

Zerubbabel

The Signet, the Plummets and the Temple

Those who attended the Worldwide Church of God will remember a truth that Mr. Armstrong came to understand in the latter years of his life. The truth that was revealed to the entire Church beginning in the mid 1970's was the identity of one who would appear as Zerubbabel at the end of the age.

Mr. Armstrong spoke and wrote about this subject quite often. He talked about this doctrine in sermons, co-worker letters, *The Worldwide News*, and in the *The Plain Truth* and *The Good News* magazines. In these messages and articles, he mentioned how the ancient governor Zerubbabel was a forerunner of one who would appear at the end of the age. It became an exciting and established truth in the Philadelphia era of God's Church, an era that is described as having "kept the word of Christ", Revelation 3:8 & 10.

In this article, you will learn how the ancient governor Zerubbabel was a forerunner of one who would appear at the end of the age. The entire *Worldwide Church of God* came to understand connection between Mr. Armstrong and Zerubbabel and why it is so significant. You will hear the words of Mr. Armstrong, as Christ inspired him to speak them, on this topic. And you will learn the echoing implications of this doctrine that pertain to God's people at the end of the age. The truth behind this subject will once again be uncovered!

Who was Zerubbabel

As we begin to look into this subject, it is beneficial to start with the Biblically recorded history of Zerubbabel. We will begin by learning who the ancient Zerubbabel was and the role that he played in ancient Israel. This will be explained and detailed with the appropriate scriptures referenced. And then, you will hear from Mr. Armstrong and from the writers of the Worldwide Church of God discuss in detail the truth behind this subject.

Zerubbabel is initially mentioned in Ezra 1:1-11 under the name of Sheshbazzar. A quick study of any concordance will reveal that Sheshbazzar was the Babylonian name for Zerubbabel. A few decades after the Kingdom of Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians, the Medo/Persian empire would defeat the Babylonians and inherit the Jews as their slaves. The first chapter of Ezra describes a contingency of Jews who, under a proclamation by the Persian King Cyrus, were allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple that was destroyed by the Babylonians. The following is what was written in The Bible Story – Volume VI:

"The first of the Jewish exiles to start back for their homeland after being captives of the Babylonians were led by *Zerubbabel*, prince of Judah. Their long caravan of about fifty thousand people also included over seven hundred horses, more than a hundred mules, over four hundred camels and almost seven thousand donkeys. There were also herds of cattle and flocks of sheep to be used as food along the way and for starting new herds and flocks when they arrived in the homeland."

Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel and Shealtiel was the son of the deposed King of Judah, Jeconiah (Jehoiachin). This is detailed in Haggai 1:12 and I Chronicles 3:17. After the proclamation by King Cyrus was issued, Zerubbabel was placed in charge of the contingency of Jews that would return to Jerusalem. It numbered 50,000. Upon arriving in Jerusalem, he served in the office of governor, Haggai 1:1 and 14. An altar of sacrifice was initially established and then the reconstruction of the temple was begun, Ezra 3:1-3 and Ezra 4:1-2:

“One of Jeconiah's sons was Salathiel, who was the father of Zorobabel, the son of royal seed through whom Jesus Christ Himself traced His royal ancestry back to David! (Matt. 1:12.) And Zorobabel — or *Zerubbabel* — was the man God caused Cyrus, king of Persia, to make a decree giving him the governorship — not the crown of a king — to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the House of God, the Temple, seventy years after the captivity.

The United States And Britain In Prophecy, Book, Herbert W Armstrong

“Seventy years later, the Persian Empire had succeeded the Chaldean. God caused King Cyrus, by communicating via ‘stirring up the spirit of Cyrus’ (Ezra 1:1) — his one ‘human’ spirit to issue a decree sending a contingent of Jews back to Jerusalem to build the second temple. *Zerubbabel* was the governor of the contingent and builder of the temple to which Christ came, at His first appearing on earth as the human Jesus.”

Good News Magazine, “Seven Proofs Of The True Church – Proof 1-4”, Herbert W Armstrong, November 20, 1978

This is the brief history and the Biblically recorded chronicles of the ancient Zerubbabel. The time frame when this occurred is between 538 BC and 515 BC. The next quote from an article that appeared in the *Good News Magazine* summarizes everything that we have just learned. This history will become much more important and meaningful shortly:

“The Jewish captivity in Babylon had been prophesied to last about 70 years.

