

# Beauties of the Truth

*A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints  
Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages  
Volume 12, Number 2, May 2001*

*A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages*

BEAUTIES OF THE TRUTH is published as a service to the brethren to stimulate their consideration and appreciation of the boundless riches of God's Word. It is published free of charge. Subscriptions will be entered for all who request it. Address all correspondence to: Beauties of the Truth, 10034 S.W. 52nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97219. Editorial Board: Brs. Jerry Leslie (Managing Editor), Carl Hagensick, Raymond Luke, Michael Nekora, David Rice, Richard Suraci.

## Solomon's Sanctuary

*'Walk about Zion, go round her, count up her towers, review her ramparts, scan her citadels, that you may tell the age to come what a God our God is forevermore.'* (*Psalms 48:12-14, Moffatt*)

According to **2 Samuel 7** and **1 Chronicles 17**, David planned a stone sanctuary for the Lord. He was inhabiting his own house of cedar, and God gave him rest from all his enemies. Then he meditated the design of a temple in which the Ark of God might-be placed, instead of being set 'within curtains,' in the tent of the tabernacle.

The greatest event of Solomon's life was the erection of this Temple. This building fulfilled a prophecy, (**2 Samuel 7:13**) and was a symbol of Jehovah's abode with the people. So it was itself both a prophecy and a type for the Jewish people and the Church, and a monument to God's abiding presence with his people. (**Jeremiah 7**) Its history is an index to the history of the Jews themselves. When it fell, they were scattered; as it rose from its ruins, they gathered round it again; and history dates the captivity, with equal accuracy, from the destruction of the Temple (**1 Kings 9:7-8; 2 Chronicles 7:20; Jeremiah 7; Jeremiah 44:2-5**)

Jerusalem was built on two opposite hills (east and west), between which the Tyropean runs southeast and then south. The eastern hill is about 100 feet lower than the western. Its northern summit is Mount Moriah, which slopes down into Ophel. This was the City of David.

**1 Kings 5** tells of King Solomon writing to his friend Hiram, King of Tyre, who had jurisdiction over the forests of Lebanon. 'Command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon... So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to his desire... and Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand in the mountains... so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.'

The great Temple of God was purposed and largely prepared by King David and later built by King Solomon. The building commenced in the fourth year of Solomon's reign and finished in the 11th. The story of its cost seems fabulous, the gold and silver employed in its construction being estimated in today's dollars above 3 billion. It was a wonderful structure for its day - one of which King Solomon in all his glory and wisdom, and the people of Israel with him, had good reason to rejoice.

Man builds his reality first and later observes the shadow. Unlike man, God first builds his shadow and later the reality. The shadow of the temple precedes the glory of the kingdom. (**Hebrews 10:1; 1Co 10:11**) In its antitypical sense Solomon's Temple certainly represents the glorified Christ, head and body, built up of living stones as the Apostle Peter explains. (**1 Peter 2:5**) All were marked of the Lord for their positions in the Temple and fell asleep in Jesus until the time of the First Resurrection, the time for the construction of the Temple.

In the cooperation of Gentiles with Israel in the rearing of the Temple we see a symbol of their higher union in the glorious architecture of that spiritual house.

The context shows that King Hiram not only contributed largely to the Temple as a friendly gift, but also supplied skilled workmen under Solomon's pay... Thirty thousand Israelites were drafted to serve in the Temple construction one month out of each quarter. Besides these there were 150,000 laborers, apparently foreigners, hired from outside, or they may have been aliens residing in the land - Canaanites. The overseers would appear to have been 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates of whom 250 were Israelites and 3,600 Canaanites. (**1 Kings 5:13-16; 9:21-22; 2 Chronicles 2:17, 8:10**) This preponderance of the Canaanites amongst the overseers implies that the laborers were mainly Canaanites, and also reminds us that 'the Canaanite was still in the land.' The fact that the Canaanites, strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel, were the chief laborers in the construction of the Temple, seems to have been typical of the fact that aliens, strangers, foreigners, and enemies of the Truth have the larger share in the work of preparing the antitypical Temple. Their hammering, chiseling, melting and casting, under divine providence, serve to make ready the living stones and glorious pillars for the spiritual house. Verily they know not what they do. Their work is greater, better, than they comprehend, as the glories of eternity will demonstrate.' (**R3282**)

The consecration services began with the transfer of the Ark from Mount Zion. The Ark was carried to its place of rest to the innermost Sanctuary, and placed between the two standing cherubim in the Most Holy. The staves were removed, for the Ark had found its permanent home. It sat there with only the Mosaic law within. The pot of manna and Aaron's rod had been removed, for they were symbols of the Church's earthly pilgrimage. But God's Law stands forever. And so it will be when the Church is complete. Only God's Law will prevail among mankind.

