were turned over to him by a symbolic "doorkeeper"?

30. (a) To whom did Jesus confine his shepherding, and how did he indicate this? (b) How and when did Moses foretell this prophet?

the covenant of divine law that Jehovah God had made with the house of Israel through his mediator Moses at Mount Sinai in 1513 B.C.E. In counseling the Israelites to be obedient to that covenant by shunning demonism of all kinds, Moses said to the Israelites shortly before his death: "A prophet from your own midst, from your brothers, like me, is what Jehovah your God will raise up for you—to him you people should listen." (Deuteronomy 18:15) That promised prophet greater than Moses was the Messiah, Jesus.—Deuteronomy 18:16-19; Acts 3:22, 23.

³¹ That Jesus had real compassion on the flock of Israel just as the true Messianic shepherd should have is evident from the account: "Jesus set out on a tour of all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity. On seeing the crowds he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." (Matthew 9:35, 36) There is nothing else for us to conclude but that the others who should have been shepherds were failing in their duty.

³² Who, then, in order to fulfill the prophetic picture, were the "three shepherds" whom Jesus Christ would efface, cut off, dismiss from their assumed positions? The record of Jesus' life shows no three individual men as fulfilling the prophetic pattern. Evidently the three shepherds whom the prophet Zechariah discharged pictured three classes of men in Jesus' time. Three classes do appear in the record, who had governmental as well as religious power in Israel. These were (1) the Pharisees and (2) the Sadducees, both of which classes were represented in the Jewish Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. That judicial body had governmental functions to some extent under the Roman governor as well as religious functions. Thus a certain Nicodemus, a Pharisee member of the Sanhedrin, was a "ruler of the Jews." (John 3:1, 2; 7:50-52) Joseph, a rich man of Arimathea, was

31. How is it evident from the record that Jesus showed compassion on the sheep, but what about other shepherds?

32. Whom did the "three shepherds" whom Zechariah dismissed picture in Jesus' day?

also a member of the Sanhedrin. (Matthew 27:57-60; Luke 23:50-53) The Sanhedrin was quite divided between Pharisees and Sadducees. (Acts 23:1-9) Besides such Jewish sectarians, there were also (3) the Herodians, the "party followers of Herod."—Mark 12:13.

³³ Similar to the feeling of the "three shepherds" toward Zechariah as a shepherd, these three groups quickly "felt a loathing" toward Jesus Christ as the Messianic shepherd. They plotted or cooperated together against Jesus to discredit him in the eyes of the flock of Israel. (Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 3:6) Jesus did not efface, cut off or dismiss these three hostile groups "in one lunar month" literally. The literal "lunar month" in Zechariah's case would picture a short period of time in Jesus' case. (Zechariah 11:8) From the very start of his ministry Jesus refused to have anything to do with those self-seeking ruling groups, that is, as far as joining in with them is concerned. Finally, at the close of his ministry his soul did become "impatient" with them. On public occasions he put all three groups to silence as far as government and doctrine are concerned. (Matthew 22:15-45) The result was, as stated in Matthew 22:46: "Nobody was able to say a word in reply to him, nor did anyone dare from that day [Tuesday, Nisan 11 of 33 C.E.] on to question him any further."

³⁴ Jesus Christ had just told them: "The kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits." (Matthew 21:23-43; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-44) Shortly after that declaration he openly denounced the scribes and the Pharisees as oppressive shepherds and religious hypocrites. Said he at the climax of his denunciation: "Therefore you are bearing witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Well, then, fill up the measure of your forefathers. Serpents, offspring of vipers, how are you to flee from the judgment of

33. How, as pictured in Zechariah's case, did Jesus become "impatient" with those "three shepherds"?

34. (a) What did Jesus say at the climax of his denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees? (b) As if breaking the staff called Pleasantness, what did he say to Jerusalem?

Gehenna?" (Matthew 23:1-33; Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:45-47) Then, as if cutting to pieces the shepherd's staff called Pleasantness, he added: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her,—how often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks together under her wings! But you people did not want it. Look! Your house is abandoned to you."—Matthew 23:37, 38.

³⁵ When Jehovah God abandoned the Jewish temple of his worship at Jerusalem that meant that he was breaking the covenant of law that he had made with the nation of Israel through Moses. So Jesus, as the shepherd foreshadowed by Zechariah, was announcing that the covenant that Jehovah had concluded with the peoples of Israel was about to be broken. The "afflicted ones" of the flock of Israel who were watching Jesus and hearing his words "got to know in this way that it was the word of Jehovah."—Zechariah 11:11.

³⁶ This meant that Jehovah was no longer to show pleasantness toward his disobedient chosen people. He was about to "show compassion no more" upon the inhabitants of the "land of Judah." That land was to suffer all the horrors of the invasion of Judea and the destruction of its cities and strongholds, including Jerusalem and its temple, in the cruel years of 70-73 C.E. Jesus Christ foretold this tragedy on that same day of Nisan 11 of 33 C.E., in his prophecy regarding the "conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 24:1-22; Mark 13:1-20; Luke 21:5-24) This national calamity was, if nothing else, a painful indication that the Mosaic Law covenant between God and Israel had been broken. What terrible consequences for rejecting God's Shepherd Ruler!

³⁷ Just how highly was Jehovah's appointed shepherd

35. By those words, what was Jesus announcing to the Jews concerning God's Law Covenant with them, and what did the "afflicted ones" watching Jesus then know?

36. What did this mean regarding God's pleasantness toward Israel, and finally what terrible consequences came for rejecting Jehovah's Shepherd Ruler?

37. How was the value that was placed on Zechariah's shepherding shown, what did Jehovah then tell him to do, and what did he now cut in pieces?

valued by the peoples of Israel? The prophet Zechariah illustrates it in his own experience and thereby foreshadows something of greater significance. He tells us: "Then I said to them: 'If it is good in your eyes, give me my wages; but if not, refrain.' And they proceeded to pay my wages, thirty pieces of silver. At that, Jehovah said to me: 'Throw it to the treasury—the majestic value with which I have been valued from their standpoint.' Accordingly I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw it into the treasury at the house of Jehovah. Then I cut in pieces my second staff, the Union, in order to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel."—Zechariah 11:12-14.

³⁸ "Thirty pieces of silver"—thirty silver shekels—was the price of a slave according to the Mosaic Law covenant. (Exodus 21:32) Was the prophet Zechariah or the value of his shepherd services worth no more than a slave? And since Zechariah had been appointed by the Heavenly Shepherd Jehovah, the valuation placed upon his appointed representative Zechariah was the same as a valuation placed upon Jehovah as a Shepherd. Jehovah could speak of it as the "value with which I have been valued from their standpoint." (Unless Zechariah were here making a parenthetical reference to himself!) True, Jehovah did speak of it as a "majestic value" instead of a slave's value; but evidently this expression was used, not in satisfaction, but in sarcasm or in a cutting manner. It meant that the lack of appreciation was felt.

³⁹ At such devaluation of the shepherd who represented Jehovah the basis for unity in the flock of God's professed people was taken away. There would not be a case of one shepherd, one flock. This would take away the protective power that unity raises up against attacks from outside. So it was with good timing that Zechariah cut to pieces the staff called Union (or, Binders) at this point. This was to illustrate that the foundation for "brotherhood" between those of the kingdom

38. What was the value of that pay given to Zechariah, and how did Jehovah refer to this pay?

39. What did Zechariah's cutting of the staff Union (or, Binders) to pieces indicate respecting the twelve-tribe nation of Israel?

of Judah and those of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel was taken away. It was over the issue of having one Messianic king, one of the royal line of David, that the nation of twelve tribes was broken up into two kingdoms, Judah and Israel, after King Solomon's death in 997 B.C.E. So the breaking of the Mosaic Law covenant meant, not only the end of Jehovah's "pleasantness" or favor to his once chosen people, but also that divine care and protection for keeping the nation together as a harmonious whole had ended. The spiritual bonds that make for brotherhood had been taken away, and the mere fleshly bond would not be strong enough to hold them together as brothers.

⁴⁰ The undervaluing of God's provisions and the rejecting of them always lead to sad consequences. Great as was the undervaluing of Jehovah as the Great Shepherd in the case of the prophet Zechariah, it was far surpassed in the case of the Messianic Shepherd pictured by Zechariah. That one was nobody else but the Son of God, whom God sent from heaven to become the Fine Shepherd to surrender his soul or lay down his perfect human life in behalf of all sheeplike human creatures. (John 10:14-18) Since the Messiah Jesus was acting as a shepherd in behalf of his heavenly Father, he could have exercised his right to ask for his wages in behalf of his Father. What wages or pay is it that a governmental shepherd asks of his subjects? It is that his subjects should render support to him and to his government whether in a material way or in loyal services rendered. The appointed officers under the governmental shepherd are the ones that should see to it that the shepherd gets such wages or pay from all his subjects. Just as Solomon, a theocratically appointed king, wrote: "My son, fear Jehovah and the king. With those who are for a change, do not intermeddle." —Proverbs 24:21.

⁴¹ For almost three and a half years Jesus served

40. (a) Why was this undervaluing of Jehovah's shepherd more serious in the case of the one pictured by Zechariah? (b) What should a shepherd ruler receive as pay from his subjects?

41. (a) Did Zechariah force the people to pay him his shepherd wages? (b) When could the Jewish representatives have paid Jesus as shepherd, but when were they forced to place a value upon him?

faithfully as a spiritual shepherd over the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." Toward the close of his shepherd work, during his last week of his life in human flesh on earth, he did not go directly to the shepherdlike representatives of Israel, as the prophet Zechariah did, and ask for his wages or pay. Zechariah told those in his day that if they did not want to pay they did not need to: "If it is good in your eyes, give me my wages; but if not, refrain." (Zechariah 11:12) In Jesus' case, when, in triumphal fashion, he rode on an ass's colt into Jerusalem, the shepherdlike representatives of Israel could have paid him the wage of giving him their acceptance of him as the true Messiah sent and anointed by Jehovah. But they refrained from doing this. Nonetheless, they were forced, just three days later (Nisan 12, 33 C.E.), to place a money value on him as a spiritual shepherd. How? Let us read:

⁴² "Then one of the twelve, the one called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said: 'What will you give me to betray him to you?' They stipulated to him thirty silver pieces. So from then on [Nisan 12] he kept seeking a good opportunity to betray him. On the first day of the unfermented cakes [Nisan 14] the disciples came up to Jesus, saying: 'Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the passover?'"—Matthew 26:14-17.

⁴³ Those religious shepherds gave Judas Iscariot the thirty silver shekels. (Mark 14:10, 11; Luke 22:3-6) Jesus foreknew that he would be betrayed and that the betrayer was Judas Iscariot. (Matthew 17:22, 23; 20:17-19; 26:1, 2, 24, 25) Jesus did nothing to hinder the sale of him by betrayal. (Matthew 26:45-57) In fact, he expedited the betrayal, that it might occur at God's due time, for, at the Passover supper he identified Judas Iscariot and dismissed him with the words: "What you are doing get done more quickly." The betrayer immediately went out to carry out his bargain with the religious shepherds. (John 13:21-30) Hours

42. What value was stipulated to Judas Iscariot for Jesus, and when?
43. What was Jesus' attitude toward the sale of him by his known betrayer, and when was the sale consummated?

later that Passover night the betrayal took place and Judas Iscariot had earned his money. (John 18:1-14) The evaluating of Jesus the Messianic Shepherd had been consummated. At thirty silver shekels, the price of a slave according to the Mosaic Law covenant! A majestic value!

⁴⁴ Judas Iscariot accepted this price. He had been the treasurer of the twelve apostles, but he did not put the money into their money box. He kept it for himself—for a while! (John 12:4-6) In the ancient case of the prophet Zechariah, he did not keep the thirty silver shekels that had been paid to him as his wages. The money really belonged to his Master, Jehovah, and so Jehovah said to him: "Throw it to the treasury." Zechariah did so. (Zechariah 11:12, 13) His action was a premonition of something. Not that Zechariah prefigured Judas Iscariot, but, just the same, like Zechariah, Judas did not keep his thirty silver shekels. What he did with them, or, rather, what resulted from his disposing of the betrayal money is reported to us:

⁴⁵ "When it had become morning, all the chief priests and the older men of the people held a consultation against Jesus so as to put him to death. And, after binding him, they led him off and handed him over to Pilate the governor. Then Judas, who betrayed him, seeing he had been condemned, felt remorse and turned the thirty silver pieces back to the chief priests and older men, saying: 'I sinned when I betrayed righteous blood.' They said: 'What is that to us? You must see to that!' So he threw the silver pieces into the temple and withdrew, and went off and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said: 'It is not lawful to drop them into the sacred treasury, because they are the price of blood.' After consulting together, they bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers. Therefore that field has been called 'Field of Blood' to this very day. Then what was spoken

44, 45. (a) What was done with the money at which Zechariah was priced? (b) What was done with the money that Judas Iscariot accepted for betraying Jesus?

through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying: 'And they took the thirty silver pieces, the price upon the man that was priced, the one on whom some of the sons of Israel set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, according to what Jehovah had commanded me.'"—Matthew 27:1-10.

⁴⁶ Because the money used by the priests in the purchase of the potter's field had been provided by Judas Iscariot, the apostle Peter speaks of Judas as having bought the field for the burial of Jews who died while visiting in Jerusalem or of proselytes. Peter said to the Christian congregation regarding Judas: "This very man, therefore, purchased a field with the wages for unrighteousness, and pitching head foremost [after hanging himself up high] he noisily burst in his midst and his intestines were poured out. It also became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that that field was called in their language *A-ke'l'da-ma*, that is, Field of Blood." (Acts 1:18, 19) The priests merely acted for Judas in taking the money out of the temple sanctuary where Judas had thrown the thirty silver shekels and conveyed it to the seller of the potter's field. The priests saw the unfitness of dropping the "price of blood" into the temple treasury, but at the same time they thought themselves fit to serve in that temple in spite of their having caused that blood to be shed.

⁴⁷ We notice that, in Matthew 27:9, 10, the apostle Matthew says that it was the saying of the prophet Jeremiah that was fulfilled. If Matthew was referring to that section of the Hebrew Scriptures known as The Prophets and this section in Matthew's day was headed by the prophecy of Jeremiah, then the name Jeremiah would include all the other prophetic books, including that of Zechariah. In such a case Matthew would really

46. (a) How did the apostle Peter later speak about Judas Iscariot and the disposal of the thirty shekels? (b) What inconsistency did the priests show respecting the blood that those thirty shekels represented?

47. (a) How could it be that the apostle Matthew could say Jeremiah and yet really mean Zechariah? (b) How does the Aramaic Version dispose of the difficulty?

be meaning Zechariah although using the name Jeremiah.* *The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts (Peshitta)* omits the name and reads: "Then what was spoken by the prophet was fulfilled, namely, I took the thirty pieces of silver, the costly price which was bargained with the children of Israel, and I gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me." (George M. Lamsa, 1957) The Syriac New Testament translated into English from the Peshitto Version, by James Murdock (copyrighted 1893), reads the same way, in omitting the prophet's name.†

⁴⁸ Since Matthew 27:9, 10 corresponds with Zechariah 11:13 and with nothing in the book of Jeremiah, Matthew's quotation must have been a loose translation of Zechariah 11:13. The way in which Matthew translated Zechariah 11:13 was evidently meant to show how the fulfillment of Zechariah 11:13 worked out, namely, that "they took," the priestly representatives of Israel took, the thirty silver pieces from the floor of the temple, and "they [the priests, acting instead of the individual, Judas Iscariot] gave them for the potter's field." Zechariah 11:13 does not tell us how the thirty silver shekels that Zechariah threw into the treasury of Jehovah's temple were particularly disposed of later. Matthew, however, does tell us how the fulfillment of the prophecy did dispose of the money, to fit the *altered* circumstances. This fulfillment would confirm that the shepherd Zechariah here pictured the betrayed and sold Messianic Shepherd, Jesus, so cheaply priced.

⁴⁹ Just as Zechariah thereafter broke the second staff, called "the Union" or "Binders," so the betrayal of

* The Syriac Version (Philoxenian Harkleian, a seventh-century revision) uses the name Zachariah, instead of Jeremiah.

† In Matthew 27:9, 10 the Sinaitic Manuscript of the fourth century C.E. reads "I" instead of "they." So do the Syriac Versions, the Philoxenian Harkleian, the Peshitta, and the Sinaitic Codex. This agrees with Zechariah 11:13, which says "I took."

48. (a) How does Matthew's loose translation of Zechariah's prophecy show the disposal of the thirty shekels? (b) This fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy confirms that he pictured whom here?

49. The fulfillment of Zechariah's breaking of the staff called "the Union" took place when, and with what consequences to the Jews?

Jesus for thirty silver shekels did lead to Jehovah's canceling of the Mosaic Law covenant with Israel. When the resurrected Jesus ascended to heaven and appeared in God's presence and presented to Him the value of his perfect human sacrifice, then the Mosaic Law covenant was blotted out, and the promised new covenant was inaugurated with spiritual Israel, Christian Israel. (Ephesians 2:13-16; Colossians 2:14-17; Hebrews 9:24-28) This left the natural, circumcised Jews that refused the new covenant mediated by Jesus Christ exposed to the false Jewish Christs. It left them without a true theocratic bond of union, and their disunity into a number of religious sects worked out disastrously for them at the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 C.E.

⁵⁰ Like ancient Israel, Christendom with her hundreds of sects has rejected the shepherdly care of the Messianic Shepherd, the heavenly Jesus Christ. How so? Not according to her pious professions, of course, but according to her acts. She has betrayed him by betraying his true disciples, whom she has persecuted, even to the death in many cases. She has refused the services of the spiritual shepherds whom the heavenly Messianic Shepherd has sent to her. What she has done to them, she has, in effect, done to him. (Matthew 25:40, 45; Mark 9:37; John 15:20, 21) Thus she has placed a cheap price on his shepherdly services, rejecting them. This reveals that she is not in harmony with the new covenant, which she claims applies to her; and so, by taking her at her word, she has broken that new covenant. So she does not enjoy the Pleasantness or favor of Jehovah God, and He does not protect her to keep her in unity. She too is exposed to all the false Christs. Her disunity will continue until the coming "great tribulation" that was pictured by Jerusalem's destruction in 70 C.E.—Matthew 24:21, 22.

50. How has Christendom, in effect, placed a cheap price on the Messianic Shepherd Jesus Christ, how is she guilty of covenant breaking, and how will failure to have God's Pleasantness affect her?

"A USELESS SHEPHERD"

⁵¹ When Jehovah's Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ, and his true undershepherds are rejected by people who profess to worship the God of the Holy Bible, there is nothing left for such people but to come under the leadership of selfish, worldly-minded shepherds. (1 Peter 5:1-4) Jehovah denounced the self-seeking governmental shepherds and reassured the sheeplike people by saying: "I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he must feed them, even my servant David. He himself will feed them, and he himself will become their shepherd. And I myself, Jehovah, will become their God, and my servant David a chieftain in the midst of them. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken." (Ezekiel 34:23, 24) Jesus Christ, the son of ancient King David, is that promised Shepherd. In the year 1919 C.E. Christendom discounted the value of his pastoral care and rejected him and his kingdom. Instead, she chose a man-made international organization for world peace and security, the League of Nations, the successor to which, the United Nations, has 132 member nations in 1972. She has reaped the consequences of this.

⁵² What consequences? A crop of ambitious, self-exalting governmental shepherds, together with their religious associates. Through the prophet Zechariah Jehovah God illustrated such consequences: worldly shepherds as prefigured by "a useless shepherd," a foolish, incompetent, worthless class of leaders. After all these decades of experience with such leaders since 1919 C.E., we can see how they conform to the type of shepherd that Jehovah God prophetically described, as recorded by Zechariah, who writes:

⁵³ "And Jehovah went on to say to me: 'Take yet for yourself the implements of a useless shepherd. For here I am letting a shepherd rise up in the land. To the

51. (a) Christendom's rejection of the Messianic Shepherd leaves the people to the leadership of whom? (b) Instead of accepting the Messianic Shepherd whom Jehovah provided, Christendom has chosen what organization?

52. What consequences has Christendom reaped from rejecting the Messianic Shepherd and his leadership?

53. Whose implements was Zechariah told to take for himself, and how would the shepherd raised up carry on, and what would happen to him?

sheep being effaced he will give no attention. The young one he will not seek, and the broken sheep he will not heal. The one stationing herself he will not supply with food, and the flesh of the fat one he will eat, and the hoofs of the sheep he will tear off. Woe to my valueless shepherd, who is leaving the flock! A sword will be upon his arm and upon his right eye. His own arm will without fail dry up, and his own right eye will without fail grow dim.'"—Zechariah 11:15-17.

⁵⁴ Are not the people today, even those of Christendom, not to speak of those of heathendom, like sheep effaced or lost out of the picture, broken and unhealed, hungry or threatened with world famine, fed upon by corrupt, graft-taking, parasitical valueless shepherds, who devour them even to their "hoofs" or who lead them over ways so rough as to tear their "hoofs"? The conditions in the nations, both so-called Christian and pagan, give eloquent answer to that question. How much longer can the "sheep" keep going? But this is the consequence of refusing Jehovah's Messianic Shepherd. Since they have chosen it that way, he has let a useless, valueless, hurtful shepherd class rise up in the land even of Christendom.

