

Beauties of the Truth

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Haggai and the Second Temple

Two years after they returned from their captivity in Babylon the Jewish people began to reconstruct the temple in Jerusalem. They had received permission from Cyrus and the construction went on uninterrupted during his reign. After the next king, Cambyses, began his reign, the construction was halted due to the intervention of the surrounding nations. Two years after King Darius assumed the throne, the prophet Haggai came to Jerusalem and urged the Jews to begin the work anew.

Haggai was the first prophet of Israel after the Babylonian captivity. His words were heeded and the reconstruction continued. Darius gave his permission and financial aid, and the work was completed in four years.

The book of Haggai tells about the world of that prophet, whose objective was to encourage the Israelites to finish the rebuilding of the temple. The book is divided into five parts, each containing a separate message from the prophet.

In the first message Haggai pointed out that the lack of the Lord's blessing upon the nation of Israel was because they had given up the temple reconstruction. He urged them to restart the work. After approximately twenty-three days the work was restarted and the prophet came back with his second message. This message was an assurance of God's help: "I am with you" (1:13). A month later, on the next to the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (this was probably observed, although there is no mention of it in the account), the prophet brought another message. In this third message he again assured them of God's help and uttered a prophetic statement about the glorious future of the temple. He also spoke of the "shaking of the heavens and the earth" In the fourth message, he reminded them that before the reconstruction began they were unclean, but now were cleansed from their uncleanness. We believe that this cleansing must have occurred during the observance of the Atonement Day, in the seventh month. The final message was directed at prince Zerubbabel, who was from the royal line. Haggai foretold of his exaltation while all other nations would be engrossed in wars, each man fighting against his brother.

THE INTERPRETATION

An interpretation of the complete prophecy is not found in the works of Bro. Russell. Of the 38 verses in the book of Haggai, only eight are prophetic statements regarding the future. Only these eight are commented on in the reprints. These comments are connected with the interpretation of the picture of the Jews returning from captivity and rebuilding the temple. These are found on reprint pages 2251, 1483 and 3576.

According to this interpretation, the reconstruction of the temple pictures the building of the church after the papal captivity. In his chronological analysis, Bro. John Edgar identifies the rebuilding of the temple with the issuing of the book "Defensor Pacis" by Marsiglio [Marsilius of Padua¹], which exposes Papacy. This work was the precursor of the Reformation in Europe. This interpretation is based on the assumption that the nation of Israel returning from captivity represents spiritual Israel, and the temple being rebuilt pictures the spiritual temple, the Gospel Age church. There is no reference to the remaining 30 verses in this interpretation.

When does a prophecy relate to natural Israel and when to spiritual? There are prophecies referring to Israel which leave no doubt that they apply to literal Israel. Examples include the establishing of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31) and the prophecy of the dry bones (Ezekiel 37). We would next ask, can the interpretation of Haggai be applied to the literal nation of Israel?

ISRAEL REBUILDS A TEMPLE

The obstacle here is the symbol of the temple. We know that during the Gospel Age the church is said to be building just such a temple. We know of no temple that the nation of Israel was supposed to build during this age. However, looking deeper, we do find such a temple. The tabernacle in the wilderness was accessible and visible to the people of the camp in two different ways. The court was accessible and visible from the gate. The Holy and Most Holy were inaccessible and practically invisible from outside the court. How will spirit beings communicate with fleshly men? Most likely it will not be through direct contact but through a special class of people. Such a class will be the visible, earthly representation of the new temple. This earthly part

will be literal Israel. Descending from heaven to earth, the new Jerusalem will rest on the earthly foundation prepared earlier. In this way, Israel also builds a temple. But, just like the temple rebuilt in the days of Haggai, the Most Holy was empty (the ark was not there), so in the new temple built on earth, the Most Holy, not made by human hands, will be the spiritual part of the temple, which is the church.

Based on this thought, we proceed to see how the picture of the rebuilding of the temple applies to literal Israel. Looking to Haggai, what elements can his prophecy contribute to this picture?