The Ark, representing the embodiment of the divine covenant with Abraham, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple. The temple supersedes the wilderness tabernacle as the meeting place between God and his covenant people. The great King, antitypical Solomon, has about finished the temple construction.

The priests then reverently retired from the most holy, and were about to minister in the Holy Place. As the trumpeters and singers sounded praise and thanks, singing, 'He is good; for his mercy endureth forever,' then the house was filled with the cloud - the cloudy pillar. This cloud symbolized the Lord's presence through the wilderness journey, and subsequently with the Tabernacle. Now it rested upon the Temple for the first time. There was such an extreme brightness that the priests could no longer remain in the Holy.

Then standing near the altar of the court, spreading forth his hands toward heaven, Solomon prayed in a manner that teaches us the purpose and object of the great antitypical Temple constructed by the antitypical Solomon. This was the dedication proper. **2 Chronicles 6:14-42** and **1 Kings 8:22-53** records Solomon's dedication prayer. He acknowledged the literal temple as the place toward which all Israel should look as God's dwelling place, the center of his power, authority, forgiveness and blessing and help in every time of need.

The Temple was dedicated in the 7th month. (**1 Kings 8:2**) However it was completed in the 8th month, Bul. (**1 Kings 6:37-38**)

'As Solomon dedicated the Temple, so the Church of Christ will be dedicated, formally presented to the Father... Jesus, presenting us all as his members, as the Temple, which is his body, reared up on the third day, the third thousand-year day from the time of his death, the dawning of the great Sabbath. (**John 2:18-22**) As a result of the dedication, the glory of the Lord fills the Temple. The fact that the typical Temple was filled with the glory of the Lord before it was entirely completed, seems to imply that at the present time there will be some manifestation of God's favor toward the Church in glory, while yet the work of construction is not quite finished.' (**R5714 205714**)

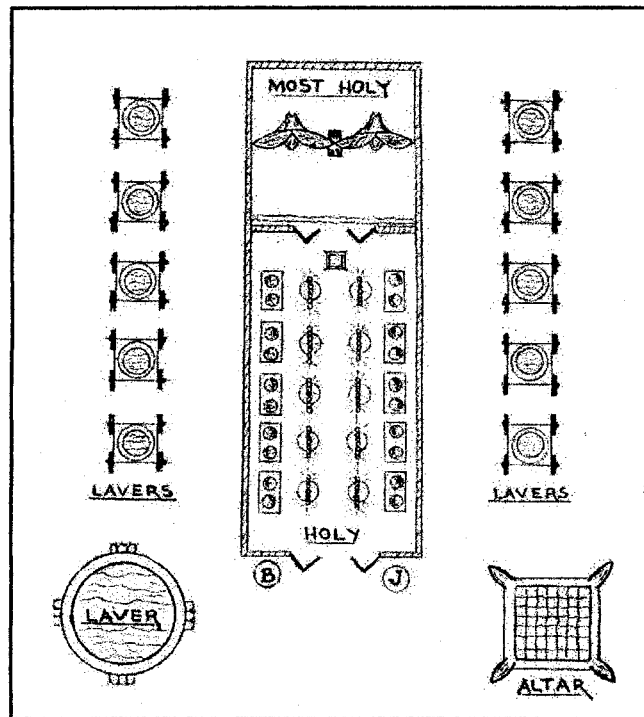
## **THE APPEARANCE**

Let us look with our mind's eye into the inner court of the temple. The most prominent object in the Court of the Priests was the large altar of unhewn stones, a square of not less than 48 feet. All around it a circuit ran for the use of the ministering priests. The horns measured about 1.5 feet in height. An inclined plane, 48 feet long by 24 feet wide led up to the circuit from the south. There was a system for drainage into chambers below and canals, all of which could be flushed into the Kidron and towards the royal gardens. Finally, there were 8 marble tables for the flesh, fat, and cleaned innards where the sacrifices were prepared. The approach to God's Holy Place is only by way of the Atar. So it is also in the antitype.

Between the altar and the porch of the Temple, but placed towards the south, was the Immense laver of brass, supported by 12 colossal oxen. Here the priests could wash and water could be drawn for the Sanctuary.