⁵⁵ The prophet Zechariah was told to illustrate the rising up of such a "useless shepherd" class in our time, as well as in the time of Jesus Christ and his apostles in the first century C.E. Zechariah did not himself become such a useless, foolish shepherd; he was merely told to take the implements or equipment of a shepherd and picture the presence and faulty conduct of such kind of shepherd. Consequently, Zechariah did not suffer the woe that Jehovah pronounced upon such a delinquent, valueless, heartless shepherd.

⁵⁶ The whole world of mankind may expect no relief or deliverance from such governmental shepherds of

54. The conditions in the nations today prove that the people have what kind of "shepherds," and why have such leaders been allowed to rise up?

55. Why did Zechariah, though taking for himself the implements of a useless shepherd, not suffer the woe that Jehovah pronounced against a valueless shepherd of that kind?

56. How has a "sword" been upon the "arm" and the "right eye" of such a "valueless shepherd" class?

human choice and appointment. Jehovah's executorial sword of authority is against such shepherd rulers, who themselves have long borne the "sword" of executorial power. (Romans 13:4; Acts 12:1, 2) Because of not having Jehovah's blessing in this their "time of the end," their "arm" of power and ability is already withering up; their "right eye," their best eye for discerning remedies and for governmental oversight, grows dimmer and dimmer. But in the world's coming "great tribulation" Jehovah will destroy that "useless shepherd" class, eyes, arms and all.

CHAPTER 19

THE KINGDOM WITHSTANDS INTERNATIONAL ASSAULT

INTERNATIONAL communications—by cablegram, by telegram, by telephone, by radio, by television—have carried the pronouncements of shepherdlike rulers to the ends of the earth. The seeming importance of such pronouncements made them deserving of such widespread newscasting. But, by a force that the scientists of this twentieth century have been unable to harness, a pronouncement of the highest importance has been communicated from beyond outer space to our earth. That high rating of this pronouncement is not too high, for it is the pronouncement of the Creator of earth and heaven, and it has been communicated by means of his invisible active force, namely, his holy spirit. Also, by means of hundreds of millions of printed copies of

1. By what force uncontrolled by scientists has the pronouncement from beyond outer space been communicated to us, being made available to most of us also by what means?

the Holy Bible, in hundreds of languages, that pronouncement has been made available for consultation by the vast majority of the population of the earth. As we read this pronouncement bearing the name of the Creator, let us judge for ourselves whether it is of international importance now:

² "A pronouncement: 'The word of Jehovah concerning Israel,' is the utterance of Jehovah, the One who is stretching out the heavens and laying the foundation of the earth and forming the spirit of man inside him. 'Here I am making Jerusalem a bowl causing reeling to all the peoples round about; and also against Judah he will come to be in the siege, even against Jerusalem. And it must occur in that day that I shall make Jerusalem a burdensome stone to all the peoples. All those lifting it will without fail get severe scratches for themselves; and against her all the nations of the earth will certainly be gathered. In that day,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'I shall strike every horse with bewilderment and its rider with madness; and upon the house of Judah I shall open my eyes, and every horse of the peoples I shall strike with loss of sight. And the sheiks of Judah will have to say in their heart, "The inhabitants of Jerusalem are a strength to me by Jehovah of armies their God." In that day I shall make the sheiks of Judah like a fire pot among trees and like a fiery torch in a row of newly cut grain, and they must devour on the right hand and on the left all the peoples round about; and Jerusalem must yet be inhabited in her own place, in Jerusalem.'"

³ Those words of Zechariah 12:1-6 are a puzzle to the natural circumcised Jews of today. They have tried to find a fulfillment of those prophetic words in the ancient history of their nation between the time of this "pronouncement" in the sixth century

2. According to that pronouncement, what will Jehovah make Jerusalem resemble to the nations, and like what will He make his people to the attacking nations?

3, 4. Why have the natural, circumcised Jews been unable to come up with an explanation of Zechariah 12:1-6 that applies to the history of their nation?

before our Common Era (about 518 B.C.E.) and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman legions in the year 70 C.E. But they have been unable to come up with anything authentic in verification of the prophecy. Why not? It is because the fulfillment of the "pronouncement" reaches its culmination or climax in an Israel and Jerusalem of a higher order than that of natural, fleshly Israel and earthly Jerusalem. Thus when the earthly Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed in 70 C.E. there was a Jerusalem that then remained. Not an earthly one, of course. It was the one of which the writer of Hebrews 12:22-24 speaks. Although writing about 61 C.E., about nine years before earthly Jerusalem was demolished in 70 C.E., he writes to Christianized Hebrews:

⁴ "But you have approached a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels, in general assembly, and the congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens, and God the Judge of all, and the spiritual lives of righteous ones who have been made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling, which speaks in a better way than Abel's blood."

⁵ "The congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens" to which those Hebrew Christians had approached was not the congregation of natural, fleshly Israel, of which they had been a part until their conversion to Christianity. Rather, it was the "congregation" of spiritual Israel and it had been brought into the "new covenant" that Jesus the mediator had validated with his own "blood of sprinkling" that speaks in a better way than did the blood of Abel the first martyr of Jehovah. In a perfect match with these facts, this spiritual Israel had a higher Jerusalem, the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem."

5. What was the "congregation of the firstborn" to which those Christianized Hebrews had approached by about 61 C.E., and what city did this "congregation" have?

⁶ The earthly Jerusalem was where the line of kings in David's royal family had had its throne, which was called "Jehovah's throne" because the occupant thereof represented Jehovah God who was the real and invisible King of Israel. Since Jehovah had covenanted with King David for an everlasting kingdom with a permanent heir of him in the throne, Jerusalem as the throne city stood for the God-given right to a kingdom in the hands of a descendant of King David. (1 Chronicles 29:23; 2 Samuel 7:14-16) Jesus Christ, "son of David, son of Abraham," was that Permanent Heir. Consequently, when Jesus Christ, resurrected from the dead, made his ascent to heaven and appeared in God's presence and sat down at his right hand, his heirship and his unforfeited right to the kingdom went along with him. Thus that Kingdom right was transferred from the earthly Jerusalem to the "heavenly Jerusalem" in the year 33 C.E.—Acts 2:29-36; Psalm 110:1, 2; Hebrews 10:12, 13.

⁷ In the year 607 B.C.E. the Babylonians overturned the kingdom of David at earthly Jerusalem, and the kingdom was to become no one else's "until he comes who has the legal right," at which time God would give it to that one. (Ezekiel 21:25-27) When did that one with the "legal right" come and receive the kingdom from Jehovah the great Theocrat? It was in 1914 C.E., at the end of the Gentile Times about October 4/5 (Tishri 15). Then Jehovah enthroned his Son Jesus Christ in the "heavenly Jerusalem." Then, too, in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1, 2 Jehovah sent the rod of Christ's strength out of the heavenly Mount Zion, saying: "Go subduing in the midst of your enemies." By that act and at that time the Great Creator of heaven and earth carried out his pronouncement and made Jerusalem, the "heavenly Jerusalem," to be a "bowl causing reeling to all the peoples." —Zechariah 12:1, 2; Revelation 11:15.

6. What did earthly Jerusalem as Jehovah's throne city picture, and when and to what was there a transfer of the thing thus pictured?
7. In view of the overturning of the Davidic kingdom in earthly Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E., when was it that Jehovah made Jerusalem a "bowl causing reeling to all the peoples" (Zechariah 12:2)?

⁸ Two thousand nine hundred and eighty-three years before that, King David had captured earthly Jerusalem and made it his capital city. On hearing that, his bitter enemies the Philistines came up against Jerusalem and tried to unseat David. Two successive miraculous defeats sent the assailants reeling back to Philistia. (2 Samuel 5:17-25; Psalm 2:1-6) What, then, do we find in the case of the "heavenly Jerusalem" with its newly enthroned King Jesus Christ, the Permanent Heir of David? For decades prior to 1914 C.E., even since the year 1876 C.E., the nations and peoples of the world had been notified that the Gentile Times would close in that year.* Dedicated, baptized Christians, like Charles Taze Russell who became president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, were used to serve this notice, especially upon the nations of Christendom. These professed Christian nations spurned the notification and launched their first world war July 28, 1914.

⁹ During this war the embattled nations took advantage of martial law and wartime hysteria and nationalistic fervor to persecute these dedicated, baptized, spirit-anointed Christians who had served notification upon them and who had taken their stand for Jehovah's established Messianic kingdom. Thus the nations gathered around them as around a drinking bowl, to take draughts of pleasure and glee at venting their opposition to God's Kingdom representatives.

* "The seven times will end in A.D. 1914." So it is stated in the special article entitled "Gentile Times: When Do They End?" by Charles T. Russell, as published on page 27 of the monthly magazine called "Bible Examiner," Volume XXI, Number 1 - Whole Number 313, under date of October, 1876, with mailing address at No. 72 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, New York, and the editor and publisher of which was George Storrs. The discontinuance of his magazine "Bible Examiner" due to his severe illness was announced under the heading "Brother Geo. Storrs," in the January, 1880, issue of *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, and the use of part of the space of this latter magazine was offered to him. Sometime after his death, an article from his pen, entitled "The Doctrine of Election," was published in *Zion's Watch Tower*, in June of the year 1884.

8. (a) When King David made Jerusalem his throne city, what did the Philistines try to do, and with what result? (b) When and how did notice begin to be served on Christendom as regards Christ's enthronement at the end of the Gentile Times?

9. During World War I, how did those embattled nations gather around "heavenly Jerusalem" as around a drinking "bowl" for their pleasure?

As these dedicated, anointed Christians were part of the "congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens," those nations were, in effect, gathered around the "heavenly Jerusalem" as around a drinking "bowl." For a time those nations did experience great exhilaration, as foretold in Revelation 11:7-10.

¹⁰ After World War I ended on November 11, 1918, the worldly nations did not cease their hostility to God's established Messianic kingdom as set up in the "heavenly Jerusalem." In the following years they adopted the League of Nations as a substitute for God's heavenly kingdom. They thus began a figurative siege of the "heavenly Jerusalem." This siege expressed itself in the nations' opposition and persecution against the anointed remnant of the "congregation of the firstborn" who proclaimed the Messianic kingdom of the "heavenly Jerusalem." Inasmuch as these disciples of Jesus Christ upheld him as "the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David," they were spiritual Judeans, or spiritually of the tribe of Judah. So, along with the heavenly Jerusalem, these spiritual Judeans were under siege by the anti-Kingdom nations. It was just as it had been foretold, in Zechariah 12:2:

¹¹ "Here I am making Jerusalem a bowl causing reeling to all the peoples round about; and also against Judah he will come to be in the siege, even against Jerusalem." (NW) "Lo, I am about to make Jerusalem an intoxicating bowl unto all the peoples around. Moreover, the cities of Judah will be under siege along with Jerusalem." (AT) "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a fearful place to all the people round about her, also there shall be a siege both against Judah together with Jerusalem." (Lamsa) "Lo, I am making Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the peoples round about, and also against Judah it is, in the siege against Jerusalem."—Yg.

¹² Whereas in 1919 C.E. the worldly nations adopted

10, 11. How, after World War I, did "heavenly Jerusalem" come to be under siege by the nations, and were these also "against Judah"?

12. How did the spiritual Judeans manifest a different spirit from what they had shown during World War I, thus taking what apostolic stand?

the League of Nations as an international organization for world peace and security, the anointed remnant of the spiritual Judah started proclaiming as never before the good news of the kingdom of the "Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David." So from then on the worldly nations began laying siege against this spiritual Judah on earth, prolonging and persisting in their endeavors to overpower the resistance and nonconformity of these spiritual Judeans. Quite differently from their general course of action during World War I, these spiritual Judeans refused to be put in fear by the nations. They discerned their commission from the Most High God more clearly than previously, and they chose the apostolic course: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) They stuck to this course even amid World War II. They stuck to an absolute Christian neutrality toward the international controversies, such as they had openly declared on November 1, 1939. The nations were quite stunned at the strictly neutral stand of these Christian witnesses of Jehovah. —See *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*, as of November 1, 1939, pages 323-333.

¹³ The intransigent stand of Jehovah's Christian witnesses for neutrality, their courageous resort to the legal courts of the land to maintain their civil rights, their steadily increasing preaching of the good news of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom, all this has sent the nations reeling. The Kingdom right, as represented by the "heavenly Jerusalem," has become a "burdensome stone" to the nations. For trying to lift it out of the way of their ambitious worldly schemes for global domination by tampering with the Kingdom preachers, the meddling nations have got "severe scratches for themselves." No satisfaction for themselves, but smarting pains of humiliating failure. Their reputations have been hurt. They cannot remove or nullify the Kingdom's right to be preached, nor can

13. By what course have the nations got "severe scratches for themselves," and why?

they silence the remnant who obey Jehovah's command to preach it world wide.

¹⁴ Already, in a figurative way, Jehovah of armies has done according to His pronouncement. He has bewildered those who fight against the spiritual Judeans, the ambassadors for His kingdom. The riders of the war machine have been made to act madly, as in the case of frustrated dictators who have become blind with fury. Their war strategists know no more what direction to take, as if for loss of sight. But Jehovah opens his eyes and keeps them open in order to direct the strategy of the spiritual "house of Judah."

¹⁵ As for the "sheiks of Judah," spiritually speaking, the governing body of the "house of Judah" and the overseers of the congregations of the spiritual Judeans, Jehovah fills these with a fiery zeal in behalf of the earthly interests of the Kingdom of the "heavenly Jerusalem." "Like a fire pot among trees and like a fiery torch in a row of newly cut grain," they set things aflame in a spiritual way, causing great religious discussions and controversies to flare up and consuming the influence of many shepherd rulers so that they are exposed as "fighters actually against God" and many of their "sheep" turn away to God's kingdom. To the right and to the left this occurs among the peoples. In consequence of this fiery activity and positiveness of these "sheiks of Judah," the spiritual Judeans keep remaining in their God-given spiritual estate, inhabiting it with increased numbers. They do not abandon the cause of the "heavenly Jerusalem."

¹⁶ It is not in their own strength that these "sheiks of Judah" and their fellow Judeans accomplish this spiritually devastating work among those who besiege

14. How has Jehovah fulfilled even already his pronouncement regarding the enemy horses and their riders, and upon whom does he open his eyes, and why?

15. How have the spiritual Judean sheiks been inflammatory "like a fire pot among trees and like a fiery torch in a row of newly cut grain," to the right and to the left?

16. The "sheiks of Judah" acknowledge that their strength to do this under siege comes from what source, and what does that source employ in their behalf?

hostilely the cause of God's reigning kingdom. In their hearts of appreciation they confess that the strength to do this under siege by all the world comes from a superhuman, supernatural source. It comes from the "heavenly Jerusalem," where the enthroned King Jesus Christ reigns and has gone forth subduing among his enemies. He has associated with him the holy angels. "Are they not all spirits for public service, sent forth to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:13, 14; Matthew 25:31) Those anointed Christians who were approaching the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem" and who ended their earthly course in death and were resurrected to life and immortality in the heavens, these also could afford invisible strength to the courageous, energetic "sheiks of Judah" and fellow Judeans on earth. (Revelation 2:26-29) Behind all this assistance from heavenly Jerusalem is "Jehovah of armies their God."

ANNIHILATION IN STORE FOR ATTACKING NATIONS

¹⁷ The worldly nations cannot crown with victory their long, persistent siege against God's kingdom and those who serve as its ambassadors throughout the earth. The Almighty God will give these spiritual Judeans renewed powers of endurance to withstand the anti-Kingdom siege, but he will weaken and finally obliterate the God-defying besiegers. This is the significance of the further words of the divine "pronouncement," in Zechariah 12:7-9:

¹⁸ "And Jehovah will certainly save the tents of Judah first, to the end that the beauty of the house of David and the beauty of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not become too great over Judah. In that day Jehovah will be a defense around the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and the one that is stumbling among them must become in that day like David, and the house of David like God [or, 'godlike ones'], like Jehovah's angel before them. And it must occur in that day

17, 18. (a) Why will the nations not be able to crown their long siege with victory? (b) According to his pronouncement, what will Jehovah do to those nations coming against "Jerusalem"?

that I shall seek to annihilate all the nations that are coming against Jerusalem."

¹⁹ That expression "the tents of Judah" indicates that the spiritual Judeans are not withdrawn behind the protective walls of cities but are out in the open field, fearlessly defending the interests of the Messianic kingdom as represented by Jerusalem, the throne city. Reasonably, then, before the attackers could come directly against the city, they would have to clear away all the "tents of Judah" that are ringed about the city in its defense. That is why Jehovah of armies has to save the "tents of Judah" first, because these are the first and direct target of attack. For that reason they will be able to boast of Jehovah's salvation of them the same as will the inhabitants of the "heavenly Jerusalem," the Kingdom location. These "tents of Judah" will have the beauty of Jehovah's salvation just the same as the "house of David" represented by the royal Son of David, Jesus Christ, and the same as the "inhabitants of Jerusalem," the resurrected joint heirs of the Messianic kingdom, Christ's already resurrected and glorified disciples.—Romans 8:15-17; 2 Timothy 2:11, 12.

²⁰ If, in the case of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Jehovah defends them and keeps them from stumbling to a fall in that he makes them strong and courageous like David the fighting king, he will do likewise with the spiritual Judeans in their "tents" out in the field. The historical record that the anointed remnant of spiritual Judeans has made for itself till now shows that He has done this. And he will continue to do this in the future, to the full carrying out of his promise. Also, because of the larger responsibility that is involved, Jehovah has done still more for the "house of David," which "house" is represented by the Permanent Heir of David, Jesus Christ. Jehovah has made him "like God, like Jehovah's angel before them." No,

19. (a) What is indicated by the expression "the tents of Judah"? (b) Why will the "beauty" of others involved not become "too great over Judah"?

20. (a) How has Jehovah made the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" to be like David, and David's house to be like Jehovah's angel? (b) How has Jehovah defended the "inhabitants of Jerusalem"?

not like Jehovah himself, but like Jehovah's "angel," who led the sons of Israel out of slavery in Egypt in 1513 B.C.E. (Exodus 14:19; 23:20, 23) Jehovah of armies has already defended the inhabitants of the "heavenly Jerusalem" by authorizing his reigning King Jesus Christ to cast Satan the Devil, "the god of this system of things," out of heaven and to keep him out. —Revelation 12:7-13; 2 Corinthians 4:4.

²¹ So the godlike Son of David, Jesus Christ, acts like Jehovah's angel in behalf of spiritual Judeans in their "tents" on earth. Appropriately one of the names by which he has been called is Mighty God. (Isaiah 9:6, 7) How, then, could all the nations of this world, backed by Satan the Devil, triumph against him and against the "tents of Judah" before whom he serves as Jehovah's angel? By force of circumstances their siege of the Messianic kingdom is bound to fail. In their lust for world domination they will never lift the siege and withdraw in admission of defeat or failure. They will keep up the siege down to the last!

²² Will Jehovah of armies have to seek far in that day when seeking to "annihilate all the nations that are coming against Jerusalem"? By no means! By their persistent opposition to his Messianic kingdom and their support of the man-made international organization for world peace and security and their harassment and persecution of the spiritual Judeans, those nations are piling up a condemnatory record against themselves. The Supreme Judge of all is aware of the account that has to be settled in full measure against them. When their final attack upon the "tents of Judah" takes place, producing the world situation figuratively called Har-Magedon, they will fill up their allowed account to the full.

²³ On examining that account, the searching Jehovah

21. (a) In harmony with the house of David's acting like Jehovah's angel, what is one of the appropriate titles of the Representative of that "house"? (b) How long will the enemy keep up the siege of Jerusalem, and why till then?

22. (a) Why will Jehovah not have to look far when seeking to annihilate the nations? (b) When will be the occasion for him to annihilate them?

23. To what will Jehovah reduce those nations, and by means of whom, and with "beauty" for whom?

of armies will find every justification for him to annihilate those nations coming against the Kingdom of his "heavenly Jerusalem." By means of his reigning King, who is "like God, like Jehovah's angel," he will reduce those nations absolutely to nothing. (Revelation 16:13-16) O with what "beauty" that will crown the "house of David" and the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" and the "tents of Judah"!

THE ONE "PIERCED THROUGH" WHO BECAME KING

²⁴ There will be no wailing and lamentation over those presumptuous nations whom Jehovah of armies annihilates in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. But there was wailing and lamentation at a mournful event that paved the way for the "beauty of the house of David and the beauty of the inhabitants of Jerusalem" in that glorious day of divine salvation. As the "pronouncement" of Jehovah the Creator of heaven and earth continues on, we learn what that event was, for we hear Him say:

²⁵ "And I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of favor and entreaties, and they will certainly look to the One whom they pierced through, and they will certainly wail over Him as in the wailing over an only son; and there will be a bitter lamentation over him as when there is bitter lamentation over the firstborn son. In that day the wailing in Jerusalem will be great, like the wailing of Hadadrimmon in the valley plain of Megiddo. And the land will certainly wail, each family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself, and their women by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their women by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their women by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their women by themselves; all the families that are left remaining, each family by itself, and their women by themselves."—Zechariah 12:10-12; *NW; JB; Mo; RS; AT*.