“In 539 B.C., the mighty Persian army under the command of Cyrus besieged Babylon. One night as the Babylonians drank and reveled, Cyrus quietly diverted the river Euphrates into irrigation channels, marched his army up the dry riverbed and in the early morning hours swarmed into the city, taking it in a few hours.

“Persia became the dominant empire of the world, inheriting the captive Jewish peoples. But Persian policies were different from those of the Babylonians. The Persians permitted captive peoples to live in their homelands and worship according to their ancient traditions. Previously deported peoples were allowed to return to the areas from which they had been taken. By 538 B.C., Cyrus issued a decree permitting Jewish subjects of his empire to return to their country and begin rebuilding. Settlers began to straggle back to Jerusalem. Among them was a descendant of King Jehoiachin named *Zerubbabel*.

He was to become governor and play an important role in the reconstruction of Jerusalem and a new Temple.

“Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest, cleared the rubble off the Temple Mount. The first order of business was to erect an altar and reinstitute animal sacrifices. This was done and the Festival of Succoth (the Feast of Tabernacles) was observed on the Temple Mount.

“It is important to note that a Temple was not at this time considered necessary for a sacrificial altar or for religious services.

“Then Zerubbabel began building a Temple. Just as Solomon had done, he hired quality craftsmen and ordered building logs of cedar. Levites were given responsibilities at the project. Songs and religious ceremonies recalled the days of glory of the first Temple.

“But the joys were short-lived. Because of many problems in the region, the work stopped.

“After more than a decade, work began and ended at irregular intervals. By 515 B.C., the main edifice of a Temple was completed and dedicated. This second Temple was similar in size to the one Solomon built, but nowhere near the magnificent structure destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.”

Good News Magazine, “Coming – A Temple in Jerusalem”, February 1985

The Temple

So is there a connection with what Zerubbabel is described as having achieved and with what Mr. Armstrong accomplished in the 20th century? And if so, what is it? An important connection that Mr. Armstrong spoke quite often about was the building of a temple. Just like the ancient Zerubbabel was given the task of building a physical temple, Mr. Armstrong understood that God was using him to build a spiritual temple:

“It says of Zerubbabel, Zechariah 4:9, ‘The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it...’ (Zech. 4:9).

“Speaking of that same Temple, in Haggai 2, but only as a TYPE of another Temple to which Christ shall come at His imminent Second Coming, ‘For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations...and I will fill this House with glory, saith the Lord of hosts...The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former.’ (Haggai 2:6-9)

*“WHAT House was God talking about? NOT the one Zerubbabel was building, for it did not compare in glory with Solomon's Temple. **He was talking of the MORE GLORIOUS TEMPLE to which Christ shall come at His SECOND COMING—a SPIRITUAL TEMPLE—His CHURCH** then resurrected to spiritual IMMORTALITY (Eph. 2:20-21). God has been building that Temple since 1933. And Satan HATES IT!”*

“Haggai 2:3-9 Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? [It's talking about Solomon's temple that was so glorious as a physical temple.] And how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? (4) Yet now be strong, O *Zerubbabel* [The second temple was like nothing compared to Solomon's. It was bigger, but it was not as fine.] Now Be strong, O *Zerubbabel*, saith the [Eternal]; and be strong, O Joshua, son of [Well, his father; and so on.] ...and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD [That is, work in building the temple.]... (5) According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. (6) For thus saith the LORD of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I WILL shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; (7) and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come [Meaning, peace which will come with Christ.]; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. (8). The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. **(9) The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former.**

“The glory of the house he was building was NOT ANYWHERE NEAR as glorious as the former temple of Solomon. But he's talking about a time when the thrones of nations will be destroyed, when God is going to shake the earth, and shake nations. He's talking about our time, now. He's talking about the Second Coming of Christ ...

“Malachi 2:9 and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts. [He hasn't given that yet but He will, at the time He's talking about. Now, **He's talking of a time of building the temple for Christ to come to. That temple is a spiritual temple.**”

Sermon, “Building the Temple”, Herbert W Armstrong, February 14, 1981

Haggai's and Zechariah's Prophecy

But how did Mr. Armstrong come to this conclusion? Why did Mr. Armstrong believe that the physical temple Zerubbabel built was a forerunner of the spiritual temple that he was building? It is because Jesus Christ taught him, directly from the written Word of God, that some of the scriptures in the book of Haggai are prophetic in nature. He understood that the time when God will “shake the heavens and the earth” and when God will “give peace to this place” can only be referring to events that will occur in the future, at the end of the age:

“You read of this in Haggai 2. In reference to the temple, God said through Haggai, ‘For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come [till the treasures of all nations are brought hither (Moffat translation)]: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts’ (Haggai 2:6-9).