As we approach the Temple proper we notice two massive columns on either side of the entrance. 'He set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jakin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz'. (**1 Kings 7:21**) The names are significant. Jakin means: 'He shall establish.' Boaz means 'In it is strength.' They symbolize 'The Christ' who possesses the strength to establish the Kingdom. The same idea may be suggested in **Psalms 96:6**, 'Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.' According to **1 Kings 7:46** they were first cast in the clay of the plain of Jordan. This illustrates how the New Creatures were begotten while still in vessels of clay. These columns were 18 feet in circumference, 34.5 feet high. It was a gigantic task to move them to the Temple. So it is to bring the Church from her low estate to the high elevation of her destiny. The head of these columns were decorated with bronze pomegranates and chains of beautiful lily work. The head of every Christian is Christ, full of beauty, fruitfulness, fragrance and precious promises.

As we proceed into the Holy we first notice the walls. They are described in **1 Kings 6:15** and **1 Chronicles 29:4**. 'He built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling; and he covered them on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir... and the cedar of the house within was carved with knops and open flowers; there was no stone seen... and within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high... and he overlaid the cherubims with gold; and he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, within and without.



*Ground Plan of Solomon's Temple*

.. And the entering of the oracle he made doors of olive tree... and he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers; and covered them with gold fitted upon the carved work' (verses 15-35).

The outside wall was constructed of stones smooth and beautifully finished. On the inside of the wall there was a layer of silver. Next came cedar wood in which were carved cherubims, palms, flowers and chains. These reliefs were then covered with gold. Finally the gold was inset throughout with precious stones. It was a dazzling sight.

One thinks of the floor of fir, a symbol of everlasting life because of its evergreen nature. Here is the ground on which we stand. As we enter this temple we enter upon eternal life. 'Whosoever believeth on me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.'

Upon every side, the walls were covered with cedar wood. According to **Leviticus 14** and **Numbers 19**, cedar was one of the ingredients in ceremonies of cleansing. So in our temple, there is that all around which cleanses from sin. 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.'

As for the gold, we remember the text of **Psalms 45:13**, 'The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold.' **Isaiah 54:11-12**, 'Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.' **1 Peter 2:5**, 'Ye as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' Here are pictured the ingredients of truth, preserving promises, character fruitage, the divine nature, and crystallized characters.

There were also carved cherubim on the walls, marking God's attributes. The cherubim alternated with figures of palm trees and open flowers. We are told 'the righteous man shall flourish like a palm tree'. (**Psalms 92:12-14**) The open flowers were probably lilies and pomegranates - fit symbols of the many precious promises of the Word; all flowers, all 'open' for our enjoyment, means bringing forth of 'much fruit.'

The room was lighted by 70 burning lights on 10 candlesticks, 10 times the brilliance of the Tabernacle. Food was provided on 10 tables instead of the 1 in the wilderness tent. Such will be the glory of our heavenly home. 'The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof... And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light'. (**Revelation 21:23,22:5**)

The doors into the sanctuary, made of olive wood, suggest thoughts of the way into God's purposes and to communion with him - access by Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared... but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.' So do the olive wood doors swing open, revealing to us somewhat of the glories which lie beyond.

As we step into that which represents the divine presence we see a familiar piece of furniture. But all is changed. The Ark has been turned so we are looking at the narrow stave end of the chest. (**1 Kings 8:7-8**) If we stand perfectly still the two cherubim of love and power appear merged into one glorious central figure. Now two immense cherubim stand fully erect with wings outstretched to touch the walls. They face the east, in the direction of the offerings being brought into the court. These two represent love and power now open to mankind, while justice and wisdom become the burning light between them.

## LESSONS IN RETROSPECT

The generations between Solomon and the captivity did something to increase the beauty and majesty of the Temple at Jerusalem. So must we ever be zealous toward the truth which we have inherited, and ever remember the purpose for which truth is given to us, 'for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ'. (**Ephesians 4:12**)

For all the truths this Temple might portend, Israel forgot their Creator and polluted the temple with worship of the creature. For this God gave it over to destruction, and turned his face from his favored people. 'Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law'. (**Ho 8:1**)

'Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs. A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with

axes and hammers. They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground'. (**Psalms 74:4-7**)

All this happened on the 10th of the Hebrew month of Av according to **Jeremiah 52:12-13** and **2 Kings 25:8** { 1 } This sublime lament might well have been composed in Babylon at the time of the captivity. It seems clearly to refer to the destruction of Solomon's Temple. There is no event in Israel's earlier history which the words can fit. The Psalmist laments the destruction of the Divine Sanctuary by fire, its pollution by pagan symbols, and concludes on the despairing note, 'we see not our signs; there is no more any prophet; neither is there among us any that knowest how long' (verse 9).