24, 25. (a) Will there be a wailing for those annihilated nations? (b) A wailing over whom is it that Jehovah foretells as being outstanding?

²⁶ Who is that "One whom* they pierced through" and to whom "they will certainly look"? Cutting through the entanglement of human guesses, we go direct to the inspired answer furnished by the One who made this prophetic "pronouncement." From the record written down by the Galilean John, who was an eyewitness of the impalement of Jesus Christ between two impaled evildoers on Friday, Nisan 14, 33 C.E., we quote these inspired words:

Then the Jews, since it was Preparation, in order that the bodies might not remain upon the torture stakes on the Sabbath, (for the day of that Sabbath was a great one,) requested Pilate to have their legs broken and the bodies taken away. The soldiers came, therefore, and broke the legs of the first man and those of the other man that had been impaled with him. But on coming to Jesus, as they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Yet one of the soldiers jabbed his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he that has seen it has borne witness, and his witness is true, and that man knows he tells true things, in order that you also may believe. In fact, these things took place in order for the scripture to be fulfilled: "Not a bone of his will be crushed." And, again, a different scripture says: "They will look to the One whom they pierced."—John 19:31-37.

²⁷ There is also another connecting of this Jesus Christ with the 'piercing through' when the same apostle John writes:

To him that loves us and that loosed us from our sins by means of his own blood—and he made us to be a kingdom, priests to his God and Father—yes, to him be the glory and the might forever. Amen.

* On the words "the One whom," the 1971 edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* carries this footnote: On this passage Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar*, by E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley (1949 reprint), says on page 446, in footnote 1 belonging to section 138 (2) e, the following: "In Zechariah 12:10 also, instead of the unintelligible *e-la'i eth a-she'r*', we should probably read *el-a-she'r*', and refer the passage to this class." In two Hebrew manuscripts the written text reads *e-la'i eth a-she'r*' ('to me whom'), but the marginal note reads *e-la'iw eth a-she'r*' ('to him [or, to the one] whom'). LXX reads: "to me for the reason that"; Vg. "to me whom"; Sy. "to me for him whom"; Th. "to him whom." See German Bible translation by Emil F. Kautzsch (1890): "To that one whom"; also John 19:37.

26. To the question of who was the one whom they pierced through, we turn to what apostle's writing for the answer, and how does he answer our question?

27. In his writings, what other connections does John make of Jesus with that one "pierced through"?

Look! He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him. Yes, Amen.—Revelation 1:5-7.

²⁸ Thus the piercing of Jesus' side occurred sometime after he had expired, not before, concerning which Doctor Luke writes:

Well, by now it was about the sixth hour [12 o'clock noon], and yet a darkness fell over all the earth until the ninth hour [3 o'clock in the afternoon], because the sunlight failed; then the curtain of the sanctuary was rent down the middle. And Jesus called with a loud voice and said: "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." When he had said this, he expired. Because of seeing what occurred the army officer [centurion] began to glorify God, saying: "Really this man was righteous." And all the crowds that were gathered together there for this spectacle, when they beheld the things that occurred, began to return, beating their breasts. Moreover, all those acquainted with him were standing at a distance. Also, women, who together had followed him from Galilee, were standing beholding these things.—Luke 23:44-49; also, Mark 15:33-41.

²⁹ The pierced side of Jesus Christ was also an important item that entered into the proof that Jesus was later raised from the dead. The apostle Thomas, who did not get to see Jesus on the day of his resurrection (Sunday, Nisan 16, 33 C.E.), said to those who had seen him materialized in the flesh that day: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe." A week later, Jesus again materialized in flesh, in a body like that of his impalement, and said to Thomas: "Take your hand and stick it into my side, and stop being unbelieving but become believing."—John 20:24-27.

³⁰ In fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10-14, the faithful apostles and other disciples of Jesus Christ must have

28. What does the medical doctor Luke write, to indicate that Jesus was "pierced through" after, not before, he died?

29. How, as in Thomas' case, did that pierced side of Jesus enter into the proof that he had been resurrected from the dead?

30. (a) How was the wailing by Jesus' disciples of greater seriousness than the "wailing of Hadadrimmon in the valley plain of Megiddo"? (b) What more was needed than the mere wailing in grief in order for the "spirit of favor and entreaties" to be poured out on them?

wailed and lamented, there at earthly Jerusalem. Their lamenting was over the death of the "only-begotten Son" of God, "the firstborn of all creation," "the beginning of the creation by God." (John 3:16; Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14) So the lamenting over him was of greater seriousness than the previous "wailing of Hadadrimmon in the valley plain of Megiddo." (Zechariah 12:11; compare 2 Kings 23:28-30; 2 Chronicles 35:20-25.) Jehovah did pour out upon those faithful disciples the "spirit of favor and entreaties." Especially so, since those disciples "were hoping that this man was the one destined to deliver Israel." (Luke 24:21) But, in order to gain divine favor, more than mere grief must be expressed in such wailing and bitter lamentation. There must be belief in the one who was pierced through and belief in the value of his sacrificial death. On the basis of such belief or faith, divine favor can be extended to the grieved one and then his entreaties due to faith will be answered.

³¹ To prove worthy of receiving that divine "spirit of favor and entreaties" a person must look with eyes of faith, "look to the One whom they pierced through." A person might be of "the house of David," but, just one's being of that royal rank according to fleshly descent by no means guarantees that one will be with the Messiah in the heavenly kingdom as one of his joint heirs.

³² A person might be one of the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" on earth; but his being of the earthly capital city of King David by no means guarantees him a place in the "heavenly Jerusalem." Such a person should grieve because of any community responsibility that may be attaching to him for the death and piercing through of the Messiah Jesus. So the wailing and bitter lamentation must include sorrow over the fact that the Messiah had to die over our sins and must

31, 32. (a) To receive the "spirit of favor and entreaties," how must one look at him who was pierced through, even though one was of "the house of David"? (b) Even if of the "inhabitants of Jerusalem," what would one have to do besides wall in order to receive the "spirit of favor and entreaties"?

also include repentance over such sins. Then Messiah's death will be of benefit to the one lamenting and he will receive the "spirit of favor and entreaties."

³³ This would apply also to a person who, according to the flesh, was of the "house of Levi." Although as a Levite he served at the earthly temple in Jerusalem, with its altar of animal sacrifices, he still needed the perfect human sacrifice of the One pierced through. The "house of Levi" also included the "family of the Shimeites." (Exodus 6:16, 17; Numbers 3:17-21) So these also needed a sacrifice able to ransom sinful human creatures. The "family of the house of Nathan" belonged to the royal family of David. (2 Samuel 5:13, 14) Mary the earthly mother of Jesus Christ was born into the line of descent of this Nathan the son of David. (Luke 3:23-31) Despite their royal connections according to the flesh, those of this family needed to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, and that he was "pierced through" in order to fulfill divine prophecy and to prove worthy of the heavenly kingdom.

³⁴ Everybody, no matter of what family or house, needed to wail and lament in repentant grief over the need for the Messiah to die as a ransom sacrifice for sins. Woman as well as man needed to do so. That is why the prophecy repeatedly says that there must be wailing on the part of "their women by themselves." (Zechariah 12:12-14) Likewise each one of us today must look with repentance and in faith to Messiah Jesus, the One whom the enemies of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom were permitted to 'pierce through.' If we do so, we shall receive the "spirit of favor and entreaties."

³⁵ Our tears of wailing and lamentation are wiped away when we discern, also, that the Messiah Jesus

33. (a) How did this rule apply also to a person even though he was of "the house of Levi," or the "family of the Shimeites"? (b) Or, if one was of the "family of the house of Nathan," as Jesus' mother Mary was?

34. (a) From what standpoint must everyone, regardless of family, house, or sex, wail and lament over the pierced one? (b) How must we today do so in order to receive the "spirit of favor and entreaties"?

35. When are our tears of wailing and lamentation over the 'piercing through' of the Messiah wiped away?

was “pierced through” for the vindication of Jehovah’s universal sovereignty. His finally being “pierced through” proved that he had maintained his perfect integrity to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah to the death. As a reward he was honored with being enthroned as Messianic King in heaven.

CHAPTER 20

A “THIRD PART” PRESERVED IN A PURGED LAND

WHAT decent, honest-hearted, righteously disposed people want today is a land in which the inhabitants live clean lives and there is no religious hypocrisy or fraud and deception. Christendom, after trying out her hundreds of varieties of so-called Christian religions, has failed to produce such a land. All hope has now been lost that she will ever be able to do so. Not one land can she set forth as her showpiece to prove that she can purge out wickedness and religious uncleanness. She has nowhere brought about a spiritual paradise among her hundreds of millions of church members. If the Creator of heaven and earth were to depend upon her to bring about a purged earth with pure, undefiled religion, it would never come about. But the Almighty God will yet bring this about, in his way, by means of his own theocratic organization. His promise to do so still stands sure, for all right-minded people to trust in today.

² It is most interesting to examine how God illustrates his purpose to do this remarkable thing. In his “pronouncement” he has just finished speaking about the

1. Has Christendom failed in producing the kind of land that honest-hearted people want, and upon whose promise to produce the desired Paradise must we depend today?

2. After telling of the wailing over the one “pierced through,” what does Jehovah tell of being opened up for sin and for an abhorrent thing?

wailing and bitter lamentation in his land over the piercing through of the Messiah to whom the inhabitants of the land had pinned their hopes. (Zechariah 12:1, 10-14) Immediately following upon this, he proceeds to say: "In that day there will come to be a well opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for an abhorrent thing." —Zechariah 13:1.

³ Do we today see 'sin and an abhorrent thing' prevailing throughout the earth, even in Christendom? If we do, then it is evident that Christendom has not availed herself of that "well" that was to be opened "in that day." We are in "that day" now, are we not? Here the word "day" does not refer to a twenty-four-hour day. How can we determine whether we are in that favored "day"? This we can do by considering all the circumstances involved.

⁴ That "day" is prominently marked by a "well." This well was opened by Jehovah, for he himself is the One that digs it by means of his loving provisions. He sees to it that it is filled with pure water. What is the stated purpose of this water? Not that of drinking in order to quench thirst, but that of purification. The "well" with its water is opened "for sin and for an abhorrent thing." Among things abhorrent to God is the one described in Leviticus 20:21: "And where a man takes his brother's wife, it is something abhorrent. It is the nakedness of his brother that he has laid bare. They should become childless." An abhorrent or impure thing has no place in God's temple. (2 Chronicles 29:3-5) An abhorrent thing is to be thrown away, even if it involves silver and gold. (Ezekiel 7:19) By acting outrageously before God, one can make oneself an "abhorrent thing." (Lamentations 1:8) The Israelite who defiled himself by touching a dead corpse was considered as something abhorrent and as not to be touched until after he had been cleansed with the water

3. What proves whether Christendom has availed herself of that "well" that was opened up for sin and for an abhorrent thing?

4. (a) Who opens that "well," to provide water for what purpose?
(b) According to the Scriptures, what are some of the abhorrent things that do not belong in God's temple?

mixed with the ashes of a sacrificed red cow.—Numbers 19:2-22.

“Before the Israelites had taken possession of the land of Canaan, the land had been made abhorrent, filthy, impure, “because of the impurity of the peoples of the lands, because of their detestable things with which they have filled it from end to end by their uncleanness.” (Ezra 9:11) But after the Israelites themselves had occupied the land for some time, they too made the land abhorrent, filthy, impure, so that Jehovah could say: “The house of Israel were dwelling upon their soil, and they kept making it unclean with their way and with their dealings. Like the uncleanness of menstruation their way has become before me.” (Ezekiel 36:16, 17; Leviticus 15:19-33) Rightly, then, Jehovah did not want the land of his restored remnant to become again an abhorrent land or to continue to be such. That is why he opened up this “well” to cleanse away sin or an abhorrent thing.

“So the “well” was opened “to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” But let us not lose from sight that these were of the remnant of Israelites who were liberated from Babylon and who returned to the land of Judah to rebuild the temple of their God at Jerusalem. Consequently, although there was among them a “house of David,” they did not have a king of the lineage of King David sitting on a royal throne at Jerusalem. Zerubbabel, who had come from Babylon, was of the “house of David” but was merely appointed by King Cyrus of Persia to be governor of Judah. (Zechariah 4:6-10; Matthew 1:6-13) The Messiah had yet to come for them to get a king of the “house of David.” Naturally, then, as here meant, the “house of David” and the “inhabitants of Jerusalem” needed cleansing from “sin” and any “abhorrent

5. How had the inhabitants of the land made it before the Israelites took possession of it, and why did Jehovah open up a “well for sin and for an abhorrent thing” in behalf of the remnant that had been restored there?

6. As this was after the restoration from Babylon, why did the “house of David” and the “inhabitants of Jerusalem” need such a well for cleansing? (b) For how many, really, was the “well” meant, and how could these avail themselves of it?

thing." They needed that "well" to be opened. In fact, the "house of David" and the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" represented their whole nation. The whole nation needed that "well" with its cleansing water, and they could avail themselves of this divine provision when they came up to Jerusalem for their annual festivals.

⁷ When was that "well" opened to the "house of David" and the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" and to the nation whom these represented? This was after the One whom they "pierced through" to the death on the impalement stake outside the walls of Jerusalem on Passover Day of 33 C.E. was resurrected from the dead. This enabled him to ascend to heaven and enter into the presence of Jehovah God and present to him the sin-atonement value of his shed blood. Thereafter on the festival day of Pentecost, Sivan 6 of 33 C.E., Jehovah God used the sin-atonement Messiah, Jesus Christ, to pour out the holy spirit upon his faithful disciples in Jerusalem, about 120 of them, to begin with. Later, that same day, about three thousand Jews confessed their guilt at having shared in the killing of the Messiah, Jesus, and they got baptized in water to become his disciples and they, too, were baptized with the holy spirit.—Acts 1:2-5, 15; 2:1-36.

⁸ When, now, the Christian apostle Peter said to those thousands of conscience-stricken Jews, "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit," what did that mean? (Acts 2:37, 38) It meant that it was "that day" foretold in Zechariah 13:1. It meant that the "well" had been opened "to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for an abhorrent thing." Could there have been an "abhorrent thing" greater than that of instigating and sharing in the violent death of the Messiah, Jesus? Likely quite a number of Jews among those thousands of Jews had looked upon the

7. When was that "well" opened up to the "house of David" and the "inhabitants of Jerusalem," and with what results at the start?

8, 9. (a) What did Peter's counsel to those thousands of conscience-stricken Jews on the day of Pentecost mean, as respects the "well"? (b) What assurance of this did Peter give later to Jews at the temple?

impaled body of Jesus Christ when it was “pierced through” by the spear of the Roman soldier guard. (John 19:37) But even such an “abhorrent thing” the water from that opened “well” could cleanse away. Peter gave assurance of this when he later said to Jews at the temple in Jerusalem:

⁹ “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers also did. But in this way God has fulfilled the things he announced beforehand through the mouth of all the prophets [including Zechariah 12:10], that his Christ would suffer. Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the person of Jehovah and that he may send forth the Christ appointed for you, Jesus.”—Acts 3:17-20.

¹⁰ That was in the year 33 C.E., but even down to the year 56 C.E. the apostle Paul under inspiration pointed out that only a remnant of the natural, circumcised Jews looked to the “pierced through” Messiah, Jesus, in faith and availed themselves of the “well” of cleansing waters: “At the present season also a remnant has turned up according to a choosing due to undeserved kindness.” (Romans 11:5; 9:27, 28) In the year 70 C.E. Jewish Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman legions and she ceased to be available for an application of Zechariah 13:1 to her literally, and her “house of David” became lost to identification by means of genealogical records, for these became lost.

¹¹ However, there is a parallel fulfillment of Zechariah 13:1 to the remnant of spiritual Israelites, who have to do with the “heavenly Jerusalem,” the “city of the living God.” During the first world war of 1914-1918 C.E., the remnant of spiritual Israelites came under Babylonish bondage and proved to be guilty of spiritual shortcomings and uncleanness. In the year 1919 there came a liberation of them from the organization of Babylon the Great and her political, military

10. According to Paul, how many natural Jews availed themselves of that “well,” and how long was Jerusalem with her “house of David” seemingly the literal location of that “well”?

11. Parallelwise, when did a remnant of spiritual Israelites come upon the scene, and what did they appreciate as respects God’s anger toward them (Isaiah 12:1, 2)?

paramours. Then they began to appreciate and discern the application of the words of Isaiah 12:1, 2: "And in that day you will be sure to say: 'I shall thank you, O Jehovah, for although you got incensed at me, your anger gradually turned back, and you proceeded to comfort me. Look! God is my salvation. I shall trust and be in no dread; for Jah Jehovah is my strength and my might, and he came to be the salvation of me.' "* So now, as in Zechariah's time, there was a restored remnant, liberated from Babylon the Great and devoting themselves to the building up of Jehovah's pure worship at his spiritual temple.

¹² This restored anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites needed to be cleansed from all "sin" and any "abhorrent thing" that had attached to them during their bondage under Babylon the Great and her worldly paramours. As something suited to their spiritual needs then, the "well" of purifying water was opened up to them by the merciful Jehovah, in that liberation year of 1919 C.E. At once they began to avail themselves of the cleansing water of that "well." Then, in a spiritual way, was fulfilled the divine promise in Ezekiel 36:24, 25: "And I will take you out of the nations and collect you together out of all the lands and bring you in upon your soil. And I will sprinkle upon you clean water, and you will become clean; from all your impurities and from all your dungy idols I shall cleanse you." During their spiritual bondage in Babylon the Great, the remnant had touched the dead things of the war-mad world; and now it was as if Jehovah through Christ were sprinkling the repentant remnant with the "water for cleansing," mixed with the ashes of the slaughtered red cow.—Numbers 19:1-13.

¹³ This was required in the case of all the repentant, restored members of the remnant of spiritual Israel.

* See *The Watch Tower* under date of June 1, 1928, and its leading article entitled "His Name Exalted," with Isaiah 12:4 as its theme text.

12. (a) When was a "well" of purifying waters opened up to them, and why? (b) How was the prophecy of Ezekiel 36:24, 25 thus fulfilled? 13. Among those restored spiritual Israelites, who among them needed to be cleansed, to correspond with the "house of David" and the "inhabitants of Jerusalem," and why so?

There were none too high in importance or responsibility, resembling the "house of David," nor any too ordinary or commonplace and numerous, resembling the "inhabitants of Jerusalem," to be excused from this cleansing by means of the water from the "well" of Jehovah's provision. The general governing body of the remnant of spiritual Israel, and also the official elders as overseers of the local congregations of these spiritual Israelites needed to be cleansed just the same as did the dedicated, baptized members of their congregations. (Acts 20:17-28; 14:23; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 4:14; Titus 1:5-9) There was a community uncleanness among them. In preaching, teaching and daily living they were obliged to be clean in their restored spiritual estate. In line with keeping themselves unspotted from this world, they were brought to the position of maintaining strict Christian neutrality toward the violent conflicts of the nations that heaped up dead corpses.—James 1:27; John 15:18, 19; 17:14.

LOYALTY TO GOD TRANSCENDS FAMILY TIES

¹⁴ "That day" in which the "well" is opened up "for sin and for an abhorrent thing" is also a day for testing the degree of one's loyalty to God. The remnant that was restored from Babylon in 537 B.C.E. was forewarned of this. In describing how loyal to Him his worshipers must be and would even be, the Sovereign Lord God proceeded to say further to his prophet Zechariah:

¹⁵ "And it must occur in that day," is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, "that I shall cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they will no more be remembered; and also the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness I shall cause to pass out of the land. And it must occur that in case a man should prophesy anymore, his father and his mother, the ones who caused his birth, must also say to him, "You will not live, because falsehood is what you have spoken in the name

14, 15. (a) "That day" must be a time also for testing what quality toward Jehovah? (b) In Zechariah 13:2, 3, what guiding illustration of this did Jehovah give?

of Jehovah." And his father and his mother, the ones who caused his birth, must pierce him through because of his prophesying.'"—Zechariah 13:2, 3.

¹⁶ As regards our time since the year 1919 C.E., Jehovah of armies is here speaking about the spiritual estate of his restored remnant of spiritual Israelites. Because this God, who requires exclusive devotion to himself, has caused the "names of the idols" to pass out of the "land" of their relationship with Him, they now refuse to worship the "wild beast" out of the sea and also the "image" of that wild beast. Or, if we say it plainly without the use of those Bible symbols of political institutions, the spiritual Israelites refuse to worship the political state as a whole on a world scale and also the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations. In this way they avoid suffering the divine penalty for carrying the "mark" of the "wild beast." (Revelation 13:1-18; 14:9, 10) Because they have "approached a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem" and they are "enrolled in the heavens," their "citizenship exists in the heavens." (Hebrews 12:2, 23; Philippians 3:20) So they do not yield themselves to the delirium of earthly nationalism. They do not render any worshipful gestures or attitudes to nationalistic idols. Idol names are not remembered. The loyal spiritual Israelites praise the name of Jehovah as the true God, in heartfelt, full allegiance to Him.