THE RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY

The return from captivity could also be seen as a picture of the return of the Jews to Palestine from their dispersion at the close of the Gospel Age. It would be synonymous with the regathering of the dry bones in the prophecy of Ezekiel. The reconstruction of the temple would correspond to the making of a new social order based on individuals who have come to trust in God's guidance and direction. As the work of the original rebuilding of the temple was interrupted, so too, this work will be interrupted and only renewed as a result of the urging of an antitypical Haggai. Haggai's mission was to persuade the Jews to continue their reconstruction work.

A long time after the rebuilding stopped, the prophet came and spoke of the fact that blessings were not coming from God. Perhaps this referred to some economic and political problems. The prophet maintains that blessings would return only after the construction work was resumed. He also talked about the approaching time of trouble for all nations and the filling of the temple with glory during the time of this trouble. This trouble is also foretold in other prophecies, such as Joel, Zephaniah, and Zechariah. In all these places we find Israel being exalted at that point in the time of trouble. This might indicate that all these prophecies, including Haggai, speak about the same events and the same time.

What could we learn from these prophecies? Both Joel and Haggai indicate that the regeneration of Israel should occur before the trouble.² Joel calls to repentance before the imminent day of the Lord. The day of the Lord in this prophecy does not represent the Millennial Age but the battle of the Lord with all the nations rising against him. It is a relatively short time dedicated to destroying the nations gathered to fight against Israel. In that day God himself will fight for his people. Haggai presented this process of spiritual regeneration as the reconstruction of the temple. Only after the temple is rebuilt are all the nations shaken.

ISRAEL AND THEIR TROUBLE

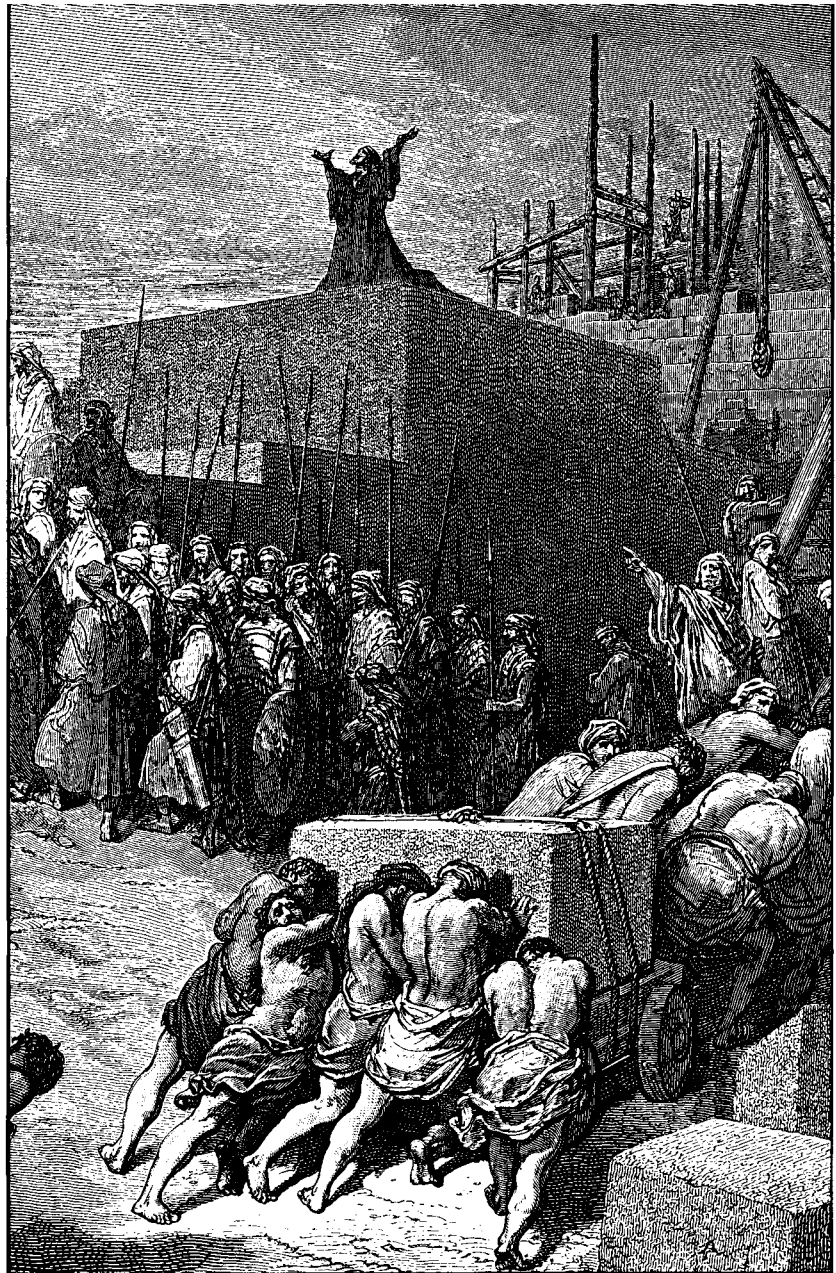
It is the general thought that the trouble sent upon Israel will cause their repentance. These two prophecies seem to indicate something different. The process of the regeneration is started much earlier and the coming trouble affects mainly the nations who rise against regenerated Israel. It is logical to think that God himself will fight for the nation after it has been regenerated. If Israel were not regenerated at that time, we might ask why God would fight for a nation not much better than others.