David's throne was perpetual through the line of Solomon down to Zedekiah. When the Lord rent the kingdom from the hands of Zedekiah he did not give it to another family, but proclaimed an interregnum - a suspension of David's kingdom, which might not go to another. The language of the prophecy is, 'Thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end... Remove the diadem, take off the crown; this shall not be the same... I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him'. (**Ezekiel 21:25-27**)

All this beautiful work was burned and torn by the destroyers in Nebuchadnezzar's army. Let us not join the destroyers of that which represents God's truth. In their zeal many have done grave harm to the cause they espouse and disservice to the Lord they love. We do well to gratefully remember the labors of those who lifted up axes upon the thick trees, and treasure the carved work they set up in the sanctuary. Christians are the inheritors of a rich tradition. Other men have labored, and we have entered in to their labors.

## **PROPHETIC PERSPECTIVE**

There has been no King of Israel, from Zedekiah's day to the present - the overturning has been thorough. The fulfillment of this promise to David is nevertheless secure, sure as the word and oath of the Almighty. The antitypical David is assuming the reigns of government at the time appointed of the Father. He, as the antitype of Solomon, is building the Lord's house, and his throne shall be established forever.

The temple was rebuilt after the captivity under Zerubbabel and later restored and remodeled under Herod. Jesus taught in the temple and in his last days drove the polluting money changers from the Temple colonnade. In **Matthew 24** Jesus said concerning the temple, 'There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'

The prophecy was fulfilled 37 years later in AD 70 when Titus, son of Vespasian, took up the siege on Jerusalem, and broke through the Temple wall on the 10th of Av and set the Temple on fire. It was the very day of the year that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple more than 600 years before. Liquid gold was gathered as it ran out between the stones. **Isaiah 64:11** and **Micah 3:12** would seem to have a two-fold fulfillment: once under Nebuchadnezzar and again under Titus on the same dates. {2}

Though Jesus said, 'There shall not be left one stone upon another' and 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,' it has laid desolate for nearly 2000 years. Stones from the Temple mount retaining wall were recently uncovered in the positions they fell from the mount. The scene is called 'the moment of destruction,' and has not been further disturbed by archaeologists. During a brief Persian dominion in the 7th Century, a Jewish passerby engraved a verse on the western wall of the temple mount, based on the prophecy of **Isaiah 66:14**, 'And you shall see, and your hearts shall rejoice, for your bones like the grass [shall spring forth].' But the verse was never completed. The words 'shall spring forth' are missing. It is as though the engraver was interrupted during his work. No doubt the engraver felt that the beginning of the end of days was at hand, that the Messiah was about to come with redemption and resurrection of the dead. {3}

Today the 9th of Av is reverently kept by Jews as the last day of temple independence. It raises the national zeal of Orthodox Jews, often leading to an attempt to return the Temple mount to Jewish hands. Yet the 9th of Av revealed another turning point in history. The guns of August that began WWI were loosed on that day. {4} It was just seven times, 2520 years from its destruction under the fury of Babylon, marked at both ends on the same Hebrew day. It was 2520 years from the time Nebuchadnezzar torched Solomon's temple till God's judgments set the torch to the feet of Gentile dominion. It was WWI that eventuated in the 1917 Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate over Turkish held Jerusalem.

It is our thought that Jerusalem will not be totally free until the Temple mount is returned to Jewish hands. Following the judgment of **Micah 3:12**, comes the restoration of **Micah 4:1-2**. Though this will primarily have a spiritual fulfillment, we think it could also have a literal counterpart.

It is our mission in the present time to prepare the gold, silver and precious things for the future temple - ready for its construction. As David and his work of preparing for the temple typifies the church in this present time, and our work of preparing ourselves and each other for the glories to follow, also Solomon's kingdom, which followed, represents the kingdom of the glorified Christ. The construction of Solomon's Temple typifies the resurrection of the church, in which all the members shall come together in glorious completeness, in the morning of the Millennial day.' (**R3259 203259**)

'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' Let us labor until the work is done!. (**1 Corinthians 3:16**)

- Jerry Leslie

{1} 'The day of the destruction of the Temple is given in one passage as the seventh of Av (**2 Kings 25:8**) and in another (**Jeremiah 52:12**) as the tenth of Av. Traditionally (Ta'an. 29A), this discrepancy is reconciled by the statement that 'On the seventh [of Av] the heathens entered the Temple and ate therein and desecrated it throughout the seventh and eighth, and toward dusk of the ninth day set fire to it and it continued to burn the whole day.' The Tosefta Ta'anit 4:10 (also Ta'an. 29A) explains this discrepancy by stating that the destruction of the outer walls and of the courtyard started on the 7th of Av while the whole edifice was destroyed on the 10th of Av.' (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1972, Temple)