¹⁷ Jehovah has also caused the false prophets and "spirit of uncleanness" to pass out of the spiritual estate of his restored remnant. Jesus Christ forewarned us concerning this "conclusion of the system of things" that "false Christs and false prophets will arise and will give great signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the chosen ones." (Matthew 24:3, 4, 24, 25) The apostle John warned: "Beloved ones, do not believe every inspired expression [or, every spirit], but test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate

16. What is the "land" out of which Jehovah has cut off the "names of the idols," and what has this resulted in among the spiritual Israelites of today?

17. In view of what warnings of Jesus Christ and the apostle John was it timely for Jehovah to cause false prophets to pass out of the "land"?

with God, because many false prophets have gone forth into the world.” (1 John 4:1) Accordingly, there would be need among the restored remnant of spiritual Israelites to guard against false prophets invading or rising up in the midst of their spiritual estate on earth.

¹⁸ How, then, did Jehovah keep their “land” or spiritual estate pure in worship by fulfilling his promise: “Also the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness I shall cause to pass out of the land”? (Zechariah 13:2) It was by causing any wrong understandings of the Bible prophecies that had been entertained before the remnant’s reinstatement in their “land” in 1919 C.E. to be corrected. The “time of the end,” the “conclusion of the system of things,” that began in 1914 at the end of the Gentile Times was God’s appointed time for the fulfillment of many prophecies. These could not be understood until they were just about to be fulfilled or after they had been fulfilled. So in the light of all that was taking place since 1914 the reinstated remnant looked anew into the prophecies that God had reserved for the “time of the end” for their fulfillment. (Daniel 12:4; Revelation 10:6, 7) This included a restudy of the books of Ezekiel and Revelation, an explanation of which had been attempted and published in July of 1917 in the book entitled “The Finished Mystery.” Thus the restored remnant heeded the words:

¹⁹ “We have the prophetic word made more sure; and you are doing well in paying attention to it as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and a daystar rises, in your hearts. For you know this first, that no prophecy of Scripture springs from any private interpretation. For prophecy was at no time brought by man’s will, but men spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit.”—2 Peter 1:19-21.

²⁰ Any attempted interpretation of prophecy, if it proved to be incorrect in the light of historic events and the clearer understanding of the Bible, was cor-

18, 19. (a) What did Jehovah’s causing the false prophet to pass out of the land require the reinstated remnant of spiritual Israel to do?
(b) What counsel of the apostle Peter concerning prophecy did they heed?

20. How, figuratively speaking, did fleshly parents pierce their son through for prophesying falsely?

rected, regardless of who had offered the interpretation. Loyalty to God and to his inspired Word was the issue here to be met. So, as an illustration of the loyalty required, even if a fleshly son should offer a wrong interpretation of divine prophecy and should persist in it, like a false prophet, then his own fleshly parents in their loyalty to God would have nothing further to do with him on a religious basis. Christian parents could not do as under the Mosaic Law covenant, namely, have him put to death; but they could pronounce him spiritually dead to themselves in spite of their parenthood of him physically. In this way, figuratively speaking, they "must pierce him through because of his prophesying." (Zechariah 13:3; compare Deuteronomy 13:1-5.) With their full consent, such a false prophet would be expelled, disfellowshipped, from the Christian congregation. By such loyalty on the part of all members of the restored remnant, the "prophet" of falsehood would be made to pass out of their "land."

²¹ Yes, too, the "spirit of uncleanness" would thus be made to pass out of their spiritual "land." If that spirit were an inspired expression of uncleanness by a would-be prophet or was any tendency, trend, or inclination to uncleanness, it would be disapproved and resisted by the loyal ones. As a consequence any uncleanness as to religious teaching or as to moral behavior would be forced to pass out, under the driving force of God's holy spirit. The God-given spiritual estate must be maintained as a "land" where clean, Scriptural living is carried on. Persons spiritually and morally unclean must be disfellowshipped therefrom.—2 Corinthians 6:14 to 7:1; compare Deuteronomy 13:6-18.

RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY EXPOSED

²² Jehovah, the God of the true prophets, will put all false prophets to shame either by not fulfilling the false prediction of such self-assuming prophets or by having

21. How, too, was the "spirit of uncleanness" made to pass out of their spiritual "land"?

22, 23. (a) How does Jehovah put the false prophets to shame? (b) How does Jehovah describe the false prophets trying to hide their reason for feeling shame?

His own prophecies fulfilled in a way opposite to that predicted by the false prophets. False prophets will try to hide their reason for feeling shame by denying who they really are. They will try to avoid being killed or being pronounced spiritually dead by Jehovah's loyal worshipers. He foretold this by having his true prophet Zechariah continue on to say:

²³ "And it must occur in that day that the prophets will become ashamed, each one of his vision when he prophesies; and they will not wear an official garment of hair for the purpose of deceiving. And he will certainly say, 'I am no prophet. I am a man cultivating the soil, because an earthling man himself acquired me from my youth on.' And one must say to him, 'What are these wounds on your person between your hands?' And he will have to say, 'Those with which I was struck in the house of my intense lovers.'"—Zechariah 13:4-6, NW; JB; NE; NAB; contrast Amos 7:14-17.

²⁴ Thus Jehovah foretold that his people, in their "land" of restoration, would be so well instructed with his Word and would be so loyal to Him and His true prophecies that they would refuse to be friends and intense lovers of any false prophet. If they did not kill him, then they would discipline him and strike him so hard in their indignation that visible wounds and scars would result. Such marks on his person, yes, on his breast which would be partly exposed, would betray his identity in spite of the fact that he had discarded official garments that he had assumed to wear as a *bona fide* prophet of Jehovah God. From whom had he got such scar-producing wounds? From his intense lovers, whether these were his own fleshly parents or his intimate associates. However, their intense loyalty to Jehovah as the God of true prophecy would be stronger than their till-then intense love for a deceptive prophet. They would place love of God and his inspired Word above personal friendships with fleshly relatives or associates. Such a course would cause "the prophets

24. The scar-producing wounds on the deceptive prophet were admitted by him to be inflicted by whom, and what would this indicate as to loyalty to God in comparison with attachment to fleshly loved ones?

and the spirit of uncleanness" to pass out of the "land" of Jehovah's repatriated people.

²⁵ This course of supreme loyalty to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has been the one adopted by the anointed remnant since 1919 C.E. This has resulted in the dis-fellowshipping or excommunicating of religious apostates or rebels from the theocratic organization that Jehovah the heavenly Theocrat has established among his obedient remnant. The loyal remnant have found out that it is not the mere "official garment of hair," not a professional uniform or type of dress, that makes a true prophet of the one living and true God. That is why they have left Babylon the Great, including Christendom, with its distinctively garbed religious priests, preachers, monks and nuns. What makes a true prophet of Jehovah today is his true Christian personality as his identification and his loyal adherence to Jehovah's Word and its prophecies. It is no wonder, then, that Jehovah's witnesses while acting as ministers of God's Word wear plain business suits or the regular attire of the common people. So the loyal remnant are willing to brush aside intense love for close associates and to inflict spiritual "wounds" upon these in disapproval and rejection of apostates. This has kept their theocratic "land" a spiritual realm of clean godly living.

STRIKING THE SHEPHERD CAUSES A SCATTERING

²⁶ Jehovah's greatest prophet on earth was struck and wounded to the death, but this was for his proving to be a true prophet of the Most High God down to the end. (Deuteronomy 18:15-22; Acts 3:13-23) His violent death caused a short-time scattering of his disciples who were loyal to him. The true prophet Zechariah was used to foretell this, for God went on to say to him: "'O sword, awake against my shepherd, even against the able-bodied man who is my associate,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies. 'Strike the shepherd, and let

25. This course of supreme loyalty to Jehovah has been adopted by whom and since when, and how has this affected their spiritual "land"?
26. (a) As a prophet, Jesus Christ was struck and wounded for what reason? (b) How did Jehovah foretell this through the prophet Zechariah?

those of the flock be scattered; and I shall certainly turn my hand back upon those who are insignificant.' ”
—Zechariah 13:7.

²⁷ Certain modern Bible translators would apply those words to the “useless shepherd,” the “valueless shepherd,” by transferring the words of Zechariah 13:7-9 and attaching them to Zechariah 11:17. (See translation by Moffatt, *An American Translation, The New English Bible*.) But we shall make no mistake if we take the application of the words of Zechariah 13:7 as made by Jehovah’s greatest Prophet on earth, Jesus Christ. It was on the night of the Jewish Passover at Jerusalem, Nisan 14 of 33 C.E. Jesus had just celebrated the Passover supper and thereafter had inaugurated the Lord’s Supper (or, Evening Meal), and was now on his way with his eleven faithful apostles to the Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives. At this point we read the record:

²⁸ “Then Jesus said to them: ‘All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night, for it is written, “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered about.” But after I have been raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.’ ”
—Matthew 26:31, 32; Mark 14:27, 28.

²⁹ Did the Great Prophet Jesus make a true application of the words taken from Zechariah 13:7? Shortly afterward that same Passover night the “sword” of warfare did awake against Jehovah’s true Shepherd, even against the able-bodied man who was His earliest and closest associate, Jesus Christ his Son. This was his only-begotten Son, “the firstborn of all creation,” “the beginning of the creation by God.” (John 3:16; Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14) Before his birth as a human creature, he had enjoyed spiritual life with Jehovah God in heaven and had associated with his heavenly Father when He created all other things, Jehovah

27, 28. To avoid the mistake made by some modern Bible translators, whose application of Zechariah 13:7 will we correctly accept, and according to what record thereof?

29. (a) In awaking against Jesus Christ, how was it that the sword was awaking against Jehovah’s Shepherd as “the able-bodied man who is my associate”? (b) Why could Jehovah have confidence in Jesus Christ when calling for the sword to awake against him?

using his only-begotten Son as his agent in doing so. (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-18) Therefore, Jehovah had the fullest confidence in his Son, even when he was a perfect, able-bodied man on earth. He was convinced that his Son would keep his integrity under warfare by the enemy. In this assurance he called for the martial "sword" of the enemies to "awake" against his Son.

³⁰ Since it was Jehovah who prophetically issued the command to "strike the shepherd," it was as if He himself were striking the shepherd. Hence Jesus could quote the prophetic words of Zechariah 13:7 as if his heavenly Father were saying: "I will strike the shepherd." (See the Greek Septuagint translation in *The Septuagint Bible*, by Charles Thomson.) The crowd that came that Passover night under the guidance of the betrayer Judas Iscariot did come with literal swords and clubs. Jesus did not try to resist the fulfillment of the prophecy. If his heavenly Father had given the command for Jesus now to be struck, then he would submit to it.

³¹ So, when the apostle Peter tried to defend Jesus with a sword, Jesus told him to return the sword to its sheath and commented: "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels? In that case, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that it must take place this way?" Then after Jesus had asked the crowd why they had come out against him, a peaceful, public preacher, "with swords and clubs as against a robber," he added: "But all this has taken place for the scriptures of the prophets to be fulfilled." At this point the scripture of Zechariah was not all fulfilled. A further part came true, when, as the record states: "Then all the disciples abandoned him and fled." In that way "those of the flock" were scattered.—Matthew 26:51-56; Mark 14:47-50; John 18:1-9.

30. Why did Jesus quote Zechariah 13:7 as if Jehovah were doing the striking, and why did Jesus not resist being struck?

31. What question did Jesus ask after telling Peter to sheathe his sword that had been drawn in defense, and what further part of Zechariah 13:7 now came true?

³² Jesus had correctly applied the prophecy. That night when he as the Fine Shepherd was struck with the "sword," his sheep did become scattered, thus being stumbled in connection with him. But how was the further part of Zechariah 13:7 fulfilled: "And I shall certainly turn my hand back upon those who are insignificant"? This proved to be a merciful and favorable turning back of Jehovah's hand, as in the case of Isaiah 1:25, 26. With his "hand" of applied power Jehovah of armies protected the scattered sheep. These fearful apostles were "insignificant" in comparison with their Fine Shepherd Jesus Christ. Also, from the standpoint of the Jewish world of that day they were "insignificant," not important enough to be taken into custody on that night of Jesus' arrest. Yet not in Jehovah's estimation were they "insignificant," and he turned his compassionate attention to them and protected and preserved them. On the third day therefrom, on Nisan 16, he brought them together again to have the resurrected Jesus appear to them and resume shepherding them.—Luke 24:33-43; John 20:1-29.

³³ At the climax of World War I in 1918 C.E., there was a similar scattering of the sheep of the governmental Shepherd Jesus Christ, whom Jehovah had enthroned in the heavens, in order to "go subduing in the midst of your enemies." (Psalm 110:1, 2) Those earthly enemies had really declared war against the heavenly Shepherd whom Jehovah had appointed to shepherd the world of mankind. Unable to use the "sword" of war directly against Jehovah's governmental Shepherd, they struck at "those of the flock" on earth by using their war powers and measures and arrangements against these "sheep," to scatter them in the hope of separating them permanently, unable to be reorganized. But, as in the first century, Jehovah of armies turned his hand back upon these "insignificant" ones of the remnant of spiritual Israel. Marvelously he protected and preserved

32. Who were "those who are insignificant," and how did Jehovah turn his hand back upon them, according to Zechariah 13:7?

33. How did the enemies strike at Jehovah's Shepherd with their "sword" during World War I, with what intent, and how did Jehovah turn his hand back upon the "insignificant" ones?

them, and in the first postwar year of 1919 C.E. he brought them together again in an organized fashion. At this reviving and exalting of them in His service, their seemingly triumphant enemies were astounded and became fearful.—Revelation 11:7-13.

"TWO PARTS" ARE CUT OFF

³⁴ The striking of Jehovah's Shepherd and Associate led to consequences that have affected all mankind, even to this day. A modern-day parallel of it in our twentieth century has had marked effects upon this generation that has been living in this "time of the end," this "conclusion of the system of things." A tremendous part of the world population are being "cut off" from any share in the God-given spiritual estate or "land" of divine favor and blessing. Because of their preoccupation with the material and political and social things of this present system of things, they are indifferent or ignorant as regards the far-reaching prophecy of Zechariah 13:8, 9 that is being fulfilled toward them. Note what it says:

³⁵ "'And it must occur in all the land,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'that two parts in it are what will be cut off and expire; and as for the third part, it will be left remaining in it. And I shall certainly bring the third part through the fire; and I shall actually refine them as in the refining of silver, and examine them as in the examining of gold. It, for its part, will call upon my name, and I, for my part, will answer it.'"

³⁶ Let us remind ourselves that these words were spoken, through the prophet Zechariah, to the repatriated remnant of Israel in the "land" of Judah. That ancient Israelite remnant would typify or prophetically prefigure the appointed remnant of spiritual Israelites in this "time of the end," this "conclusion of the system of things" that began when the Gentile Times ended in 1914 C.E. After the severe trials and bondage experi-

34. From what is a tremendous part of the world population being cut off, and why so?

35. How many "parts" does Zechariah 13:8, 9 say will be "cut off"?

36. Did the fact that the spiritual remnant were liberated and reinstated in their "land" in 1919 C.E. mean that Jehovah was through refining and examining them, and what typical picture shows whether or not?

enced during World War I, the surviving remnant of spiritual Israelites were liberated and reinstated in their God-given spiritual estate or "land" in 1919, in the spring of that meaningful year. The fact that those of this surviving remnant had come through the persecution and afflictions of that first world conflict did not mean that they were now finished with their being tried and examined by the heavenly Refiner Jehovah God. It was not so in the case of the Israelite remnant (including Zechariah) who were liberated from fallen Babylon in 537 B.C.E. They had quite a time getting the second temple of Jehovah completed at Jerusalem, first by the year 515 B.C.E. It has been correspondingly so with the remnant of spiritual Israel since 1919.

³⁷ The prophet Malachi, who prophesied in the land of Judah about sixty years after Zechariah lived, foretold that Jehovah, accompanied by his "messenger of the covenant," would come to his temple. There He would sit "as a refiner and cleanser of silver" and he would "cleanse the sons of Levi." Why? So as to bring about a restoration of the pure worship of the true God at his temple. Then, just as predicted by Malachi, "They will certainly become to Jehovah people presenting a gift offering in righteousness. And the gift offering of Judah and of Jerusalem will actually be gratifying to Jehovah, as in the days of long ago and as in the years of antiquity."—Malachi 3:1-4; written about 443 B.C.E.

³⁸ There would be more to it than the cleansing of the sons of Levi as temple functionaries, in order to make the "land" of his restored people a land of clean, godly living. Jehovah also said: "'And I will come near to you people for the judgment, and I will become a speedy witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against those swearing falsely, and against those acting fraudulently with the wages of a wage worker, with the widow and with the fatherless boy, and those turning away the alien resident, while they have not feared me,' Jehovah of armies has said. 'For I am Je-

37. What did Malachi prophesy about sixty years later concerning Jehovah's refining work and the restoring of pure worship at His temple?

38. What more would there be to it besides the cleansing of the sons of Levi, in order to cleanse the land?

hovah; I have not changed. And you are sons of Jacob [Israel]; you have not come to your finish. . . . Return to me, and I will return to you,' Jehovah of armies has said."—Malachi 3:5-7.

³⁹ There was a first-century fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy at the time that the Messiah Jesus was present in the flesh among the nation of Israel. (Matthew 11:7-10; Mark 1:11, 12; Luke 7:24-27) There should likewise be a further fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy after Jesus Christ was enthroned in the heavens in the year 1914 C.E. and thus became present in his kingdom. At the due time thereafter Jehovah God, accompanied by him as "the messenger of the covenant," must have come to his spiritual temple for the judgment of all his worshipers there, including those who were merely professing to worship Him. Certainly Jehovah must have been at his spiritual temple as the Supreme Judge by the year 1919, when he liberated the spiritual Israelites from Babylon the Great and restored them to their "land" or God-given spiritual estate on earth.

⁴⁰ In harmony with the prophetic picture, Jehovah would act as a refiner of his professed people. He would clear away those who were like dross. He would treasure and keep those who were like pure precious metal, like clarified silver and gold. So from 1919 C.E. onward it would be the time for certain ones to be cut off from the "land" that was to be inhabited by his restored people. Spiritually speaking, such "cut off" ones must "expire" as far as vital relationship with Jehovah is concerned.

⁴¹ Who, then, are the "two parts in it" that are "cut off and expire"? (Zechariah 13:8) This is something for the reigning King Jesus Christ as the "messenger of the covenant" to indicate for us. This has to do with the "conclusion of the system of things," the "time of the end" in which we have been living since 1914.

39. Was there a fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy in the first century C.E., and what indicates whether there should be any fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy since 1914 C.E.?

40. How did Jehovah act like a Refiner of precious metal, and who were due to be "cut off" from 1919 C.E. onward?

41. In his parable of the sower, what did Jesus say about the cutting off of some?

(Daniel 12:4; Matthew 24:3-14; 28:20) What did Jesus say about this critical period? In explaining the parable of the sower he said:

"The sower of the fine seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; as for the fine seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; but the weeds are the sons of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels. Therefore, just as the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be in the conclusion of the system of things. The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will collect out from his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and persons who are doing lawlessness, and they will pitch them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be. At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matthew 13:37-43.

⁴² That parabolic illustration foretold a cutting off of a large part in the conclusion of the system of things, where we are now living since 1914 C.E. The part cut off during this time is the symbolic weeds, who picture the "sons of the wicked one," Satan the Devil, the "enemy" who sowed such weeds. They were for a long time mistaken for being symbolic wheat, mistaken for being the "sons of the kingdom," that is to say, anointed Christians with a call to the heavenly kingdom. They pretended to be Christians, and so they were confused with the true anointed Christians who are heirs of the Kingdom. But their development to what they really are in this time of the "harvest" has proved them to be "weeds," imitation Christians, who, like the Devil their sower, are enemies of the Kingdom. Rightly, they are "cut off" from association with the "wheat" class. The heavenly angels, as "reapers," are the ones used to cut them off. These pitch the "weeds" into the "fire" and such weeds will not come through that "fire." Their false identity is destroyed, and finally they themselves also.

⁴³ However, there is another "part" or class that is

42. Who specifically are those symbolic "weeds," and from what are they cut off, and by whom?

43. In his prophecy on the "sign" of the conclusion of the system of things, how did Jesus describe the harvest of the chosen ones, and thereafter whose cutting off did he foretell?

"cut off" in this "conclusion of the system of things." Jesus Christ foretold this "part" or class in his marvelous prophecy regarding the "sign" of his presence and of the conclusion of the system of things. (Matthew 24:3) In this prophecy he tells of the "harvest," which history shows began in the year 1919 C.E., and he said: "He will send forth his angels with a great trumpet sound, and they will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from one extremity of the heavens to their other extremity." (Matthew 24:31) Then, toward the middle of this prophecy, he said:

"On this account you too prove yourselves ready, because at an hour that you do not think to be it, the Son of man is coming.

"Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings.

"But if that evil slave should say in his heart, 'My master is delaying,' and should start to beat his fellow slaves and should eat and drink with the confirmed drunkards, the master of that slave will come on a day that he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know, and will punish him with the greatest severity and will assign him his part with the hypocrites. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be."—Matthew 24:44-51; compare with this Luke 12:42-46 with its similar parable.