Historically, God fought for Israel only when they turned away from sin. On the other hand, when they sinned, other nations executed God's punishment upon Israel. The same will be true of the future battle. God will stand on Israel's side because they will have already been regenerated.

This puts the book of Haggai in a new light. It describes the process of Israel's regeneration. And this will not be a result of the trouble upon the nation but a result of the mission of antitypical Haggai. This mission could probably be identified with the call for repentance in Joel and the prophesying to the wind in Ezekiel 37:9. Yet someone might say, Israel never repented as a result of a prophet's mission alone. The prophecies indicate that indeed there will be something more than just the mission of the prophet.

In the book of Joel we find mention of a plague of locusts which will precede the great day of the Lord. Similarly, in Zephaniah, we find two plagues described. The first is the Day of the Lord's sacrifice, described in chapter one. The second plague is the day of the Lord itself described in chapters one and three. In the second chapter of this prophecy we find information of the destruction of the nations surrounding Israel between these two troublous times.

Thus these prophecies indicate that there will be two times of difficulty for Israel. The second time will affect primarily other nations, although not exclusively so. From Zechariah we can infer that even after the first time of trouble and the first mission of the prophet, the whole nation is not converted.



The Rebuilding of the Temple

In chapter 13 we read about the three parts of Israel. Two of them will be destroyed and one will be purified as gold in the fire. These two parts could possibly be those who will not be converted and who will be treated just like the other nations.

WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?

When will be the fulfillment of these prophecies? I suggest that they are still in the future. The beginning of the Jewish settlements in Palestine could be seen as the beginning of the reconstruction of the temple. The reconstruction was interrupted. What was being built then was a state patterned after the Western world. It is estimated that some 80% of the people currently living in Israel are not interested in religion. It is likely that there will be another wave of anti-Semitism in the Western countries and another wave of Jews immigrating back to Israel. Israel is not yet ready to hear a prophet. As far as the antitypical prophet himself, it would be hard to identify who that would be today. It seems that it will not be the church which would fulfill this mission, since they will be taken from the scene before the final trouble. Perhaps this work will belong to the Great Company.

SUMMARY

If the above interpretation is correct, we briefly summarize as follows: (1) The main theme of the prophecy is the prophet's mission urging Israel to rebuild the temple. (2) The reconstruction of the temple may represent a spiritual regeneration of Israel. (3) This process will begin before the final trouble which will come upon the angry nations. (4) Preceding the mission calling for a regeneration, a different trouble can be expected, one which would prepare Israel to hear the prophet's message. (5) Regenerated Israel will constitute the earthly part of the temple whose Most Holy will be the church of Christ. (6) Not all of Israel will be converted before the final trouble. (7) Converted Israel, under the New Covenant, will lead the way for all nations to Christ's Kingdom. The above thought is only a suggestion. Time will indicate the correct interpretation. What remains is for us to study and share our ideas so that our understanding of the time to come is more accurate and complete.