{2} 'At the beginning of Av (August) the wall of the Antonia was finally stormed, and after a few days the Temple was set aflame (9th of Av).' (\@Encyclopaedia Judaica\@, 1972, Jerusalem). 'The frequent Roman assaults on the wall of the court were repulsed until the eighth of Av, when Titus gave orders to set fire to the gates of the court. The next day a council was held at the Roman headquarters to decide upon the fate of the Temple. According to Josephus, Titus did not want the Temple to be demolished, but a different source, probably based on Tacitus, states that he demanded its destruction. In Josephus' account the burning of the Temple is accidental, resulting from a Roman soldier having thrown a burning torch through a window into one of the Temple chambers on the north side. In spite of Titus' efforts to contain the flames (so Josephus says), another torch was thrown against the Temple gate (apparently the gate of the sanctuary because the entrance hall was not closed by a gate), and the entire building went up in flames, except for two gates (Wars 6:281). The Jewish defenders fought with desperate bravery until the very last, and when they saw the edifice go up in flames many threw themselves into the fire. According to Josephus (Wars 6:248-250) the catastrophe occurred on the tenth of Av in the year 70 CE; according to the Talmud (Ta'an. 29A) on the ninth.' (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1972, Jerusalem). 'The city walls were breached in May; the fortress of Antonia adjoining the Temple Mount had fallen by late July. In August the Hebrew date is the ninth of Av, the same date on which, six and a half centuries earlier, Nebuchadnezzar's troops razed Solomon's Temple, the Temple of Herod was sacked and burned.' (Heritage, Abba Eban, 1984, page 86).

{3} *The Stones Cry Out*, Randall Price, 1997, page 190. *The Holy Temple Revisited*, Rabbi Leibel Remick, 1990, page 162. *Biblical Archaeology Review*, November/December 1986, Page 33.

{4} Besides the anger and ambition of nations, the conflagration of the Great War was precipitated by two notable events: (1) The assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary while on a visit to Bosnia on June 28, 1914. (2) Serbia was issued an ultimatum on July 23, to which they mostly consented. Nevertheless Austria retaliated with bombarding Belgrade on July 29. Russia would not stand aside while their Serbian ally was attacked and mobilized for war. The rapid sequence of events

followed which historians define as the igniting of the first World War. The events of the first 7 days of August follow. August 1-2 correspond to the Hebrew dates Av 9-10.

1. Germany declares war on Russia
2. Germany invades Luxembourg
3. Germany declares war on France and invades Belgium
4. Great Britain declares war on Germany
5. Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia
6. Serbia attacks Germany
7. Russians invade East Prussia, Montenegro attacks Austria-Hungary.

Sources: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th Edition, 1973, World Wars. The Age of Empire, Eric Hobsbawm, 1987. The Guns of August, Barbara Tuckman, 1962. Medieval and Modern Times, James H. Robinson, 1919.

### ***The Interrupted Vision***

*The angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words'. (Zechariah 1:12,13)*

Zechariah and Haggai were the two prophets of the Jewish return from Babylon. They returned to their native land shortly after the edict of Cyrus. Their mission was the same - to motivate the Hebrews of the return to rebuild the temple. Although both of their prophecies have second advent applications, they must be interpreted first in light of this historic context.

The book of Zechariah can be broken into four subdivisions: (1) a series of eight progressive visions, chapters 1 through 6. (2) An answer to a question concerning fasting, chapters 7 and 8. (3) The first 'burden' applying largely to the first advent of Messiah, chapters 9 through 11. (4) The second 'burden' applying to the second advent of Messiah, chapters 12 through 14.

Although many interpretations have been suggested for the eight visions, the list below shows only one of them. This view takes the visions as being in chronological sequence as a foreview of Zechariah's main purpose - to know what the future holds for Israel. In this view, application is made of the first three visions to natural Israel, the next two to spiritual Israel, the sixth and seventh to nominal spiritual Israel, and the last one as a summary of God's plan, not only for Israel, but for the whole human race.

- (1) Horses in Bottom Land - Natural Israel - Watch care of God's attributes over Israel during four universal empires
- (2) Horns and Carpenters - Natural Israel - Removal of four universal empires
- (3) Measuring of Jerusalem - Natural Israel- Restoration of Israel to divine favor



- (4) Joshua's Change of Garments - Spiritual Israel - Anointed to office
- (5) Olive Trees and Candlesticks - Spiritual Israel - Spiritual feeding during Gospel Age
- (6) Flying Scroll-Nominal Spiritual Israel-Judgment beginning at house of God
- (7) Woman in Ephah - Nominal Spiritual Israel - Rise of nominal church as Babylon
- (8) Horses Between Mountains - All Classes - Summary of results of working of God's attributes in finished plan

The above remarks will suffice to serve as a preface for our examination of the fourth vision of Zechariah, that of Joshua's change of garments.