⁴⁴ Here it is the "evil slave" who is "cut off," he being assigned his part, not with the fellow slaves of his master, but with the hypocrites, with the unfaithful ones, after he has been punished with the greatest severity. Just as the "faithful and discreet slave" pictures a class of anointed Christians who are actually in the household of the Master Jesus Christ as his "domestics," so that "evil slave" pictures a class. This class of Christians, unlike the "weeds," was anointed with God's spirit and was a part of the Master's household, he being a fellow slave therein. However, this class turns unfaithful, becomes self-seeking, loses self-control over its appetites, mistreats fellow slaves in an abuse of power

44. What class, then, does that "evil slave" picture, and why is that class cut off, and from what?

and authority, and becomes careless and indifferent toward the matter of having to account with its Master at his coming. Therefore, during this "conclusion of the system of things," this time of his second and invisible "presence," as King, he cuts this "evil slave" class off. He disfellowships them to the religious hypocrites and to the unfaithful ones. There they expire.

⁴⁵ Thus "two parts" or the majority of those professing to be Christians at this time are cut off from the "land" or God-given spiritual estate of Jehovah's restored remnant. But the Sovereign Lord God has brought a "third part," a minority of those professing to be heirs of God's heavenly kingdom, through the "fire" of testing and examining as to their faith, personality and works. These have humbly submitted to the refining process as applied by the great Refiner, although it has been trialsome. To endure the figurative heat, they have had to call upon Jehovah's name, and he has answered them according to the sincerity of their hearts.

⁴⁶ In fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 13:9, the heavenly Supervisor of his "land" has not cut off this "third part" from the God-given spiritual estate of his restored remnant. He has said, by his evident favor toward them and by his marvelous dealings with them as His witnesses: "It is my people." In turn, the faithful anointed remnant has said: "Jehovah is my God." Outstandingly so since July 26, 1931, when those of this anointed remnant embraced the name "Jehovah's witnesses." They have remained active on their spiritual "land" to this day, praising their God.

⁴⁷ It is to this "third part" that has been left remaining in this spiritual "land" that the "ten men out of all the languages of the nations" attach themselves, taking hold of the skirt of these faithful spiritual Jews or Israelites. To these the international "great crowd"

45. Thus how many "parts" have been "cut off," and who have been brought through the "fire," and why have they called upon God's name?

46. What has Jehovah said to this "third part," and how, and what has this "part" said in response?

47. Who is it out of all the nations that attach themselves to the "third part" to join in worship at Jehovah's temple?

as pictured by the "ten men" are saying: "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people." (Zechariah 8:20-23) In increasing numbers, by the tens of thousands in a year, these associate themselves with the anointed remnant on their "land" and worship Jehovah at his temple.—Revelation 7:9-15.

CHAPTER

21

THEOCRACY TRIUMPHS OVER ALL THE NATIONS

FROM being the victim of international attack to being the religious center sought out by all nations—this is the theme of the glorious concluding chapter of Zechariah's prophecy! Such a marvelous metamorphosis did not take place with earthly Jerusalem in the year 70 C.E. In that year the feet that stood upon the Mount of Olives that overlooks Jerusalem from the east were feet of the Tenth Legion of the four Roman legions under General Titus that surrounded the doomed city. It was not half of the city that went forth into exile, but the entire city and its temple were destroyed, 1,100,000 Jews perishing during the siege of the city, and 97,000 Jewish survivors were led off as captives to be scattered to the ends of the earth, "into all the nations." (Luke 21:20-24) That certainly was not the fulfillment of the heart-gripping prophecy of the Most High God as stated in Zechariah 14:1-4:

² "Look! There is a day coming, belonging to Jehovah, and the spoil of you will certainly be apportioned out in the midst of you. And I shall certainly gather all the

1. Instead of the fulfillment of the last chapter of Zechariah's prophecy upon it, what was the experience of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives in 70 C.E.?

2. According to Zechariah 14:1-4, who were to be gathered against Jerusalem, was the city to be destroyed, and whose feet were to stand upon the Mount of Olives?

nations against Jerusalem for the war; and the city will actually be captured and the houses be pillaged, and the women themselves will be raped. And half of the city must go forth into the exile; but as for the remaining ones of the people, they will not be cut off from the city. And Jehovah will certainly go forth and war against those nations as in the day of his warring, in the day of fight. And his feet will actually stand in that day upon the mountain of the olive trees, which is in front of Jerusalem, on the east; and the mountain of the olive trees must be split at its middle, from the sunrising and to the west. There will be a very great valley; and half of the mountain will actually be moved to the north, and half of it to the south."

³ In those stirring words of prophecy the pronoun "you" is in the feminine gender, in the Hebrew text, and it therefore refers to the city. But not in actuality to the earthly city of Jerusalem, either in the days of Jesus' apostles or in our twentieth century. Those divine words are addressed to a higher city, to "a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem," to which the Christian congregation of spiritual Israelites has approached. (Hebrews 12:22) But how can that be? How can Jehovah of armies gather all the earthly nations against the "heavenly Jerusalem," and this city be captured by them and its houses be pillaged, its women be raped, and half of the city go off into the exile?

⁴ Let us recall to mind what was represented by the ancient Jerusalem down to the days of Christ's apostles. Remember Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not swear at all, neither by heaven, because it is God's throne; . . . nor by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King." (Matthew 5:34, 35) Down till the year 607 B.C.E., "Jehovah's throne" used to be there in Jerusalem, it being a material throne occupied by an anointed royal descendant of David with whom Jehovah made a covenant for an everlasting kingdom in

3. To whom does the Hebrew feminine pronoun "you" apply, and what questions does this therefore raise?

4. In his Sermon on the Mount, what did Jesus call Jerusalem, and to what did earthly Jerusalem renounce its right at the time of his triumphal ride into it?

his family line. In the year 33 C.E., when Jesus, the spirit-anointed descendant of King David, rode in a triumphal procession into Jerusalem, that city did not want him as King. Thus the earthly Jerusalem renounced its right to have the Permanent Heir of King David sit upon a royal throne within it. Its Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin, had Jesus Christ put to death on an execution stake just outside the walls of Jerusalem. —Matthew 21:1-43.

⁵ Was the divine promise of an everlasting kingdom in the royal line of David to fail because of this violent death of David's spirit-anointed Permanent Heir? Impossible! The unbelieving Jews, led by their religious shepherds, took Jesus to be a false Christ. But not so! For on the third day the Almighty God of heaven did the humanly impossible. He raised the real Permanent Heir of King David from the dead, not giving him back his forever-sacrificed fleshly body, but giving him spirit nature, the "divine nature," clothed with immortality. That is the meaning of the Christian apostle Peter's own words: "Even Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God, he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit."—1 Peter 3:18; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:42-45, 53, 54.

⁶ On the fortieth day therefrom this transformed Jesus Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem to the invisible heavenly presence of Jehovah God, to present to the Supreme Judge the ransoming value of his perfect human sacrifice. Ten days later, on Sivan 6 of 33 C.E., or the festival day of Pentecost, Jehovah God used his returned Son Jesus Christ to pour out the holy spirit upon the apostle Peter and over a hundred other waiting disciples assembled in an upper room in earthly Jerusalem. Consequently, under the dynamic force of that outpoured spirit, the apostle Peter said to the crowd of thousands of inquiring Jews:

5. How was God's promise of an everlasting kingdom in the line of David not allowed to fail because of Jesus' violent death?

6. (a) To whose presence did the resurrected Jesus ascend, and what did he do there? (b) How did the apostle Peter's words to the inquiring Jews at Pentecost indicate that the right to have Jehovah's throne in her had passed from earthly Jerusalem?

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that God made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you impaled." (Acts 1:12-15; 2:1-36) Those words signified that the right to have a representative throne of Jehovah occupied by the Permanent Heir of King David had passed from the earthly Jerusalem to the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem."—Matthew 21:42-44.

⁷ None of the nations of earth, either Jewish or Gentile, can dethrone Jesus Christ from his royal seat in the "heavenly Jerusalem." Neither can any nation or gathering of nations actually capture the "heavenly Jerusalem" and pillage it. How, then, can the prophecy of Zechariah 14:2 be applied to the "heavenly Jerusalem" and find a fulfillment in it? How, if at all, has it been fulfilled in the case of the "heavenly Jerusalem"? If so, when?

⁸ Again we must remember that the prophet, God himself, applied it to the "day coming, belonging to Jehovah." (Zechariah 14:1) That spectacular day, the day of Jehovah, has already come. Zechariah 14:3 foretells that Jehovah's day is to be marked by his fighting, his warring; and so this remarkable day in which Jehovah will once again display himself to all the nations as a Warrior must be the one marked by the "war of the great day of God the Almighty." The issue over which that war is to be fought is to be settled at the compelling world situation "that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." Already we can see all the political nations being gathered by diabolical leadings to that location for the unavoidable confrontation. (Revelation 16:13-16) Consequently, that 'day, belonging to Jehovah,' began in the year 1914 C.E., at the end of the "appointed times of the [Gentile] nations" about October 4/5 of that year. At that time there came the "birth" of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom,

7. In view of the Jerusalem involved, what questions arise as to fulfillment of Zechariah 14:2?

8, 9. (a) To what time did Jehovah himself apply that prophecy, and when did that time begin, and why? (b) What announcement was heard in heaven confirming this?

Jehovah's Christian kingdom, in the heavens. Then could be heard up there the announcement:

⁹ "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever."—Revelation 11:15.

¹⁰ Then could be heard the voices of those who uphold that world kingdom of our Lord Jehovah and of his Christ, saying: "We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king. But the nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came, and the appointed time for the dead to be judged, and to give their reward to your slaves the prophets and to the holy ones and to those fearing your name, the small and the great, and to bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Revelation 11:16-18; 12:1-10.

¹¹ For more than three decades the nations had been notified that those "appointed times of the [Gentile] nations" would terminate in the fall of 1914 C.E. (Luke 21:24) The nations did not believe that those "appointed times" of uninterrupted rule of the whole earth by the Gentile nations, from the year 607 B.C.E. onward, would really end in that year of 1914 C.E. Why not? For one thing, because the combined clergy of Christendom, the priests and the preachers of her churches, were not believing it and hence not preaching it. They ridiculed and scorned the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites, who, as International Bible Students, were pointing to the Bible's time schedule and declaring that the "times of the Gentiles" would end in 1914, to usher in an unprecedented "time of trouble" upon all the nations. However, the overwhelming evidence since that epoch-making year proves that the clergy of Christendom were wrong. The Gentile Times did end then.

¹² In defiance of the evidence that began to pile up

10. Also, what were the voices of those who upheld the world kingdom of the Lord Jehovah and his Christ saying because of that?

11. Did the Gentile nations believe that the Gentile Times would end, as predicted, in 1914 C.E., and what was one big reason for their attitude?

12. What, in this connection, could the nations not directly attack, and so what did they attack, in expression of what feeling?

from 1914 onward, the Gentile nations did not want to believe or choose to believe that their term of world power without opposition from any Messianic kingdom of God had ended. They could not undo what had taken place in the "heavenly Jerusalem" in that year. They could not directly attack that invisible heavenly city and its Messianic King, Jesus Christ. But they could attack what represented it on earth. They could attack the anointed remnant of the "congregation of the first-born who have been enrolled in the heavens." They could attack this remnant of "ambassadors substituting for Christ" who were notifying the nations of the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. They could attack this remnant of "heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ." (Hebrews 12:22, 23; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20; Romans 8:16, 17) That is exactly what the war-engulfed nations did. Revelation 11:18 had said, prophetically: "The nations became wrathful." They expressed their wrath by persecuting the anointed remnant.

¹⁸ What the nations did to this remnant of Kingdom ambassadors, Kingdom heirs, enrolled in the heavens, was the same as if done to the "heavenly Jerusalem," where those of the anointed remnant have their "citizenship." (Philippians 3:20) Those nations began to war, not just against the anointed remnant, but against all that they represented and what they preached. Jehovah God the Almighty did not prevent this, for he had foretold it. (Zechariah 14:1, 2) He had foretold: "The city will actually be captured." Was it? As represented by the anointed remnant, it was. There was a confining of many members of the anointed remnant in the military encampments or in prisons. But the nations felt that they had indeed "captured" the spiritual "city" when, during the spring and summer of 1918, they arrested and railroaded off to a federal penitentiary in Atlanta,

13. The nations were in effect attacking the "heavenly Jerusalem" because of what spiritual aspects of the anointed remnant under attack, and when did they think they had 'captured the city'?

Georgia, U.S.A., seven outstanding members of the Governing Body of the anointed remnant.*

¹⁴ The capture of Jerusalem in Palestine some months earlier by British General Allenby, whose troops marched into Jerusalem on December 10, 1917, the next day after its surrender, played no part in fulfilling Zechariah 14:2. Earthly Jerusalem was captured from the Islamic Turks, who certainly do not worship the God with the name Jehovah. The Sovereign Lord Jehovah had decreed the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem of the Jews, and neither before nor after its destruction in the year 70 C.E. did he issue authorization for that earthly city to be rebuilt by his people. What was now of real and foremost importance to him was the higher Jerusalem, the "heavenly Jerusalem." So in the case of an earthly Jerusalem, that was rebuilt in the second century by non-Jewish or Gentile hands, what happened to it in 1917 C.E., or 1948 C.E. or in 1967 C.E. was of no importance and had no connection with the fulfillment of Zechariah 14:1-4.

¹⁵ During World War I, besides imprisonments and detention in military encampments, there were widespread mobbings and mistreatment of members of the anointed remnant who represented the "heavenly Jerusalem." Much of their property was also destroyed. (See *The Golden Age*, No. 27, as of September 29, 1920, featuring "'Distress of Nations': Cause, Warning, Remedy.") The unchristian injustice and brutality that thus occurred corresponded with what Zechariah 14:1, 2

* These members of the Governing Body who were imprisoned were seven in number, four of these being members of the editorial committee of the *Watch Tower* magazine, three of such being also members of the board of directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, one of such being the Society's president, another its secretary-treasurer, another being a coauthor of the book "The Finished Mystery"; besides the foregoing, there was the other coauthor of "The Finished Mystery," a fourth member of the board of directors of the Society, and the Society's office supervisor.—See *The Watch Tower* as of January 15, 1918, pages 18, 23, 178, 194, 222. (Note that not all members of the Society's Board of Directors were on the Editorial Committee nor were all members of the Editorial Committee also directors of the Society.)

14. What happened to earthly Jerusalem in the years 1917, 1948 and 1967 C.E. was of what importance to the fulfillment of Zechariah 14:1-4, and why?

15. Besides such imprisonment and detention, what else occurred during World War I to correspond with mistreatment of the inhabitants of the captured "Jerusalem"?

foretold: "The city will actually be captured and the houses be pillaged, and the women themselves will be raped."

¹⁶ Doubtless, this persecution alienated many members away from the anointed remnant, the enemy thus carrying them into spiritual exile; as it was foretold: "And half of the city must go forth into the exile." What about the further part of the prophecy: "And the spoil of you will certainly be apportioned out in the midst of you"? What the attackers were after was to despoil the anointed remnant of the wealth of influence and popular appeal that the remnant exercised in behalf of the now established kingdom of God. This their attackers did by banning their literature and repressing the activities of them as Kingdom ambassadors.

¹⁷ Despite all the misrepresentation, opposition and persecution at the hands of the attackers, there was a faithful part of the anointed remnant that refused to be alienated, exiled, from the Messianic kingdom of God as now set up in the "heavenly Jerusalem." These are the ones referred to when the prophecy says: "But as for the remaining ones of the people, they will not be cut off from the city." So these are the ones that survived the hardships and trials of the first world war, which the enemies used as a fine occasion to attack the anointed remnant and despoil them of their ambassadorship for Jehovah's Messianic kingdom.

¹⁸ We are not to think, however, that with the close of World War I the prophecy was carried out to the full and there were to be no more mass attacks by the gathered nations. The "heavenly Jerusalem" still remained, and it had a devoted remnant of loyal representatives on earth, to whom the earthly interests of God's Messianic kingdom had been entrusted. As might well be expected, that World War I attack upon them

16. (a) How did some go forth into the exile, as foretold? (b) How was the "spoil" of the city apportioned out in the midst of it according to the prophecy?

17. Who proved to be the "remaining ones" concerning whom it was prophesied: "They will not be cut off from the city"?

18. Was that attack of the gathered nations during World War I the last attack in fulfillment of the prophecy, and what already proves whether or not?

by the gathered nations was not the last attack launched against the "heavenly Jerusalem" and its spiritual citizens on earth. World War II of 1939-1945 proved that. It provided for the embattled nations an excellent opportunity to resume the attack, yes, on even a more massive scale and with greater violence. More plainly than ever, this atrocious war between the earthly nations was for world domination, in defiance of Jehovah's rightful sovereignty of the earth. In fighting for the mastery of God's good earth those nations were in fact fighting against the heavenly government that the Sovereign Lord Jehovah had put in power in the "heavenly Jerusalem." So once again "the nations became wrathful" against the remnant.

¹⁹ The violence and repressive measures against the anointed remnant of Jehovah's Christian witnesses far exceeded what they experienced during the first world war. The persecution flared not just against the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites; it flamed also against those of the "ten men" out of all the languages of the nations who had joined the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel in worship at Jehovah's spiritual temple. (Zechariah 8:20-23) The faithful ones held firmly to their Christian neutrality toward worldly combats and stuck fast to Jehovah's theocratic government as the only rightful government of all the earth. Remarkably, although concentration camps and prisons opened their gates to thousands of uncompromising Christian witnesses of Jehovah in the lands at war, none of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Christian witnesses world wide was imprisoned. Instead of yielding to enemy pressures and arranging to close down their God-given work, the Governing Body planned from 1942 forward to expand the witness to Jehovah's Messianic kingdom to newer regions of the earth, even before peace arrived with its United Nations organization in 1945.

²⁰ Like World War I, so World War II settled nothing.

19. How did the attack on the "city" during World War II compare with that during World War I, and what did the Governing Body, from 1942 forward, plan for the future?

20. Did World War II settle the dominant issue, and what will the nations have in mind in making a final attack on the anointed remnant?

Certainly the issue of world domination has not been settled, but tension over this is mounting among the superpowers. They still rebel against world domination by the Universal Sovereign Jehovah. Resentfully they are against those who proclaim and advocate the world sovereignty of the great Theocrat Jehovah by means of his Messianic kingdom. Those who advocate this are, not the religious churches of Christendom, but the theocratic Christian witnesses of Jehovah. So the time will come, shortly, when all the nations engaged in international rivalry for world domination will decide that Jehovah's Christian witnesses have no right to a place on earth. In blatant rejection of all that suggests God or divine rulership, they will destroy all religious Christendom and all religious pagandom. Then in a do-or-die effort they will hurl their final attack against the surviving Christian witnesses of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Will the nations succeed this time?

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES SPLIT AT ITS MIDDLE

²¹ Under the coming attack by the nuclear-powered nations *en masse*, what chance of survival do the anointed remnant and their fellow proclaimers of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom have? As much of a "chance" as the prophetic Word of God allows them. What "chance" does it allow them? For it says:

²² "And Jehovah will certainly go forth and war against those nations as in the day of his warring, in the day of fight. And his feet will actually stand in that day upon the mountain of the olive trees, which is in front of Jerusalem, on the east; and the mountain of the olive trees must be split at its middle, from the sunrising and to the west. There will be a very great valley; and half of the mountain will actually be moved to the north, and half of it to the south. And you people will certainly flee to the valley of my mountains; because the valley of the mountains will reach all the way to Azel. And you will have to flee, just as you fled

21. What chance of survival will the anointed remnant and their companions have then?

22. What experience does Zechariah 14:3-5 foretell for the Mount of Olives?

because of the earthquake in the days of Uzziah the king of Judah. And Jehovah my God will certainly come, all the holy ones being with him.”—Zechariah 14:3-5.

²³ Since Jerusalem is here symbolic—of the “heavenly Jerusalem”—so also must the “mountain of the olive trees” be. How, then, will what it symbolizes be “split at its middle” and become two mountains, “my mountains,” as Jehovah says? A prophet whom Zechariah may have personally known in ancient Babylon records a prophetic dream that illustrates how this will come about. About the year 605 B.C.E. the king of Babylon had his dream of a manlike image, that, by its four metals and clay, pictured the unbroken succession of world powers from Babylon down to the Anglo-American World Power of today together with all the associated political rulers of our time. Then, some distance away, a large mountain is seen. Without the human hands of any excavators a stone is cut out of this original mountain. Without its being pitched by a human hand, it takes on motion and speeds on its way. Into outer space? No, but toward that metallic image of world domination of political world powers. Without a miss it smashes against the image, striking it upon its feet that are part of iron and part of clay. Instead of splattering to pieces at its impact with those feet, why, believe it or not, it crushes them. Down comes the whole image to the ground. What next? This:

“At that time the iron, the molded clay, the copper, the silver and the gold were, all together, crushed and became like the chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away so that no trace at all was found of them. And as for the stone that struck the image, it became a large mountain and filled the whole earth.”—Daniel 2:1, 31-35.