- *Dariusz Siwek*

¹ *Great Pyramid Passages*, Vol. II, pages 106-107, 279. *McClintock and Strong*, Vol. V, page 817. *A History of Christianity*, Latourette, Vol. I, pages 479-480, 555.

² The editors consider this point speculative and not indicated by a clear statement of Scripture.

Consecration vs. Pharaoh's Objections

The Christian's duty to separate himself from the world is well illustrated in Pharaoh's four subtle objections to the full deliverance of God's ancient people from the land of Egypt. The first objection is expressed in his words to Moses:

1. "Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land [of Egypt]" (Exodus 8:25)

The object in this proposal of Pharaoh, doubtless instigated by Satan, was to hinder full obedience to the command of the Lord to separate entirely from Egypt and its evil, idolatrous influences. Egypt is very generally understood to represent the world. Deliverance from Egypt represents deliverance from this "present evil world" (Galatians 1:4). The tendency of professed Christians in defining what constitutes "the world" or worldliness is to place it a point or two lower than the standard they themselves have reached. God's Word, however, defines it very explicitly and informs us that it is "all that is not of the Father" (1 John 2:16); hence the deeper our sense of fellowship with the Father, the keener will be our sense of what is worldly. The more we are enabled in the power of an ungrieved spirit to drink in Christ's revelation of the Father, the more accurate does our judgment become as to what constitutes worldliness. It is most difficult to define where worldliness begins. One has said that it is shaded off gradually from black to white. It seems impossible to place a bound and say, "this is where worldliness begins"; but as the Christian walks close to the Lord, the keen sensibilities of his inner spiritual nature discern it. Possessing the power of the "new life" enables the individual Christian to mark the dividing line. Moses' reply to Pharaoh was: "It is not meet so to do ... We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He shall command us" Exodus 8:26, 27

There seems to be illustrated in Moses' reply what is meant by true separation from the world. The "three days' journey into the wilderness" seems to represent what the death, and the resurrection of Christ three days after, signify to a true Christian believer, namely his identification with Him in His justification, and his identification with Him in His consecration, being quickened by the spirit of Truth, to walk in a new life of separation from sin and worldliness.

2. Pharaoh's reply, "I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shalt not go very far away."

If he could not keep them *in* Egypt, he would at least keep them *near* it, so that he might act upon them by its varied influences. In this way they might be brought back again, and the testimony more effectually quashed than if they had never left Egypt. There is always much more serious damage done to the cause of Christ by persons seeming to give up the world and returning to it again, than if they had remained entirely of it; for they virtually confess that, having tried heavenly things, they have discovered that earthly things are better and more satisfying.

3. The third objection of Pharaoh was to the Israelites taking their children when they should go to worship and sacrifice to God in the wilderness.

The lesson seems to be to spiritual Israel that they are required to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4), a lesson to which many Christians fail to take heed.

4. Pharaoh's fourth objection was to their taking their flocks and herds.

Moses' reply to this last attempt of Pharaoh to cause the Lord's people to compromise is a grand illustration of how in consecration, the Lord requires not only that we give ourselves, but all that we have - all that we possess. "Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind" (Exodus 10:25-27). It is only when God's people take their stand upon this elevated ground of entire consecration, on which by faith Christ's death and resurrection places them, that they can have any clear sense of what the claims of consecration are. Moses' words, "We know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither" seem to teach that no one can have a knowledge of the Divine claim, or their responsibility, until they have, figuratively speaking, gone "three days' journey into the wilderness" It is only then that we know that "we are not our own; we are bought with a price"

- R.E. Streeter "The Revelation of Jesus Christ"

***"Go ye out from thence ... be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."
(Isaiah 52:11)***

The Builders Temple-Tower (Luke 14:25-30)

"Now there went great multitudes with him." Some were friends and followers; more were enemies who sought an occasion to do him injury; most, mere curiosity-seekers or place-hunters. Upon this mixed assembly the Master turns, and in a few words lays down the primary requirements for discipleship. Listen, O easy-going, lukewarm professor of Christianity: full consecration - a daily cross-bearing, even unto death - these things are required for all who would become his disciples, who would learn of him. He must have first place in the hearts of his followers - he will brook no rivals. "If any man come to me, and hate* not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he *cannot be my disciple.*"

At this radical and sweeping pronouncement, the Master no doubt read in the faces of his hearers varying emotions of astonishment, dismay, sorrow and ridicule. Then, for the instruction of the earnest truth-seekers - he cared little for the crowd of the curious and lukewarm - he gave the two short parables of The Builder's Tower and The King's Soldier. These illustrations, let us note, are in explanation of his extreme demands upon his followers - his disciples.