### **JOSHUA, THE HIGH PRIEST**

The fourth vision saw the high priest Joshua receive a change of garments, his filthy rags exchanged for new, fresh, and clean garments. There are four actors in the vision - Joshua, the angel of Jehovah, Satan, and a group of spectators. The vision is in two parts - the clothing of Joshua (**Zechariah 3:1-5**) and a statement by the angel of Jehovah (**Zechariah 3:6-10**).

As high priest, Joshua was the leader of the priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel, the prince of the tribe of Judah. Joshua comes from noble heritage. His grandfather, Seraiah, was martyred, (**2 Kings 25:18-21**) and his father, Jehozadak, was taken captive when Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Jerusalem. Joshua was active with Zerubbabel in building the second temple. (**Ezra 3:2-8**) The two of them were encouraged in this work by the prophets Haggai (**Hag 1:10**) and Zechariah. Possibly he was the ancestor of Ezra, {1} who returned about a century later.

As in most pictures of the Aaronic priesthood, Joshua represents the church. It is apparent, both from his filthy garments and from the fact that the 'angel of the LORD' who defends him is Jesus, that Joshua represents the church alone. The words of the 'angel of the LORD' countering the charges of Satan, are 'The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan.' These words are quoted in **Jude 9** where they are attributed to Michael, the Lord Jesus.

The change of garments, shows the glorification of the church in her royal garments. This scene is reminiscent of **Leviticus 16:23,24** where, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest removes his sacrificial robes, bloodied by the performance of his duties, and changes his garments into those of glory and beauty.

Though not mentioning the various elements of the garments, the prophet does call attention to the headpiece - 'set a fair mitre {2} upon his head.' This garment was the next to the last one donned by the priest in his glory robes. (**Exodus 29:6**) Only the attachment of the gold plate (here called a crown) with the words 'Holiness to the LORD' was added afterward.

### **THE WARNING OF JEHOVAH**

The Hebrew *uwd*, translated 'protested' in the King James Version, (**Zechariah 3:6**) is open to a wide variety of renderings. It contains primarily the thought of a solemn and serious tone of voice and has, as one of its meanings, 'to give warning' (Brown-Driver-Riggs).

The warning makes the promise of rulership conditional - 'If thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my charge.' The promise itself is not merely to judge, or rule, but to be counted among the heavenly spectators.

We will quote the first part of the second statement of Jehovah from the updated American Standard Revised Version. 'Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you - indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.'

This translation rightly catches the point that the gathered spectators were symbolic. To them he would introduce another servant, called 'the Branch.' This verse had a partial application in the days of the literal Joshua, but applies in the fullest sense to the true Christ and the construction of the true temple.

Pastor Russell's comments on the literal application bear repeating. 'Verses 9 and 10 blend type and antitype. Zerubbabel had begun the building of the literal Temple, and the people understood that it would be completed by him' (R1491). In other words, Zerubbabel, who was a branch of the kingly Davidic line, was a type of Christ as Joshua was of the church.

### A STONE WITH SEVEN EYES

The next statement warrants close examination. 'For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the Braving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.'

The Hebrew word for 'stone' is *eben* (Strong's #68), and is used of a broad variety of stones from rocks to gem stones. It is the word used for the onyx stones on the shoulders of the high priests and for the precious stones in his breastplate. (**Exodus 25:7; 28:16**) The New Living Bible, admittedly a paraphrase, uses 'jewel' as its translation. The two most reasonable options for identifying the stone is either the foundation stone of the temple which is mentioned in the next vision, (**Zechariah 4:7-9**) or a stone or stones associated with the high priest. Since the vision concerns the garments of the high priest, and since 'engraving' is always used of an inscription or ornamentation in metal or precious stones, we suggest it refers to the stones on Joshua's breastplate. The word translated 'one,' suggesting a single stone, can be translated 'any' or 'every' of a number of stones, according to both Professor Strong and Brown-Driver-Riggs. The New Living Bible is in accord with this concept of a jewel: 'Now look at the jewel I have set before Jeshua, a single stone with seven facets. I will engrave an inscription on it, says the LORD Almighty.'

Keil and Delitzsch note that the engraving does not consist of the 'seven eyes,' but that 'the seven eyes are directed toward the stone, or watch over it with protecting care.' This leaves us with the suggested translation, 'Behold, I lay before [or upon] Joshua every precious stone, and my seven eyes will watch over them to protect them.' The last phrase of verse 9 properly belongs with verse 10.