²⁴ Now just two mountains remain to view—the large mountain filling the whole earth, and the original mountain quite a distance away from the earth and hence not of this earth. This outcome is what all future inhabi-

23. As to how the symbolic “Mount of Olives” is split at the middle, what is the prophecy given by Daniel to which we turn for an illustration?

24. What interpretation of the dream did Daniel give to King Nebuchadnezzar?

tants of our earth face in the realization of this symbolic dream. What does it mean? Listen, as Daniel interprets the dream to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon:

"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite; forasmuch as you beheld that out of the mountain a stone was cut not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the copper, the molded clay, the silver and the gold. The grand God himself has made known to the king what is to occur after this. And the dream is reliable, and the interpretation of it is trustworthy."—Daniel 2:36-45.

²⁵ By this "trustworthy" inspired interpretation we know that the stone mountain that filled the whole earth pictured a permanent kingdom. Consistently, then, the mountain from which the stone was cut out "not by hands" pictured a permanent kingdom. Since it is the "God of heaven" who sets up over all the earth the "kingdom that will never be brought to ruin," that original mountain, which fathers the "stone," pictured God's universal kingdom. It pictured his theocratic rule. The mountain that grew up from the stone and that becomes the only mountain on earth pictures the kingdom of God's Son, Jesus Christ, the Messianic kingdom, which will be the only kingdom in control of the earth after the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon puts an end to the man-made, devil-controlled kingdoms of this present system of things. (Revelation 16:14-16) Thus there will be two symbolic "mountains," two kingdoms, that of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah as the Great Theocrat and that of His Messiah, Jesus, over all the earth. In this way Jehovah, in exercising once again his universal sovereignty, will use the kingdom of his Son as his agency.

²⁶ The divine prophecy through Zechariah concerning

25. What does the original "mountain" picture, and what does the "mountain" that grows up out of the stone picture?

26. What does the Mount of Olives, in its undivided state, symbolize, and how does this compare with the "heavenly Jerusalem"?

"that day" corresponds with the prophetic dream interpreted by Daniel. So the "mountain of the olive trees" to the east of earthly Jerusalem pictures, in its undivided state, the universal kingdom of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Just as the highest eminence of the Mount of Olives rises to a height of 2,963 feet and thus dominates the general level of Jerusalem by more than 400 feet, so Jehovah's universal kingdom dominates the "heavenly Jerusalem" and uses it as a theocratic agency.—Hebrews 12:22.

²⁷ God's universal kingdom never becomes divided against itself. (Matthew 12:25, 26) That is not what is pictured by the splitting of the Mount of Olives "at its middle." Jehovah does not act against his own sovereignty by establishing the Messianic kingdom of his Son. What, then, does this division of the Mount of Olives picture, and when does its division take place?

²⁸ It does not picture a dividing of Jehovah's supremacy, nor the dividing of his universal sovereignty. He always remains the Most High God and the Sovereign Lord of the universe. In harmony with the prophetic dream as interpreted at Daniel 2:44, 45, the splitting of the mountain that is to the east of Jerusalem pictures Jehovah's establishing of a kingdom that is subsidiary to his own universal kingdom, because it is over an area that is really a rebel territory so that Jehovah cannot deal directly with it. It is a kingdom of one who is in the line of earthly King David, and also a kingdom after the manner of that of King-Priest Melchizedek. Hence it is a government not just over King David's earthly domain but also over the whole earth.—Psalm 110:1-4; Hebrews 5:10 to 8:1; Acts 2:34-36.

²⁹ This produces a kingdom of the only-begotten Son of God alongside of and subject to the kingdom of God the Father. And since this secondary kingdom has connections with the earthly kingdom of David, it must

27. Why does the splitting of the Mount of Olives not picture Jehovah's universal kingdom's becoming divided against itself?

28. Does the splitting of the mountain picture the dividing of Jehovah's supremacy and sovereignty, and so what does the splitting of the mountain "at its middle" really picture?

29. So this split produces what kind of a kingdom, and when did this split occur, and why?

take into account the 2,520-year-long Gentile Times that were imposed upon the kingdom of David. Hence that secondary kingdom in the hands of the Messianic King, the Son of God, was first established at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E.—Luke 21:24; Daniel 4:16, 23-25; Hebrews 10:12, 13.

³⁰ This explains why Jehovah speaks of the two mountains that result from the split of the Mount of Olives as being “my mountains.” (Zechariah 14:5) Scripturally the mountain to the north would picture Jehovah’s universal kingdom, and the mountain to the south the Messianic kingdom of his Son. (Psalm 75:6, 7) That this newly produced “mountain” kingdom is subject to and not opposed to Jehovah’s universal kingdom is stated in 1 Corinthians 15:25-28:

“For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing. For God ‘subjected all things under his feet.’ But when he says that ‘all things have been subjected,’ it is evident that it is with the exception of the one who subjected all things to him. But when all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone.”

³¹ That both kingdoms are, from the start, subject to the Sovereign Lord God is set out in the declaration: “And his feet will actually stand in that day upon the mountain of the olive trees, which is in front of Jerusalem, on the east.” And when the symbolic mountain splits, half to the north and half to the south, Jehovah’s feet remain set upon both mountains, “my mountains.” Since the Mount of Olives is hundreds of feet higher than ancient Jerusalem, from a vantage point like this the Most High God, Jehovah, could see what goes on with regard to the “heavenly Jerusalem” as respects its interests in the earth. When, symbolically speaking, Jehovah plants his feet upon the Mount of Olives, it means that he has come. Just as he prophetically said:

30. What does God speak of the two resulting mountains as being, what does each one picture, and what must be said as to opposition of the one to the other?

31. (a) How does the prophecy show that both kingdoms remain subject to Jehovah? (b) His “feet” being there indicates what, and who is the Chief One with whom He comes?

"And Jehovah my God will certainly come, all the holy ones being with him." The Chief One of his heavenly "holy ones" is, of course, his sinless Son, Jesus Christ, whom he makes king over the secondary "mountain" kingdom. (Zechariah 14:5) Such "holy ones" act as Jehovah's executorial forces.

³² "There will be a very great valley; and half of the mountain will actually be moved to the north, and half of it to the south. And you people will certainly flee to the valley of my mountains; because the valley of the mountains will reach all the way to Azel. And you will have to flee, just as you fled because of the earthquake in the days of Uzziah the king of Judah." (Zechariah 14:4, 5) This flight of the repatriated remnant of Jehovah's people is not panicky flight "in order to enter into the holes in the rocks and into the clefts of the crags" or a "saying to the mountains and to the rock-masses: 'Fall over us and hide us from the face of the One seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb.'" (Isaiah 2:20, 21; Revelation 6:15, 16) It will be a flight to God's protective provision, a flight to the very great valley between "my mountains," guarded on the north and on the south by the halves of the symbolic Mount of Olives. Yes, to beneath Jehovah's feet. That valley of divine protection extended from the Kidron Valley overlooked by the eastern wall of Jerusalem all the way eastward to Azel, with plenty of room for fugitives.

³³ In our twentieth century, the flight of the restored remnant of spiritual Israelites began after their liberation from Babylon the Great and her political, military consorts in the spring of 1919 C.E. In Revelation 12:1-14, the flight of God's heavenly "woman" into the wilderness after the birth of the Messianic kingdom and the war in heaven to oust the Devil and his angels has some relationship to the flight of the anointed remnant on earth from 1919 onward. But her

32. (a) What results from the splitting of the mountain, and what advantage is taken of the resulting formation? (b) The fugitives there come under what divine provision?

33. The flight of the remnant began when, and it has some relationship with what flight described in Revelation, chapter twelve, and yet why is it longer?

flight is not the same as theirs; her flight and stay in the wilderness away from the face of the diabolical "dragon" is for only one thousand two hundred and sixty days or three and one-half prophetic "times." It coincides partly with the flight of the anointed remnant, "the remaining ones of her seed, who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Revelation 12:17) But the flight of all those dedicated, baptized ones who become part of the anointed remnant was not over by the end of the woman's 1,260 days. The remnant are still in that symbolic "valley" under protection of Jehovah's universal kingdom and the Messianic kingdom of his Son.

³⁴ When, though, comes fulfillment of this part of the prophecy: "And Jehovah will certainly go forth and war against those nations as in the day of his warring, in the day of fight"? (Zechariah 14:3) It was not in 1914, at the end of the Gentile Times, although the establishing of the Messianic kingdom of the heavens was a step in that direction. But Jehovah of armies has yet a fixed time to go forth to war against those nations that attack the representatives on earth of his "heavenly Jerusalem." Those Gentile nations (including those of Christendom) did launch a vicious attack upon the anointed remnant during World War I and then a more violent and sweeping one during World War II. But their final attack is now being planned for and is yet to come—under the leadership of the foretold "Gog of the land of Magog." (Ezekiel 38:1 to 39:5) Then Jehovah of armies will make that to be their last attack, and he will distinguish himself as a Warrior more gloriously than in any previous 'day of warring,' in any former "day of fight."

THE WAR AND THE EFFECTS OF "THAT DAY"

³⁵ That day of Jehovah's warring against the attacking nations should be the darkest day of their

34. When comes the fulfillment of that part of the prophecy about Jehovah's going forth as in the day of his warring, to fight?

35. How does Jehovah prophecy that that will be the darkest day of all for the attacking nations, and how is the immobilization of the enemies' operational things indicated?

existence. He even forecasts such a day for them, saying: "And it must occur in that day that there will prove to be no precious light—things will be congealed." (Zechariah 14:6) "And it hath come to pass, in that day, the precious light is not, it is dense darkness." (Yg) "And it shall come to pass in that day there shall be no light, but cold and ice." (Syriac, *Lamsa*) No heavenly light of divine favor and loving warmth will shine upon them. Artificial lights of modern science will not remove the darkness of divine disfavor. Operational things will be immobilized, stiffened with cold, as if congealed. This reminds us of Jehovah's questions to the patriarch Job: "Have you entered into the storehouses of the snow, or do you see even the storehouses of the hail, which I have kept back for the time of distress, for the day of fight and war? Out of whose belly does the ice actually come forth, and as for the hoarfrost of heaven, who indeed brings it to birth?" (Job 38:22, 23, 29) Jehovah has natural phenomena at his disposal for fighting.

³⁶ Concerning the lack of light and of warmth on that day, Jehovah of armies says concerning the coming time of "great tribulation" upon all of Babylon the Great as an enemy of the "heavenly Jerusalem" these words: "Look! The day of Jehovah itself is coming, cruel both with fury and with burning anger, in order to make the land an object of astonishment, and that it may annihilate the land's sinners out of it. For the very stars of the heavens and their constellations of Kesil will not flash forth their light; the sun will actually grow dark at its going forth, and the moon itself will not cause its light to shine." (Isaiah 13:9, 10) When Jehovah of armies executes his adverse judgments upon his enemies during this day that belongs to him, there will, as it were, be neither the warm light of the sun nor the cold light of the moon. Such darkness betokens coming destruction!

36. How does Jehovah, through the prophet Isaiah, speak of the darkness of the "great tribulation" upon Babylon the Great, and what will such darkness betoken?

³⁷ How does this which is a cold dark day for the attackers of the "New Jerusalem" result for Jehovah of armies and his theocratic organization? He himself tells us in these words: "And it must become one day that is known as belonging to Jehovah. It will not be day, neither will it be night; and it must occur that at evening time it will become light."—Zechariah 14:7.

³⁸ Does this description mean a twenty-four-hour period of medium light, midway between light and darkness, a twilight? Not for Jehovah of armies and for his "heavenly Jerusalem," not even for those who on earth represent the "heavenly Jerusalem," nor for all those who have fled to the "very great valley" between the two "mountains" of Jehovah. Rather, it means a time period that is not divided between daytime and nighttime. Even at the time when the evening darkness is ordinarily due to fall, it will become, not dark, but light. The whole period will be one of light. Thus, whereas the attacking nations experience death-dealing darkness, Jehovah's faithful worshipers on earth enjoy continuous light of his favor and approval, just as during the ninth plague upon ancient Egypt the Egyptians suffered three days of dense darkness but "for all the sons of Israel there proved to be light in their dwellings." (Exodus 10:23) In this "day" Jehovah sheds increasing light upon his loyal worshipers by increasing their understanding of his inspired written Word.—Proverbs 4:18.

³⁹ What a gloriously bright day this turns out to be for Jehovah of armies, for the victory with which he crowns it results in the vindication of his universal sovereignty, no portion of all the realm of creation being excepted from his sovereignty, not even this comparatively tiny earth! His already "unreachably high" name attains to new heights of universal fame. (Psalm 148:13; Isaiah 12:4) Eternally associated with

37. What will be extraordinary about that day, as foretold in Zechariah 14:7?

38. In what way will that time period of neither day nor night become light at evening time, and for whom?

39. Why is that a day that specially belongs to Jehovah, and how will it result as respects the universal issue that has been under debate for almost six thousand years?

His own personal name will be the Hebrew name Har-Magedon, the world situation at which the war of all wars is fought and won, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty." By means of his Messianic kingdom in the hands of his heavenly Son, whom He has made to be "King of kings and Lord of lords," Jehovah of armies gains this superlative victory. (Revelation 16: 13-16; 19:11-21) He deserves to have this unique day as belonging to Him, for on it and by it he settles forever in His favor the millenniums-old issue of Universal Sovereignty! The infamous rebel who raised this issue almost six thousand years ago, Satan the Devil, loses. So, after his earthly forces lose at Har-Magedon, he and his demons are abyssed!—Revelation 20:1-3.

⁴⁰ What blessings follow, to mankind, during the thousand years during which Satan the Devil and his demons are held prisoners in chains in the abyss! The effects of that victorious "day" are prophetically detailed by the victorious God himself in these words:

⁴¹ "And it must occur in that day that living waters will go forth from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. In summer and in winter it will occur. And Jehovah must become king over all the earth. In that day Jehovah will prove to be one, and his name one. The whole land will be changed like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon to the south of Jerusalem; and she must rise and become inhabited in her place, from the gate of Benjamin all the way to the place of the First Gate, all the way to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel all the way to the press vats of the king. And people will certainly inhabit her; and there will occur no more any banning to destruction, and Jerusalem must be inhabited in security."—Zechariah 14:8-11.

"LIVING WATERS" FOR ALL MANKIND

⁴² With relation to earthly Jerusalem, on which the prophetic picture in Zechariah is based, the "eastern

40, 41. After the abyssing of Satan and his demons, what blessings will follow for Jehovah's worshipers, as foretold in Zechariah 14:8-11?
42. With relation to earthly Jerusalem, what was the eastern sea and what was the western sea, and what do these two seas picture respectively?

sea" would be the Salt Sea or Dead Sea, and the "western sea" would be the Great Sea or Mediterranean Sea. Both of these seas are here used symbolically, evidently symbolic of peoples, as is the case in Revelation 17:15. The Dead Sea is at the lowest spot on earth, 1,291 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, and is utterly devoid of fish or plant life. So it would well picture the countless human dead who are in Sheol, Hades, the common grave of mankind. On the other hand, the Mediterranean Sea teems with fish and plant life and at a higher level. So it would well picture the "great crowd" of Jehovah's worshipers who are associated now with the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel and who survive the "great tribulation" with the remnant. (Revelation 7:9-15) Those of that "great crowd" have inherited from our first human parent Adam the sinfulness and imperfections and the condemnation of death. Of these disabilities they need to be relieved, in order to be able to live forever in God's new system of things.—Romans 5:12.

⁴³ Both symbolic seas will need the "living waters" that will go forth, not from earthly Jerusalem in the Middle East, but from the "heavenly Jerusalem," which is the seat of the Messianic kingdom of Jehovah's dear Son, Jesus Christ. Those symbolic "living waters" are not just fresh, running waters, quenching thirst, but waters imparting life to those to whom they flow forth. Just as the waters flowing forth from the temple of Ezekiel's vision imparted cure and life to the Dead Sea, causing it to abound with fish life, so the "living waters" flowing eastward and westward from the "heavenly Jerusalem" will impart life on earth. (Ezekiel 47:1-12) So those "living waters" compare, also, with the "river of water of life" seen by the Christian apostle John in the vision of the New Jerusalem. (Revelation 21:2 to 22:2) Accordingly they picture all of Jehovah's provisions through his once sacrificed but now reigning Messiah, Jesus, for all mankind to gain eternal life, as made available during the thousand-

43. Those waters flowing east and west compare with the waters seen in what other visions, and so what do such waters picture?

year rule of Jesus Christ over the whole earth.—Revelation 14:1; 20:4-6, 13, 14.

⁴⁴ The "living waters" that flow eastward, evidently through the "very great valley" between the two mountains, down to the Dead Sea convey a resurrection from the dead to an animated, conscious existence here on earth. "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous," said the apostle Paul. (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29) The "living waters" that flow westward to the Mediterranean Sea convey, figuratively speaking, release from the condemnation of death and from the sinfulness and imperfections and weaknesses inherited from the sinner Adam. Were mankind to continue in such things, they would die, for only those absolutely perfect will be justified to eternal life on a Paradise earth. Hence the "great crowd" of Jehovah's loyal worshipers who survive the "great tribulation" with which this system of things ends will need such "living waters." Likewise, those humans, likened to the Dead Sea, who get a resurrection from the dead will, at the start, be like the "great crowd" of survivors. They will be still in the inherited sinfulness, imperfection, weakness and liability to death. They also will need to keep drinking the "living waters."

⁴⁵ "In summer and in winter it will occur." (Zechariah 14:8) Since those "living waters" will not be affected by any dry, rainless season of the year, they will continue flowing all year round, without any drop in the water level. For the thousand years of Christ's reign over mankind they will keep flowing, to benefit all the ransomed dead and all those alive on the Paradise earth. In this way all those on earth will be able to continue drinking until they have been cured and restored to flawless, disease-free human perfection, like that of Adam at his perfect creation in the Garden

44. (a) What will the waters flowing to the symbolic Dead Sea convey to those thus pictured? (b) What will the waters convey to those pictured by the Mediterranean Sea, and how long will such waters have to be partaken of?

45. The flowing of these waters both "in summer and in winter" will allow for what on the part of the eastern sea and western sea classes, and what will be the final result of this, as pictured in Revelation 20:14?

of Eden. When all those of the eastern sea and of the western sea have attained to this glorious estate by loyal obedience to the Messianic kingdom, then will be fulfilled the picture of Revelation 20:14: "And death and Hades were hurled into the lake of fire. This means the second death, the lake of fire." What a blessed provision through the "heavenly Jerusalem"!

⁴⁶ The "heavenly Jerusalem" will then be exalted. It will no longer be like an earthly Jerusalem captured by the attacking nations and pillaged by them and having its population reduced by half of its citizens being taken into exile. (Zechariah 14:1, 2) In her case the prophetic picture must be fulfilled as when the "whole land" round about earthly Jerusalem sank and became like the Arabah, like the Rift Valley through which the Jordan River flows down to the Dead Sea, and, in contrast, the city of Jerusalem rises. True to this picture, the "heavenly Jerusalem" will be exalted as a result of Jehovah's magnificent victory over the attacking nations and she will become the capital of the heavenly Messianic kingdom. Thus she will tower above the earth over which the Kingdom rules. This Messianic kingdom is thus by far superior to the man-made kingdoms of the Gentile nations on earth. So, then, in becoming subject to this higher government, it will be as if the "whole land" on earth subsided to become like the low Rift Valley, "changed like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon to the south of Jerusalem."—Zechariah 14:10.

⁴⁷ The heavenly capital, "heavenly Jerusalem," will become like the former earthly Jerusalem with its protective walls and its well-known gates and tower and royal press vats. Upon the "heavenly Jerusalem" there will be no divine curse, no "banning to destruction" because of any unfaithfulness on the part of its inhabitants. (Revelation 22:3; Zechariah 14:11) The

46. How is the exaltation of the "heavenly Jerusalem" pictured by what happens to earthly Jerusalem and the land round about, and through what does the heavenly Jerusalem become thus exalted?

47. To correspond with the prophecy of Zechariah 14:11, how will the "heavenly Jerusalem" be "inhabited in security"?

heavenly capital will be fully inhabited, fully populated. The entire "congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens" will be there, the complete number of 144,000 spiritual Israelites, united in the heavenly kingdom with the glorified Messiah, Jesus the Son of Jehovah God. (Hebrews 12:22, 23; Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1-4; 20:4-6) As if inside city walls they will dwell in security.

⁴⁸ The attacking nations of earth challenged the kingdom of the Most High God, his universal sovereignty. But finally they learned that his sovereignty was a reality—to their own destruction. Instead of their exercising any further devil-controlled kingdom over the earth, the prophecy will be realized: "And Jehovah must become king over all the earth. In that day Jehovah will prove to be one, and his name one." —Zechariah 14:9.

JEHOVAH THE KING "ONE, AND HIS NAME ONE"

⁴⁹ What does that spell out for all mankind but unity, yes, unity throughout the whole earth among all the inhabitants thereof! One King "over all the earth"—Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign! But, just as King David represented Jehovah when seated on the throne in the earthly Jerusalem, so King David's Permanent Heir, the Messiah Jesus, will represent Jehovah in the "heavenly Jerusalem" as he reigns for a thousand years over redeemed mankind. Thus it will be "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" under which mankind, the living survivors and the resurrected dead, will have the blessed opportunity to gain everlasting life in human perfection on earth transformed into a paradise surpassing all the lovely parks or gardens on earth today.—Revelation 11:15.