In the first we understand he represents himself as planning the building of a vast structure - a tower, or stronghold. Elsewhere he has stated his intention - "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). At the time he speaks he is himself engaged in laying the foundation, by the sacrifice of himself as the ransom price. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11).



Jesus Preaching to the Multitudes

Upon this foundation - the ransom - is to be built the superstructure - variously referred to in Scripture as a tower, a refuge from the Enemy; a temple meeting place for God and men; a city, the New Jerusalem, symbolic of the government or Kingdom of God, to be erected by the Christ, on earth, at his glorious appearing.

Jesus was himself about to complete the foundation when he gave his parable; and through it he tells us that he had counted the cost for completing the building. What did his reckoning show would be required? We reply, naturally, a certain quantity of a peculiar quality of "living stones" - to use a figure supplied by two of the Apostles - Peter and Paul.

“The Lord is gracious to whom coming, as unto a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God, elect, precious ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house. ... Because it is contained in scripture, Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious and he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame” (1 Peter 2:4-6)

“Ye are no more strangers and sojourners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God ... built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophet⁴ Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord - in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:19-22)

But what an extraordinary simile - “living stones!” A reference of course, to the characters of those composing the symbolic structure - hard, unyielding to outside influences as stones, yet as submissive and unresisting as stones to the mason. The more we consider this peculiar and almost paradoxical character-combination, the less surprised are we that it has required nearly nineteen hundred years to obtain the requisite number. Yet how foolish it would be to attempt to build a tower with stones that refused to submit themselves to the mason’s hand! Stones that, placed in position in the daytime, jumped down and ran away at night! The Master declines to build his wonderful living Temple for his Father's occupancy with any such flimsy and crumbling material. “If any man come to me and hate not” *all else*, “he cannot be my disciple”

We may not be surprised, then, neither consider unreasonable or unjust, the rigid initial requirements, nor the severe process of preparation and incidental elimination of the unfit, through which the prospective Temple-stones are put.

“God's hand that saves, though kind, seems rough;
His methods sometimes rude;
Frail, shrinking nature cries 'Enough!'
Yet proves the Lord is good.

“The temple stones God now prepares
Oft cry, 'You hurt me sore;'
The Sculptor seeks their perfectness,
And trims them more and more -

“Until, by dint of strokes and blows,
The shapeless mass appears
Symmetric, polished, beautiful
To stand th’ eternal years”

- Horace E. Hollister *St. Paul Enterprise*, 1914

The Song of Solomon and Revelation

The central idea of the Song of Solomon is the same as that of the Apocalypse. According to Ewald, the commentator who has given the most subtle analysis of this exquisite poem, the plot is this:

“On the one hand, a king in all the splendors of his glory, transported with admiration, overflowing with passion; on the other, the poor and simple shepherd to whom the Shulamite [maiden] has plighted her faith; the former present, the latter absent; the maiden called to decide freely between these two rivals. Such is the conflict in all its moral grandeur.”