These 'seven eyes' are also attributed to the slain Lamb of God in **Revelation 5:6**, where they are identified with the 'seven spirits' (see also **Revelation 1:4**). They have been interpreted as the Lord speaking to the church since the messages to each of the seven churches in **Revelation 2** and 3 end with the admonition, 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.' In general, they can be seen as the wisdom and watch care of both the Father and the Son over the church. This accords well with the usage in our passage in Zechariah.

The commentary of Adam Clarke on these seven eyes, though arbitrary, is worth noting. He identifies them with seven specific attributes of Christ performing seven functions in the care of the church. The list below depicts his thoughts.

## 'Seven Eyes' of Christ per Adam Clarke

Wisdom Directing

Power Protecting

Goodness Saving

Mercy Upholding

Truth Purifying

Love Governing

Compassion Preserving

If, then, the engraving on the stone (or every stone) was not the seven eyes, what was it? If, in truth, this stone (or stones) referred to the garments of Joshua, it would refer either to the onyx stones which were on the priest's shoulders or to the stones in the breastplate. It was on the onyx stones that we do find an engraving, the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. (**Exodus 28:9**) Thus we have the commitment of God to eternally watch over these twelve tribes, and antitypically, over the spiritual twelve tribes named after the twelve apostles, whose names are in the twelve foundation stones of the New Jerusalem. (**Revelation 21:14**)

The final statement of the vision details the two results to be obtained through Christ and the anointed 'Joshua' class - 'I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall æ call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.'

In fact it will be in the 'same day,' the thousand-year day of Christ's reign, that there will be both the removal of all Adamic sin and its accompanying iniquity, as well as the obtaining of the security of every man sitting under his own vine and fig tree. The latter expression can be understood in either its literal sense or symbolically, sitting under the rulership of Christ (the 'vine') and the earthly dominion of restored Israel (the 'fig tree').

## FINISHING THE VISION

With this statement the vision of Joshua the high priest appears to end. The narrative goes on to describe the next four visions. However, after completing his account of all eight visions, the prophet returns to the story of Joshua the high priest to add, as it were, an addendum to the earlier vision.

This addition is found in **Zechariah 6:9-15**. 'And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah; Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of

hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.'

In **Zechariah 3** we see Joshua dressed in pure garments and topped off with a mitre; in **Zechariah 6** we see a crown made to go over the mitre. This is reminiscent of the instructions given regarding the making of the original garments of glory and beauty. In **Exodus 29:6** we read, 'And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre.'

The main difference between the two is that the original crown for Aaron was a simple gold plate engraved with the words 'Holiness to the LORD'. (**Exodus 28:36**) a second difference is that Zechariah refers to 'crowns' in the plural, rather than to a singular tiara. However eight ancient manuscripts, along with the Syriac and Chaldaic versions, read 'crown,' in the singular, which better accords with the concept that this was a crown for Joshua and not for multiple priests.

The object of Joshua having a crown is specifically stated in **Zechariah 6:13**, 'he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne.' This is the same position as Melchizedek, who was both a priest and a king. (**Hebrews 7:1,8:1**) Joshua is the first and only Aaronic priest who shares these two offices. In fact, historically these positions were kept separate, the kingly line descending from the tribe of Judah and the priestly line from Levi. Now, however, they are to be joined in Messiah, the true Branch, who, with his church, shall be 'priests and kings and reign a thousand years'. (**Revelation 20:6**)

There are, thus, two occasions when we see the roles of king and priest united in the line of Aaron - in Joshua and in the robes of glory and beauty for the Aaronic priesthood, where the golden plate represents the crown. {3} It is then, as stated in **Zechariah 6:13**, that 'A counsel of peace shall be between them.' Indeed, the Updated American Standard Version renders this phrase, 'the counsel of peace shall be between the two offices.'

We note that one of the times the high priest was to change into the garments of glory and beauty was on the atonement day, after the scapegoat was let go into the wilderness. (**Leviticus 16:22-24**) This implies that the garments of glory and beauty do not apply to Christ or the church until the sacrificial work is done. Since Jesus finished his sacrificial work some two thousand years ago and yet does not don the glory robes until the sacrificing of both the church and the great company is completed, those robes do not apply to the glory of person. Rather, they represent the glory of the office which will be filled when the spiritual classes are complete.

Likewise, though Joshua was given clean raiment in **Zechariah 3**, he is not given the crown until the work of all the other visions are complete. It is the last act of the vision section of Zechariah's prophecy.

### **LAI D UP FOR A MEMORIAL**

Further, in the visions of Zechariah, even after the crown is made for him, he does not immediately wear it. The crown is to be placed in the completed temple and placed under the charge of Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah 'for a memorial.' The Hebrew word *ztkrown* (Strong's #2146) is the same word used of the onyx stones on Aaron's glorious garments in **Exodus 28:12**.