⁵⁰ Just as the prophet Moses, away back in the year 1473 B.C.E., said: "Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God

48. What is it that the attacking nations challenge, and what will they learn about it, and with what result for the whole earth?

49. (a) What will their then having one king mean for mankind?

(b) In what way will the government be "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ," and under it mankind will live in what state on earth?

50. At that time, how will Jehovah "prove to be one"?

is one Jehovah. And you must love Jehovah your God," so it will be in that "day" so near at hand: "Jehovah will prove to be one." The reigning Messiah Jesus will uphold and adhere to the worship of that one Most High God, for when he was asked by a Jewish scribe nineteen hundred years ago, "Which commandment is first of all?" Jesus answered: "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah, and you must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.'" (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5; Mark 12:28-30) Christendom's unchristian doctrine of a Trinity of "God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost" will be rejected by all enlightened mankind as being a blasphemous pagan lie.

⁵¹ Also, just as Jehovah is One, not a self-contradictory "trinity in unity," so will his name be one. Nobody in all creation shares that name uncombined.* Just as He said, through his prophet Isaiah: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8) When the prophet Moses first wrote down that divine name he spelled it by four Hebrew consonantal letters, without vowels, namely, יהוה (YHWH). This four-lettered name-spelling (Tetragrammaton) occurs 6,961 times in the inspired Hebrew Scriptures, from Genesis to Malachi.

⁵² Its exact pronunciation is unknown today. For that reason it is pronounced in various ways in English alone; and the way in which other non-Hebrew languages pronounce this Tetragrammaton differs considerably. But in "that day" of Jehovah's kingdom by Messiah He will reveal the exact pronunciation just as he did to Moses. Then there will be just one pronunciation of that holy name by everybody on earth. This

* The name Jesus or Jeshua is a combination name, it being an abbreviation for the Hebrew name Jehoshua, which means "Jehovah Is Salvation."—Numbers 13:16.

51. Does any creature share the divine name in an uncombined form, and how is that name written down in the Hebrew Scriptures?

52. In "that day," how will Jehovah's name prove to be "one" as far as pronunciation is concerned?

will be realized by the bringing of all mankind back to speaking just one language again.

⁵³ Besides worldwide uniformity of pronunciation, there is more to the oneness of that sacred name. That name, used so many thousands of times from its first appearance in Genesis 2:4 to its last appearance in the joyful exclamation "Hallelujah!" in Revelation 19:6, is sufficient in itself to be used in all the many connections where God is involved. That one name thus embraces within itself a host of associations that give us a thorough idea of what God is like. That one name needs no substitute; it needs no replacement. It is not true that at the time of the baptism of Jesus in the year 29 C.E. the name of this Son of God became a 'substitute or a replacement for Jehovah' and that Jesus is the same as Jehovah and hence the name Jehovah does not need to be used anymore. Or, also, that the nameless title "The LORD" or just "God" can be properly used as a substitute for the identifying name Jehovah. That is deceptive reasoning on the part of the religious clergy of Christendom and of Jewry. Their erroneous reasoning will perish with them. In Jehovah's coming new theocratic system of things His name will be just one!

SCOURGE AND CONFUSION UPON THE ATTACKING ENEMIES

⁵⁴ When the nations of earth make their coming final attack upon the "heavenly Jerusalem," they will irreligiously scorn Jehovah's Christian witnesses on earth and their tongues will doubtless abuse and blaspheme that most holy name. But not for long will their tongues wag in their mouths and their eyes look with disdain upon those who are proclaiming the kingdom of the "heavenly Jerusalem." It makes us shudder to hear what will befall those attackers:

⁵³ How else, besides uniformity of pronunciation, does Jehovah's name prove to be "one," due to its occurrence from one end of the Bible to the other?

⁵⁴ 55. Why does it make one shudder to think of what is prophesied to happen to the eyes and tongues of those attacking the heavenly Jerusalem?

⁵⁵ "And this is what will prove to be the scourge with which Jehovah will scourge all the peoples that will actually do military service against Jerusalem: There will be a rotting away of one's flesh, while one is standing upon one's feet; and one's very eyes will rot away in their sockets, and one's very tongue will rot away in one's mouth. And it must occur in that day that confusion from Jehovah will become widespread among them; and they will actually grab hold, each one of the hand of his companion, and his hand will actually come up against the hand of his companion. And Judah itself also will be warring at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about will certainly be gathered, gold and silver and garments in excessive abundance. And this is how the scourge of the horse, the mule, the camel, and the male ass, and every sort of domestic animal that happens to be in those camps, will prove to be, like this scourge." —Zechariah 14:12-15.

⁵⁶ Frightful? Gruesome? Sadistic? Ghoulish? Fiendish? Bible readers in Christendom may express shock at that inspired battle account! But would it not be hypocritical for them to do so? How can they sincerely be shocked, when the so-called "Christian" nations that they so patriotically support now stand prepared to fight the final war with the flaming napalm bombs dropped from airplanes, with liquid fire belched forth from guns, with corrosive chemical gases, with explosives that will blast away a person's face so that the surviving victim needs to wear a mask and be fed intravenously, with nuclear bombs of such enormous power as to make tens of thousands of human creatures disappear into thin air? How can the supporters of such wartime viciousness find fault with Jehovah of armies? Let them rather be shocked, horrified, at themselves!

⁵⁷ As we reflect upon the severity of the "scourge

56. Why could it not be with sincerity that the peoples of Christendom should express shock at the account of that scourge?

57. In reflecting on the severity of the scourge, what is the seriousness of the attack by the nations upon heavenly Jerusalem that we have to take into account?

with which Jehovah will scourge all the peoples that will actually do military service against Jerusalem," we need to bear in mind the seriousness of the action that the peoples and nations are taking. (Zechariah 14:12) In doing military service against the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem," they are striking at the capital organization of the Great Theocrat, the Sovereign of the universe. What brazen impudence could be greater? What defiance could be more extreme, reach to greater heights? What an insult to the highest and greatest Personage in all the realm of existence! Such impudent, defiant, insulting revolvers against the universal sovereignty of the Great Theocrat need to learn to know with whom they are dealing. "For our God is also a consuming fire." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 12:29; 10:31) It is into *his* hands that they are plunging when they hurl themselves in godless military service against what Jehovah says is like "my eyeball."—Zechariah 2:8.

⁵⁸ The strike of the religiously disillusioned nations and peoples will be against that which visibly represents the "heavenly Jerusalem," namely, the anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites "who have been enrolled in the heavens." (Hebrews 12:22, 23) This is indicated when the prophecy says: "And Judah itself also will be warring at Jerusalem." (Zechariah 14:14) With this anointed remnant who are warring spiritually for the interests of Jehovah's theocratic capital city will be the "great crowd" of those individuals out of all nations, tribes and peoples who have taken their stand on the side of Jehovah's theocratic government. (Revelation 7:9-17) Being warriors in defense of what the "heavenly Jerusalem" stands for, they will be spared from the "scourge with which Jehovah will scourge" all the attackers.

58. In what way will the spiritual "Judah" be "warring at Jerusalem," who will be warring alongside of them, and from what will they therefore be spared?

⁵⁹ Whether the "scourge" will be literally as described in the prophecy, or not, silenced will be the mouths that are opened to let out terrifying war cries and threats! Tongues have rotted away. Powers of vision will suddenly go black, so that the fierce-eyed attackers can only strike out blindly against the object of their attack. Eyes have rotted away! Muscles and sinews of highly trained, physically developed warriors will lose strength, resilience, moveableness, as they stand on their feet ready for do-or-die action, not while they are lying on the ground as dead corpses. Flesh that clothes their skeletal structure has rotted away! The scourge hits suddenly, also, at the horses, the mules, the camels, the male asses and any other sorts of domestic animals that are in their military camps. Mobile equipment for the attack is helplessly immobilized! —Zechariah 14:12, 15.

⁶⁰ Terrifying enough—all this! But adding to the terror of this surprising development is the confusion that the Almighty God stirs up among the would-be attackers. Their unitedness of action against the "heavenly Jerusalem" and the warriors of "Judah" is broken up. Like gladiators with a blinding helmet over their heads in a Roman arena on spectacle before crowds of bloodthirsty circus attenders, they grab hands and strike at one another sightlessly. They have lost the vision of their common goal. Personal interests take the ascendancy. Their evolution theory of "the survival of the fittest" takes over and controls them. The death-dealing confusion becomes widespread, as they engage in mutual slaughter of themselves.—Zechariah 14:13.

⁶¹ This is the climax of "that day"! Jehovah has moved into action in order to "war against those nations as in the day of his warring, in the day of fight." (Zechariah 14:3) Memories are stirred up of Jehovah's fight against the horsemen and chariots of the haughty

59. Whether applied literally as described, or not, what will be the effect of the scourge upon the attack forces?

60. What does the widespread confusion cause the attackers to do?

61. (a) What memories are now stirred up of Jehovah's warring in the past, "in the day of fight"? (b) At whose side will He fight in the coming war?

Pharaoh of Egypt at the Red Sea in the days of the prophet Moses! Of Jehovah's discomfiture of the combined forces of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir on the western shore of the Dead Sea in the days of King Jehoshaphat of Judah (936-911 B.C.E.). Of Jehovah by means of his angel striking dead in one night 185,000 Assyrian soldiers under King Sennacherib who threatened Jerusalem in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah! (Exodus 14:1 to 15:21; 2 Chronicles 20:1-26; 2 Kings 18:13 to 19:36) But impressive as were those fights of Jehovah in days of old, far grander in magnitude will be his fight for his universal sovereignty, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" at the approaching world situation called Har-Magedon. (Revelation 16:13-16) There He fights at the right hand of his Messiah, his Son. (Psalm 110:4-6) The recorded preview of the fight says:

⁶² "And the ten horns that you saw mean ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they do receive authority as kings one hour with the wild beast. These have one thought, and so they give their power and authority to the wild beast. These will battle with the Lamb, but, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them. Also, those called and chosen and faithful with him will do so." —Revelation 17:12-14.

⁶³ Thus the political lords and kings of the earth, although giving their power and authority to the United Nations as an organization for maintaining human sovereignty of all the earth, will suffer defeat at the hands of the once-sacrificed Lamb, Jesus Christ the King, and will be destroyed. (Revelation 19:11-21) Thereby Jehovah's sovereignty over all the universe, including this earth, will be eternally vindicated. This divine vindication will, in itself, be the most precious spoils of victory. The greatest issue of all times will have been decisively settled to the satisfaction of all who live in heaven and on earth. The interests of the

62, 63. (a) How does Revelation 17:12-14 describe the fight for victory by Jehovah's Messiah? (b) What will be most precious and most appreciated as the spoils of victory?

pure, true worship of the one living and true God at his spiritual temple will have been preserved for all time. These priceless things the war survivors on earth will appreciate more than all the material spoils that the slain enemies will leave behind in abundance: "and the wealth of all the nations round about will certainly be gathered, gold and silver and garments in excessive abundance."—Zechariah 14:14.

CHAPTER 22

AN INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL IN PARADISE

GLORIOUS in the annals of universal history will be the day when Jehovah's Theocracy triumphs over all the hostile nations of the earth. Tingling from head to foot with joyful excitement will be all the safeguarded worshipers of Jehovah as they behold this universal Theocrat gain the victory of victories in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon.—Revelation 16:13-16.

² All the material goods that the war survivors will gather after the destruction of their international enemies will be put to use in the service of the God-King Jehovah. No wrecked war equipment will be preserved as relics. (Isaiah 2:2-4) It will be a time for construction, not for destruction. The literal earth will doubtless have suffered from the "military service" of the enemies of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom. The selfish ruiners of the earth will themselves have

1. How will Jehovah's worshipers on earth be affected at beholding him gain the victory on "that day"?

2. (a) To what use will the material goods left behind after that victorious war be put? (b) What dying promise concerning the earth did Jesus make when he was dying a sacrificial death on earth?

been brought to ruin, but many effects that their ruinous course will have produced down to the end of the final war will still be on hand. (Revelation 11:18) The peace of the thousand years of Messiah's reign over all mankind now sets in. What more suitable time could there be for restoring earth, for transforming it from a battlefield into a paradise clear to its "four corners." Before the Messiah as a perfect man on earth died in sacrificial death, he left this dying promise, to renew Paradise on God's footstool, the earth.

³ To the dying evildoer who expressed faith in the kingship of Jesus as a righteous man, saying, "Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom," this prospective King replied: "Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise."—Luke 23:39-43.

⁴ By the fight of the Lamb Jesus Christ against the symbolic "ten horns" of the scarlet-colored wild beast he has come into undisputed possession of the kingdom over all the earth. (Revelation 17:12-14; 19:11-21) It is the due time for beautifying the earthly domain of his subjects like the original Garden of Eden and to bring the long-dead evildoer into it by resurrecting him from the dead. If that evildoer, just for his expression of faith and of sympathy, is to enjoy Paradise under the Messianic kingdom, most certainly the "great crowd" of his loyal disciples who survive the coming "great tribulation" will do so as a loving reward.—Revelation 7:9-17.

⁵ The restoration of the earthly Paradise will not be the work of a day, but the earthly subjects of the theocratic kingdom of the Christ will have to work in that behalf. But their true, undefiled worship of Jehovah God, in order to flourish, will not have to wait until that restoration of Paradise is complete. Their

3. What did Jesus say to the dying evildoer who expressed faith in Jesus' kingship?

4. (a) After the Lamb Jesus Christ gains the victory over his beastly enemies, what will it be the time for him to do for the domain of his subjects, and also for that sympathetic evildoer? (b) Therefore, who also should be rewarded with enjoying the Paradise?

5. (a) What kind of paradise did the attacking nations try to ruin, but what success did they have? (b) Who of the war survivors will enjoy the earthly Paradise continually?

enjoyment of a spiritual Paradise does not have to be put off until then. (2 Corinthians 12:4) The enemies who were ruining the earth down to the end of the war upon the "heavenly Jerusalem" had tried to ruin the spiritual Paradise of the anointed remnant in their God-given spiritual estate on earth. But they did not succeed in doing so, even with all their persecution and violent opposition. The enemies did not succeed in driving the anointed remnant and the "great crowd" of Jehovah's worshipers out of that spiritual Paradise. So the spiritual Paradise survived right along with them through the "great tribulation" and into Jehovah's new system of things. Thereafter when the anointed remnant finish their earthly assignment, they will receive fulfillment of the divine promise in Revelation 2:7. But the "great crowd" will remain on earth and inherit the terrestrial Paradise.—Psalm 37:11, 37-40; Proverbs 2:21, 22.

^o A spiritual Paradise is possible only along with the pure Scriptural worship of the one living and true God. The new system of things will start off immediately with that. Why should not the Great Theocrat, the God-King Jehovah, be adored and worshiped for his glorious victory in behalf of his universal sovereignty, which results also in the eternal liberation of his worshipers on earth from the Devil's untheocratic organization? A precedent for this was set for the survivors of the "great tribulation" by the patriarch Noah. After the global flood had passed, and God told Noah and his family to leave the ark of preservation, Noah at once proceeded to offer up a sacrifice to the God of their salvation. This pleased Jehovah and won for Noah and his family the divine blessing. (Genesis 8:15 to 9:1) This fine example will be followed by the surviving anointed remnant and the "great crowd" of their fellow survivors. With Babylon the Great annihilated and with all her associated opposers of true worship destroyed, the anointed remnant and the

6. (a) What is the necessary requirement for a spiritual Paradise on earth, and why will the new system start with it? (b) What historic example do the surviving remnant and "great crowd" have for putting Jehovah's worship first in the new order?

"great crowd" will have greater reason than ever to put Jehovah's worship first in the new order.

⁷ How could it be otherwise than that the spiritual Paradise will flourish with greater beauty and grandeur than ever before? All those of mankind for whom the Messiah died and whom he calls forth from the memorial tombs of the dead will have to bring themselves into harmony with that spiritual Paradise. (John 5:28, 29) They will have to put Jehovah's worship first in their lives. They will have to accept the Bible truth and to cultivate the fruits of God's holy spirit. (Galatians 5:22, 23) If they really desire to gain life eternal in the Paradise earth, they will have to come up to the worship of the heavenly Theocrat, the God-King, at his spiritual temple. By doing so, they will enter into boundless joy, never to fade. This divine requirement for such *resurrected* ones is spoken of in Zechariah's closing sentences. Those of whom he speaks did not come up to Jehovah's temple before Jerusalem was attacked. So they do not picture survivors of Har-Magedon. They appear on earth after it by resurrection.

⁸ "And it must occur that, as regards everyone who is left remaining out of all the nations that are coming against Jerusalem, they must also go up from year to year to bow down to the King, Jehovah of armies, and to celebrate the festival of the booths. And it must occur that, as regards anyone that does not come up out of the families of the earth to Jerusalem to bow down to the King, Jehovah of armies, even upon them no pouring rain will occur. And if the family of Egypt itself does not come up and does not actually enter, upon them also there shall be none. The scourge will occur with which Jehovah scourges the nations that do not come up to celebrate the festival of the booths. This itself will prove to be the punishment for the sin of Egypt and the sin of all the nations that do not come up to celebrate the festival of the booths.

7. Those resurrected from the dead on earth will have to bring themselves into harmony with what Paradise, and where will they have to go up for worship in order to gain unfading joy?

8. What will happen to those who do not go up from Egypt and other nations to worship Jehovah and celebrate the festival of booths?

⁹ "In that day there will prove to be upon the bells of the horse 'Holiness belongs to Jehovah!' And the wide-mouthed cooking pots in the house of Jehovah must become like the bowls before the altar. And every widemouthed cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah must become something holy belonging to Jehovah of armies, and all those who are sacrificing must come in and take from them and must do boiling in them. And there will no more prove to be a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of armies in that day."—Zechariah 14:16-21.

ADVISABILITY FOR NATIONS TO JOIN IN THE FESTIVAL

¹⁰ We can imagine how, in the prophetic picture, Jehovah's magnificent victory over the international armies attacking Jerusalem would affect the people back home of those nations that supplied such armies. His victory would painfully demonstrate to them that Jehovah is the only living and true God and that He is invincible. And if He smote their combined armies in the astounding way that He did, what could he not do to them if they kept on showing opposition to him and did not acknowledge him? What would he do to them if they did not go up to Jerusalem and bow down to him as King at his temple? Will he tolerate even their *passive* resistance? If they were not positively *for* Him, would it not mean that they were actually against Him? Yes, it means exactly that!

¹¹ Jehovah is the heavenly Rainmaker, concerning whom all people are exhorted: "Make your requests of Jehovah for rain in the time of the spring rain, even of Jehovah who is making the storm clouds, and who gives a downpour of rain to them, to each one vegetation in the field." (Zechariah 10:1) If those nations who furnished the attack armies did not receive rain,

9. In that day, how will bells on the horses be marked, and what will happen with the bowls and cooking pots in the land, and who will no longer be found in the temple?

10. How will Jehovah's victory over the international attacking forces affect the attitude of the nations that supplied such forces, and why will they not want to risk passive resistance to Him?

11. Who is the Rainmaker, and what would result to them, if the nations (including Egypt) failed to worship him?

how could they survive? Perpetual drought would produce an ecological condition nationwide that would spell death. Ancient Egypt depended upon the Nile River to irrigate her land regularly. But if Jehovah did not send rain in downpours at the sources of the Nile River, what would happen to their deified river and its annual floods? Yet, even if Egypt and other lands did get along without the moisture from the skies, their neglect to worship the one living and true God would be punished with the deadly scourge that had wrought havoc with their attack armies. There was no dodging of the divine requirement. They must come up to Jerusalem to worship at his temple or die. Their lands would not become part of the earthly Paradise. —Zechariah 14:17-19.

¹² Whether Jehovah of armies gained his victory over the attacking nations just before the Jewish festival of the booths (or, tabernacles) in the seventh lunar month, Tishri, is not definitely stated in Zechariah 14:12-15. However, the festival of booths, celebrated on Tishri 15-21 of each year, at Jerusalem, is the one that all the nations are specifically required to celebrate at the temple in Jerusalem. It was most appropriate that to this particular festival all the nations should come up and bow down to the King, Jehovah of armies. At this seven-day festival in Jerusalem there were offered seventy young bulls, beginning with thirteen young bulls on the first day and decreasing the number of them by one each succeeding day down to seven on the seventh day.

¹³ Such young bulls appeared to be sacrificed in behalf of all the families of the earth, there being seventy family heads enumerated in the record of Genesis, chapter ten, concerning the spread of earth's population after the flood of Noah's day. Seventy is the product of seven times ten; and, since in Scripture both of these numbers represent perfection, complete-

12. To what annual festival were the nations required to come up, and what special sacrifices were offered during that festival?

13. (a) Why is the number of the young bulls sacrificed significant, and how many benefit from such a sacrifice? (b) To gain everlasting blessings to whom must the nations dedicate themselves?

ness, wholeness, spiritually and earthly, the seventy young bulls of the festival of tabernacles or booths would figuratively serve as a sacrifice for all the world of mankind, all nations. (Numbers 29:12-34; Leviticus 23:33-35; Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Exodus 23:16) All nations, without exception, must turn their backs on false gods, on false religion, to which they had formerly 'dedicated themselves.' (Hosea 9:10) They must now dedicate themselves to the worship of the God-King Jehovah at his temple. This will result in everlasting blessing to them.—1 Thessalonians 1:9.