Translating Oriental poetry into Apocalyptic symbolism, the book of Revelation yields us the same conception. Immanuel, the Shepherd Bridegroom ... in [the heavenly] Paradise, is ever sending word to His espoused Church on earth, “Behold I come quickly.” But she, in her long waiting, is constantly solicited and wooed by royal suitors - purple and gold and precious stones being offered here - to withdraw her heart from her heavenly Consort, and to accept a throne with the kings of the earth. The harlot bride, a fallen daughter of God, clothed with scarlet and decked with jewels, and giving in fornication with the rulers of this world, appears upon the scene, hating and hunting this unsullied spouse of Christ and driving her into exile. But in spite of all these trials of her faith on the one hand, and all these solicitations of kings and these proffers of Solomonic wealth and splendor on the other, her heart is still true to her absent Lord, and her noble answer [in the poem] is, “Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would be utterly contemned” (Canticles 8:7)

And yet the trial is one of intense and protracted severity. Her Lord delays His return long beyond her expectation; and the world mocks at her bridal hope, incredulously asking, “Where is the sign of His coming?” Besides, it is an invisible and far-off Lover to whom her heart is plighted, one who appears only in visions of hope, and who in His sublime austerity scorns to use any sensuous means for attracting His people to Himself. In a word, her choice must be between an earthly Solomon, crowned with present glory and honor, and the Beloved whom the world has rejected, and who now stands without, knocking, His head wet with the dews of the night. Sometimes He comes down and manifests Himself to the eyes of her faith. She sees Him as in a dream; she delights herself spiritually with His presence - then suddenly He vanishes. And then once more she is alone, carrying on the contest with Solomon, who draws near in all his pomp, and tries to cast his spell upon her. But she remains faithful to Him who is invisible; she sees the moment approaching in which, the true love of her God having won the victory in her heart over all the arts of the seducer, she will be fetched away by Him, and - more fortunate in this respect than the Shulamite herself - will be able to follow Him to those spiced mountains where He pastures His flock amongst the lilies.

- R. E. Streeter *The Revelation of Jesus Christ,*” quoting Godet, *“Studies in the Old Testament”*

Treasures in Heaven

“Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal For where your treasure is there will your heart be also” - Matthew 6:20-21

The things we value in history are not the records of events, the geographical and historical information; but what they reveal of the men and women that have lived. That which makes a country great is not its lofty mountains and beautiful plains, its magnificent scenery and Eden-like climate; for many of the fairest scenes of earth may claim all this, and yet they are waste and desolate for want of men. That which makes a country great is glorious men and women, far more than things or events, resources or incomparable advantages. That is what we cherish in our annals - not our art, poetry, traditions and memories, but our heroes. And, if we come down to the nearer realm of our own life, what do we value most? Not our houses and lands, our commerce and wealth, nor our earthly advantages. You would give everything on earth for one frail little life that others would not give a farthing for. There is more to you in one human heart, than in all the world. Your treasures are in your friends, those that have become in some sense your own.

- R1095

Four Passovers

“Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews.” (John 5:1, NIV)

“The identity of this feast is significant for the attempt to ascertain the number of Passovers included in Jesus' ministry, and thus the number of years his ministry lasted. John explicitly mentions at least three different Passovers: the first in 2:13, 23, the second in 6:4 and the third several times (eg in 11:55, 12:1). If three Passovers are accepted, the length of Jesus' ministry was between two and three years. However, if the feast of 5:1 was a fourth Passover or assumes that a fourth Passover had come and gone, Jesus' ministry would have lasted between three and four years” - footnote, NIV Study Bible, 1985 Zondervan, p. 1603

The Sinaitic MS read η εορτη [the feast], while the Vatican 1209 and other Mss. omit the definite article η and



Feeding the Multitude near the Third Passover

render the text “a feast.” The Concordant Greek Text confirms the Sinaitic with this note: “s faint + H.” This means in the Sinaitic, there appears a faint Uncial (upper case Greek) character H, which corresponds to the definite article η. Were the article genuine, we would be compelled to regard the chief festival, that is the Passover, as the one meant. If it is not genuine, the Passover may be meant, but so also may be some other feast. We notice two other references where the definite article is omitted and yet where the feast of Passover is obviously meant. These are Matthew 27:15 and Mark 15:6. It is our opinion that the Passover feast is meant in either case here in John and that this reference brings the total Passovers mentioned by John to four. That these occurred in the springs of AD 30, 31, 32 and 33 would correspond with the first half of the symbolic 70th week of Daniel 9:27. This being the second Passover observed since Jesus' Baptism would mark the four references in John as 2:13, 5:1, 6:4, 12:1. This view also allows for two times that Jesus cleansed the temple: one at the beginning and the other at the end of his ministry. The first is noted in John 2:14 and the second time, just prior to the last passover, is noted in Matthew 21:12 and Mark 11:15. For further analysis of John 5:1 see
A Harmony of the Gospels by A. T. Robertson, pages 42, 267.