Probably it was not that it was only to remain as a memorial token, for such are the grounds of idol worship. More likely it was to be kept there for those rare occasions when the crown was to be worn by Joshua or his successors.

## HELDAI, TOBIJAH, JEDAJAH AND JOSIAH

Very little is positively known about these individuals, who were active both in the making and in the preserving of Joshua's crown. We do know that the first three were among the returnees to Jerusalem from Babylon. We can assume that Josiah had returned earlier since he already owns a house. We can also assume that all four came from godly parentage, since all four names include the 'iah' suffix, meaning 'Jehovah.' The name 'Helem' in verse 14 is likely the 'Heldai' of verse 10.

Somewhat more is known about Josiah. {4} His ancestor is listed as Zephaniah. This Zephaniah is not the prophet whose book bears that name, for that prophet was a descendant of Hezekiah (Hizkiah in the Authorized Version) while this Zephaniah appears to have access to the temple, and thus be a priest. Most probably this was the Zephaniah who was the frequent messenger of King Zedekiah to Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 29:29 37:3**) and was one of the leaders of Israel who were killed by the Babylonian captain of the guard, Nebuzaradan. (**2 Kings 25:18-21**)

Their role was two-fold - first, manufacture the crown of gold and silver for Joshua; second, be responsible for its maintenance in the temple. We suggest that their roles may be similar to those ascribed to the four and twenty elders of Revelation. These are seen in **Revelation 5:9,10** witnessing with joy to the worthiness of Christ and those who would rule with him: 'And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.' ' (VAS)

In **Revelation 4:4** we see them sitting around the throne wearing crowns of gold. These crowns, however, they do not retain. In verses ten and eleven, they are seen casting their crowns before the one on the throne, saying, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'

This activity of the 24 elders is roughly parallel to that of Josiah and his three companions in Zechariah. Though there is honest debate among brethren as to the identity of these 24 elders, we would suggest that they represent the prophets (or prophecies) of the Old Testament. In these prophecies we find the defined requirements for the one who would prove worthy, not only to open the book, but to wear the crown. They retain, like the holder of a wager in a gambling event, the booty for the one who meets the requirements. Once that party is proven, they cast their crowns before him or, as in the case of Joshua's crown, they continue to keep it treasured in the temple as a memorial.

Thus, in the interrupted vision we see the call, selection, proclamation, and crowning exaltation of the Joshua class, the church in their future role of kings and priests with the Lord upon his throne.

- Carl Hagensick

{1} Ezra is also listed as the son of Seraiah. (**Ezra 7:1**) Since both Joshua and Ezra were high priests, it is most likely that the Seraiah of the two lineages is the same. The following note from the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia gives a logical explanation for this seeming discrepancy. 'Since Seraiah, according to the Book of Kings, was killed by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, (**2 Kings 25:18-21**) and since he was the father of Jehozadak, the high priest who was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar (**1 Chronicles 6:14-15**, etc.) in 588 BC, and since the return under Ezra took place in 458 BC, the word 'son' must be used in **Ezra 7:2** in the sense of descendant.'

{2} Though the Hebrew word for 'mitre' in this passage is not the same as that used of the high priest in Exodus, and is frequently translated 'turban,' the following from the Keil and Delitzsch is noteworthy:

'Tsaniiph is not a turban, such as might be worn by anybody (Koehler), but the headdress of princely persons and kings, (**Job 29:14, Isa 62:3**) and is synonymous with mitsnepheth, the technical word for the tiara prescribed for the high priest in the law (Exodus and Leviticus), as we may see from **Ezekiel 21:26**, where the regal diadem, which is called tsaniiph in **Isaiah 62:3**, is spoken of under the name of mitsnepheth. The turban of the high priest was that portion of his dress in which he carried his office, so to speak, upon his forehead; and the clean turban was the substratum for the golden plate that was fastened upon it, and by which he was described as holy to the Lord, and called to bear the guilt of the children of Israel. (**Exodus 28:38**) (From Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament. New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.)

{3} It is interesting to note that the only time after that when there was a 'king' to rise over Israel came as a result of the Maccabean revolt when Judas Maccabeus, a Levite and a priest, assumed the kingly role. He was followed by his descendents of the Hasmonean Dynasty.

{4} 'Hen,' in verse 14, is likely not a proper name, but should have been translated into its meaning as 'chosen' - the chosen, or favored son of Zephaniah. Many translators, so interpreting it, render 'Hen' as 'Josiah.'