¹⁴ Of all three annual festivals celebrated at Jerusalem, the festival of booths or of ingathering proved to be the most joyous one of all the year. Why should the celebrants not rejoice at the abundant harvest with which their God had blessed them at the close of the agricultural year? So great was the joy at this seven-day festival that it was said that whoever had not seen the joy at the festival of the booths does not know what joy is. The great Rainmaker, who blesses the earth with moisture from heaven, wants all the nations to be joyful. Their worship of Him will be blessed with this overflowing joy. How wise, then, for the nations to accept his invitation to celebrate this festival at his temple!—Deuteronomy 32:43; Romans 15:10, 11.

¹⁵ Do we catch the significance of this prophetic picture? Not that all the nations must celebrate the literal feast of tabernacles or booths at an earthly Jerusalem annually. The celebration of the festival of tabernacles at Jerusalem in the Middle East ceased in the year 70 of our Common Era. And appropriately so, for since the death and resurrection of the Messiah Jesus and his ascension to heaven in the year 33 C.E. that literal seven-day festival had ceased to apply, to have value. It was a part of the "law of Moses," which law had a "shadow of the good things to come." (Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:16, 17) Those prophetic

14. At the festival of the booths, to what emotion was expression most fully given, and, by Jehovah's inviting nations to attend it, what does he indicate to be his will for the nations?

15. Why is it that the nations must not go up to an earthly Jerusalem in the Middle East to celebrate a seven-day "feast of the booths"?

shadows of the Mosaic law gave place to the realities, when the ascended Messiah Jesus appeared in God's heavenly presence and applied the value of his sacrificial blood to the validating of the promised "new covenant," which introduced the Christian realities. So the *reality*, as foreshadowed by the typical "festival of the booths" or "festival of the ingathering," is the thing now to celebrate. To it the redeemed ones of all mankind, the living survivors and the resurrected dead nations, must come, under the Messianic kingdom of Jesus, the Son of God.

¹⁶ To the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem," these earthly celebrators out of all nations, tribes and peoples must approach, by recognizing the heavenly Messianic kingdom. To the earthly courtyard of Jehovah's spiritual temple they must come, and there they need to "bow down to the King, Jehovah of armies," the Great Theocrat, the Universal Sovereign. If they refuse to leave their former state of enmity with God and gather in obedience and service at his spiritual temple, they will suffer punishment for wanting to continue in sin. The divine "scourge" will be upon them, and that will signify everlasting death inflicted by Jehovah through his Messianic King, Jesus. There will be upon such no "pouring rain" of blessings. This will mean no share for them in the fruitful, life-sustaining Paradise.—Zechariah 14:17-19.

THE JOYFUL INTERNATIONAL INGATHERING

¹⁷ The ancient festival of the booths, the feast of the ingathering, pictured the gathering of the redeemed ones of all nations, peoples and tribes of mankind to the worship of the King, Jehovah of armies, at his spiritual temple. This will take place during the thousand years' reign of the King-Priest, Jesus Christ. He will serve as Jehovah's High Priest like Melchizedek in behalf of all mankind who gather to the spiritual

16. (a) To what Jerusalem will the nations go up for the celebration of the festival? (b) What will befall those who refuse to go up, and what will that mean for them?

17. (a) What does the ancient festival of ingathering picture, and when will it be celebrated? (b) What will descend upon the obedient celebrators, and what pleasures of Paradise will they enjoy?

temple of worship. They will have to recognize the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem," as the capital city of Jehovah's theocratic organization. Upon these there will be a "pouring rain" of divine blessings. For these worshipers the spiritual Paradise will flourish with all the fruits of God's holy spirit in their lives. For them, also, the earthly Paradise will bloom all around the globe. It will yield its fruitage in abundance to sustain all of earth's obedient inhabitants in perfect human life eternally. Reaping the fruitage of earth's Paradise forever, they will have reason to worship and bless the Provider of the never-ending ingathering to all time in perpetual joy.

¹⁸ What a festival place the paradisaic earth will then be! What an international gathering of Jehovah's worshipers to the festival of the booths and of ingathering will then take place! Reverential regard will then be given to the holiness that belongs to Jehovah. Worshipful attention will then be paid by all who are favored with the gift of everlasting life. Listen! Do you hear those bells jingling on those horses coming, likely out of Egypt, from which land horses used to be imported? Now they are bringing worshipers to the center of worship for the celebration of the joyous festival of the booths! Why, even those bells are inscribed with the words "Holiness belongs to Jehovah." And the jingling or tinkling of those bells calls attention to that important fact. The use of the horse is turned to a peaceful, holy purpose, no more to war chariots.

¹⁹ The inscription on those horse bells is the very same as that engraved upon the golden "shining plate" that was tied by a blue cord to the forefront of the turban of the high priest of Israel. This engraved plate was called "the holy sign of dedication." (Exodus 28:36-39; 29:6; 39:30) How beautifully this pictures that all the way from the High Priest Jesus Christ in the "heavenly Jerusalem" down to the bearers of the

18. How does the prophetic picture show that reverential regard will be paid to the true God even in using horses?

19. (a) The inscription on the horse bells was the same as that engraved where else, and what does this indicate as regards all those proclaiming Jehovah's holiness? (b) Such awareness of His holiness acts as an incentive to do what?

earthly worshipers to Jehovah's spiritual temple, everything proclaims the holiness of the Most High God! Everything appears to be pervaded with the awareness that Jehovah of armies is God and King. Everything is done joyfully with a view to glorifying, sanctifying, holding sacred his worthy name. How close this draws the worshiper to the God whom he adores! What an influence this exercises toward the worshiper's living as a credit to his Creator and God, bringing no reproach upon Jehovah!

²⁰ Even the commonplace things of life take on new meaning, new value. Why, "the widemouthed cooking pots in the house of Jehovah must become like the bowls before the altar. And every widemouthed cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah must become something holy belonging to Jehovah of armies, and all those who are sacrificing must come in and take from them and must do boiling in them." (Zechariah 14:20, 21) Does this mean that, in figurative speech, the cooking pots at the house of Jehovah would thenceforth be made, not of brass or copper, but of gold like the bowls with which the precious blood of the sacrificial victims was caught and from which the blood was tossed against the altar of sacrifice? Possibly! And that would mean that no matter whether the cooking of the sacrificial meat had been rated as not of as high importance and value as the catching of the blood of the sacrificial victim and the tossing of it, now, however, in the new system of things it would be different. Every step in the offering of a communion sacrifice to God and in the sharing of it with Him would be just as precious as every other step in the arrangement.

²¹ It is not the material of which the particular vessel is made that counts; it is the service that it renders, and it is also the importance that is attached to that service. This would signify, then, that every feature of service and of praise to God is important, is necessary, is valuable. Every feature is appreciated by God and is

20, 21. (a) How will the widemouthed cooking pot in Jehovah's house become like the bowl at the altar? (b) How does this reflect that we shall view or treat every part of our living then?

holy to him or is of a sacred quality to Him. How that thought warms the heart of every worshiper of Him! How it stimulates us as worshipers of Him to do everything that we do as part of our worship of Him and as if done directly to Him!—1 Corinthians 10:31.

²² The prophetic picture could also be suggesting the great increase in the number of worshipers of Jehovah, at his typical temple where they are offering their sacrifices. There would be so many animal victims slaughtered that the bowls for tossing the blood normally at the temple would not be enough in quantity; so there would be need to resort to using the wide-mouthed cooking pots also to catch the blood and toss it against the altar. (2 Chronicles 29:22) As a result, there would be more flesh of the sacrificial victims to be boiled preparatory to being eaten in the dining halls of the temple. The cooking pots at the house of Jehovah being used extraordinarily now for the sprinkling of the blood on the altar, there would be a shortage of cooking pots at the temple. This would necessitate the appropriating of the common cooking pots of the private homes of the city of Jerusalem in order to do the boiling of the sacrificial flesh at the temple. In this manner those common domestic cooking pots would become "something holy belonging to Jehovah." They would be sanctified to His service.

²³ Whatever would be the case with the typical Jerusalem as used in the prophetic picture, there will be no shortage of priestly service in the "city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." The High Priest Jesus Christ and his full complement of 144,000 underpriests will be up there. They will be fully adequate for the worldwide work of healing obedient mankind from the death-dealing effects of sin and imperfection. There will be no shortage of utensils, as it were. The cleansing, healing blood of the High Priest Jesus Christ as the

22. How might such use of the cooking pots at the temple besides the altar bowls suggest a great increase in the number of worshipers of Jehovah?

23. Notwithstanding what the picture with earthly Jerusalem implies, what about a shortage of priests in the "heavenly Jerusalem" and the means for rendering priestly service to mankind?

"Lamb of God" will be ample enough in its redemptive value to avail for all who turn to Jehovah God. Throughout the thousand years of his reign he and his underpriests will minister to mankind's needs; and so the blessed results of this will be, as stated in Hebrews 7:24, 25: "He because of continuing alive forever has his priesthood without any successors. Consequently he is able also to save completely those who are approaching God through him, because he is always alive to plead for them." So the tremendous increase of worshipers at Jehovah's spiritual temple due to resurrection of the dead will not put too great a burden on him.

NO "CANAANITE" TO MAR MILLENNIAL WORSHIP

²⁴ When all those earthly celebrators of the Millennial festival of the booths approach Jehovah's spiritual temple of worship, they will not be confronted with or be obliged to run the gauntlet of a swarm of traffickers in religious articles, selfishly seeking to make money off those who desire to worship God "with spirit and truth." (John 4:24) Jehovah's heavenly High Priest will not stand for this for one moment. When he was on earth as a man in order to offer his perfect human sacrifice as a high priest, he twice cleansed the temple at Jerusalem of religious commercialists, once in the first year of his public ministry and again just four days before his sacrificial death. Concerning this latter case we read:

"And [on his triumphal ride] he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and he looked around upon all things, and, as the hour was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. The next day, when they had come out from Bethany, . . . they came to Jerusalem. There he entered into the temple and started to throw out those selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves; and he would not let anyone carry a utensil through the temple, but he kept teaching and saying: 'Is it not written, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations"? But you have made it a

24. (a) What will the earthly celebrators of the Millennial festival not be molested by at the spiritual temple of Jehovah? (b) What action by Jesus on earth at the temple of Jerusalem proves that he will not tolerate any such molestation?

cave of robbers.' And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and they began to seek how to destroy him."
—Mark 11:11-18; Isaiah 56:7; John 2:12-17.

²⁵ With just as much zeal as ever for the house of God's worship, the heavenly High Priest Jesus Christ will see to it that the closing words of Zechariah's prophecy are fulfilled: "And there will no more prove to be a Canaanite [or, tradesman] in the house of Jehovah of armies in that day."—Zechariah 14:21.

²⁶ The designation Canaanite was synonymous with "tradesman." (Proverbs 31:24; Job 41:6; compare Nehemiah 13:15-21.) Such persons, who seek to make selfish, commercial profit out of the most sacred thing on earth, the worship of the one living and true God, have no place in the earthly courtyard of Jehovah's spiritual temple, nor on the earth His footstool at all. And there will be none such, nor any religious frauds. The teaching of the pure truth and the practice of pure, undefiled religion will then sanctify the earth. Everywhere on earth Jehovah will be known and adored. (Isaiah 11:9) He is holy, and his worshipers in the earth-wide paradise will, like him, be holy.
—1 Peter 1:16.

²⁷ "From year to year" all on earth who drink of the "living waters" that go forth from the "heavenly Jerusalem" will celebrate the Millennial festival of booths with unspeakable joy at Jehovah's spiritual temple. (Zechariah 14:8, 16) The vision seen in the Bible's last book of the numberless "great crowd" of worshipers jubilating before God with palm branches in their hands corresponds with the temple scene especially on the last day of the "festival of booths" in ancient Jerusalem. (Revelation 7:9) The "great crowd" of survivors of the "great tribulation" will have a special joy. It will be that of helping the many billions of those

25. The High Priest will see to it that what part of Zechariah's prophecy is thus fulfilled?

26. (a) Why does the "Canaanite" have no place at Jehovah's house of worship? (b) How or with what will the earth then be sanctified?
27. (a) What special privilege will the "great crowd" of tribulation survivors have during the Millennial celebration of the festival? (b) All those devoting themselves to Jehovah's worship will then gain the right to what?

resurrected from the grave to go up to the celebration of the festival, without regard to their previous nationality during the former system of things. In that way all those who devote themselves to the worship of the King, Jehovah of armies, will gain the God-given right to a life of endless joy in a paradisaic earth under Jehovah's Theocracy.

²⁸ All you worshipers of the Divine Ruler Jehovah, lift your eyes of faith to the future scene that will grace the terrestrial "footstool" of this heavenly Theocrat. See all the earth radiantly blooming with a peaceful Paradise, that delights even the eye of the great Theocrat and Creator, a Paradise adorned with vegetation and trees, both good to look at and also producing food for sustaining creature life in perfection. The divine commission that was given to perfect man and woman at the beginning in Eden has been realized, namely: "Fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth." The whole earth to its four corners is filled with godly human creatures in physical, moral and mental perfection, whom the paternal Theocrat is joyful at acknowledging to be his sons and daughters through the Lamb Jesus Christ.

²⁹ It is the close of the last day of the divine week of seven creative days, each seven thousand years in length. As God the Creator examines and sees everything that he has made, look! it is "very good." (Genesis 1:28 to 2:3) All heaven is watching the perfected earth and listening. The hearts of the heavenly seraphs, cherubs and angels are filled with admiration for the great Theocrat as they see all humans on earth strike a worshipful attitude. Praise to God sounds forth. It thrills the heavenly throngs as they hear the earth's full population join the "great crowd" in gratefully saying: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is

28. To what future scene of God's accomplished purpose regarding the earth may worshipers of the Divine Ruler lift their eyes of faith?

29. To whom will all of Paradise's inhabitants ascribe their salvation, and how will the inhabitants of heaven respond?

seated on the throne, and to the Lamb." "Amen," respond all the holy inhabitants of heaven, "The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanksgiving and the honor and the power and the strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen."—Revelation 7:9-12.



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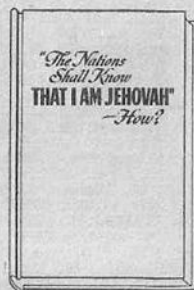
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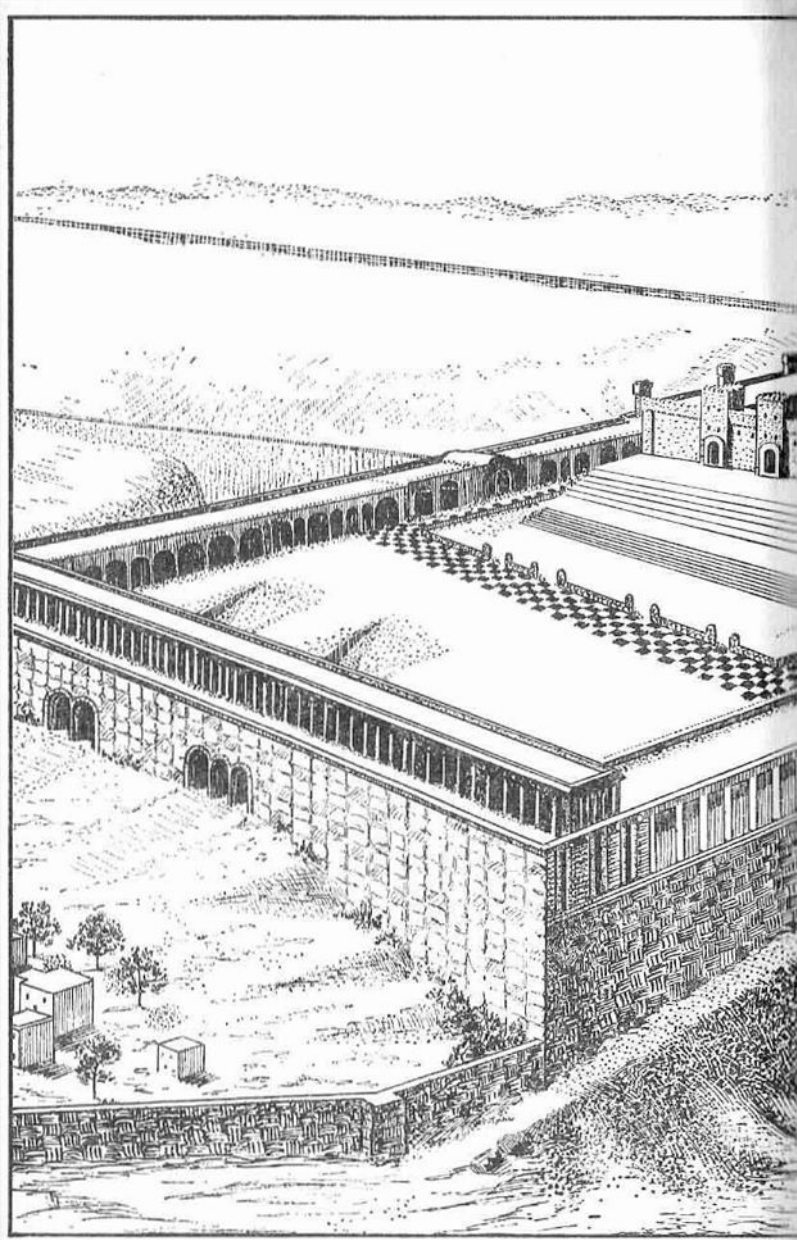
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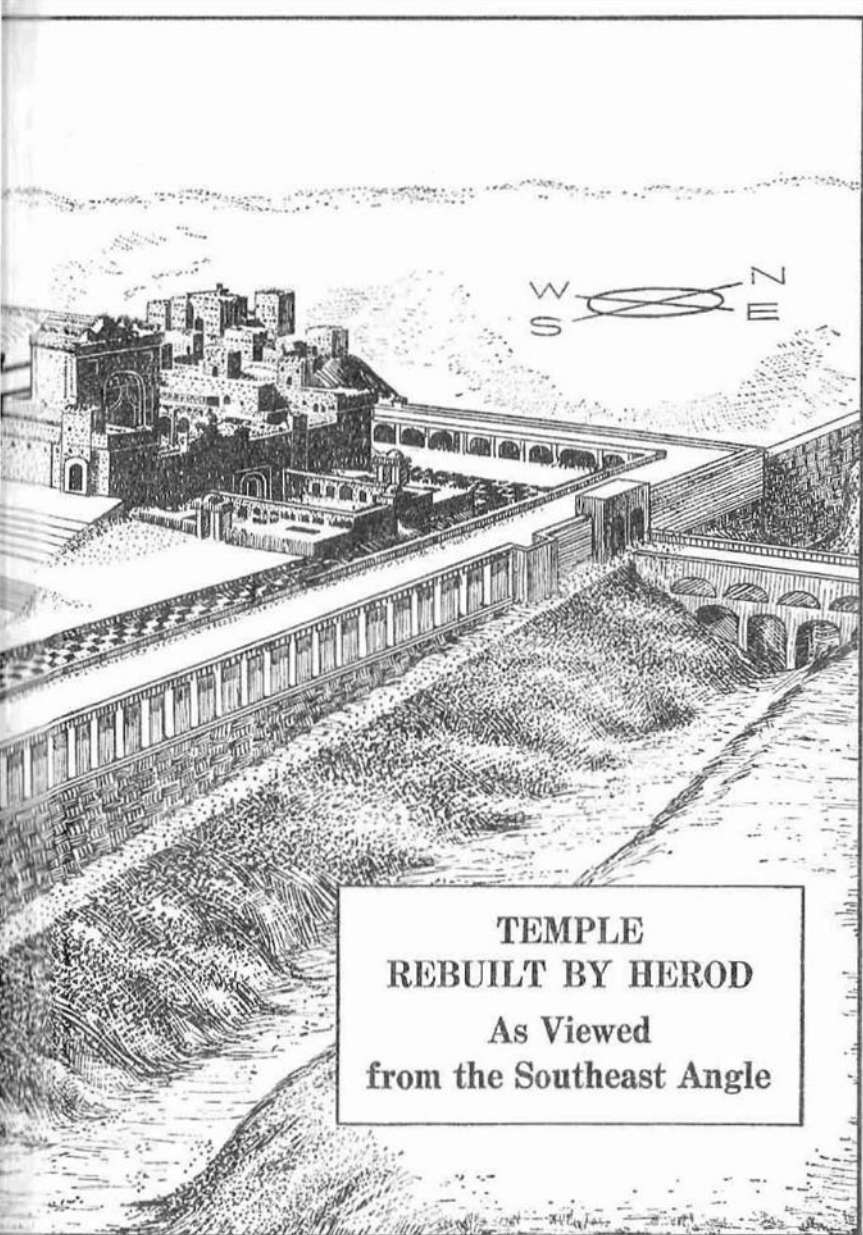
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**TEMPLE
REBUILT BY HEROD**
As Viewed
from the Southeast Angle