- Jerry Leslie

Venerable Tradition

Psalm 90:3-4 - “Thou dost turn man back into dust, and dost say, 'Return, children of men' ' For a thousand years in Thy sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or as a watch in the night” (NAS)

2 Peter 3:8 - “But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (NAS)

Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. 2, page 39 - “Though the Bible contains no direct statement that the seventh thousand will be the epoch of Christ's reign, the great Sabbath Day of restitution to the world, yet the venerable tradition is not without a reasonable foundation” (B39)

Chamber's Encyclopedia, 1881, Vol. VI, page 458-9 [Millennium] - “Millennium designates a certain period in the history of the world, during which the kingdom of Messiah will, according to tradition, be visibly established on the earth. This idea originated proximately in the Messianic expectations of the Jews ... but was connected by the Christians with the *Parousia*, or Second Coming of Christ. In the first century of the church, millenarianism (the Greek equivalent of which, *chiliasm*, from *chiloi*, a thousand, is the term employed by the Fathers) was a widespread belief, to which the book of Daniel, and more particularly the pictorial predictions of the Apocalypse (Chaps. 20 and 21), gave an apostolical authority.

“In the Mosaic account of creation, we find the primitive ground for making the victorious era of the church last a thousand years. That account was regarded by the Jews and by the Judaic Christians as a type of the destinies of creation. Now, by a strict literal interpretation of the 4th verse of the 90th Psalm, it was supposed that a day of God was arithmetically equal to a thousand

years; hence the six days of creation were understood to indicate that the earth would pass through 6000 years of labor and suffering, to be followed by a seventh day - that is, 1000 years of rest and happiness”

The Jewish Encyclopedia, 1905, Vol. X, page 605 [Sabbatical Year and Jubilee] - “The week of Creation consisted of seven days, the last being the Sabbath. The Feast of Weeks is so called because it occurs seven weeks after Passover, the fiftieth day being Pentecost. These days are parallel to the years of shemittah and yobel [sabbath and jubilee]. The duration of the world is 7,000 years, the seven thousandth year being the millennium, the Great Sabbath of the Lord”

Book of Jubilees* - translated from the Ethiopic (written in 135-105 BC, though some hold it was in 332-320 BC) by E. J. Goodrich in 1888. Chapter 1:24 “... The law and the testimony for the weeks and the jubilees, each year according to all its number and the jubilees according to years from the day of the new creation, when heaven and earth were created new, and also all creation according to the powers of heaven and all the creation of the earth, until then when the sanctuary of the Lord will be made in Jerusalem on Mount Zion, and all the luminaries will be renewed for a healing and for peace and for a blessing for all the chosen of Israel, that it may be thus from this day on and to all the days of the world “

Chapter 4:28-29 “And in the end of the nineteenth jubilee, in the seventh week, in the sixth year thereof, Adam died, and all of his sons buried him in the land of the creation of Adam, and he was the first to be buried in the earth, and he lacked seventy years of one thousand years; for one thousand years are like one day in the testimony of heaven, and therefore it was written concerning the tree of knowledge “On the day on which ye shall eat thereof ye shall die” And for this reason he did not complete the years of this day; for in it he died”

Chapter 50:3 “Concerning this I have ordained for thee the weeks of years and the jubilees, from the days of Adam to this day ... and jubilees will pass by until Israel shall be cleansed from all fornication and guilt and uncleanness and contamination and sin and transgression, and shall dwell in all the land in safety, and no Satan and no evil one will injure him, and the land will be cleansed from that time on and to eternity.”

Accordingly, we may understand Psalm 90:3 to indicate that for 6000 years God has allowed man to be turned “back into dust” and in the seventh says “Return, children of men”

*We are not advocating the apocryphal Book of Jubilees as an authoritative source for interpreting Scripture, but simply to document the history of Jewish tradition and thought.