“Notice! **This is a PROPHECY—for the future.** The TIME? The present and immediate future.

“The theme at the beginning of chapter 1 has been the building of the second temple. Then, in the verses above quoted, it becomes a PROPHECY— no longer a history of Zerubbabel building the temple over 500 years before Jesus came, yet the same temple to which He came at His first coming. **But suddenly the HISTORY changes to PROPHECY of our time now,** and it speaks of the temple—this ‘latter-house’—having glory far greater than that of Solomon's temple. Now what temple is it talking about? The one Zerubbabel built was nowhere near as glorious as Solomon's temple!”

CoWorker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, July 24, 1979

“Zerubbabel was the governor of that colony. And Zerubbabel was given the commission to build that temple. ‘Who is left among you [who] saw this [temple] in [its] first glory? and how do [we] see it now? [it had been totally destroyed] ... yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua [then it gives his father and parents' names] and work [in other words, work to build this physical building to which Christ came the first time]: for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts: according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.’

“And His Spirit remains among His people even today. In a way it was not with all of the people then, but really is in us today.

*“For thus says the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land [What's He talking about? He's not talking about the time in which Zerubbabel lived; **He's talking about our time; this was a prophecy. Haggai is not a book of history, it's a book of prophecy**]; and **I will shake all nations [He hasn't done that yet.** He didn't do that in Zerubbabel's day. Zerubbabel lived about a little over 500 years before Christ], and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts.*

Worldwide News, “Congress Of Leading Ministers Hears Defined And Reemphasized Spiritual Organization Of Church”, Herbert W Armstrong, March 6, 1981

“But Zerubbabel was merely a TYPE. The prophecy, as we see plainly beginning in verse 6, chapter 2, is millennial. ‘For thus saith the Eternal of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire [RSV has, ‘so that the treasures of all nations shall come’] of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts... The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former.’

“It is speaking of the end-time — at the second coming of Christ. Now what does it mean, the glory of this latter house (or latter-day house) shall be greater than that of the former — that is, greater in splendor than Solomon's temple, which had the most glorious splendor of any building on earth?

Certainly the second temple, built by *Zerubbabel*, even though larger, could not compare in splendor to Solomon's.

"But God was speaking of the temple to which Christ shall come, at His glorious second coming as King of kings and Lord of lords!"

Where is the True Church?, Book, Herbert W Armstrong, 1984

The Philadelphia Era

God used Mr. Armstrong to restore the truth to the Church during the Philadelphia era. He used him to raise up the *Worldwide Church of God*. The *Worldwide Church of God* was the spiritual temple that was built by the modern day Zerubbabel.

What makes this Church era unique is the characteristic of "holding fast to the truth". This is an era that "kept the Word of Christ", Revelation 3:8, which is the truth, John 17:17. Revelation 3:11 explains how a group will continue to hold fast to the truth. It is the remnant of this group and those that have the characteristics of the Philadelphia era listed in Revelation 3:7-11, that will exist at the end of this age and will be protected in a place of safety, Revelation 3:10 and 12:14. And this is the glorious temple that Christ will return to at His second coming:

"God's TIME had come! His time for one, of whom John the Baptist was type and forerunner, to prepare the way for Christ's SECOND coming. **For one of whom Zerubbabel, in building the second temple at Jerusalem, was type and forerunner, of one through whom Christ would build this era of God's CHURCH - the spiritual TEMPLE to which Christ will come the second time to RULE and RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD.**"

Good News Magazine, "The History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God", Herbert W Armstrong, April 1980, Page 26

"However, as the second temple *Zerubbabel* was building was a typical forerunner of the temple to which Christ shall come, even so **Zerubbabel was the typical forerunner of one Christ would use in building the far more glorious temple to which Christ shall come in His GLORY!**

"In Zechariah 4:9, "The hands of *Zerubbabel* have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it..." And as *Zerubbabel's* hands did finish that second temple, so shall the one Christ uses in building the temple to which He shall come in His GLORY!

"And the Church of God of the present day shall be '... a building fitly framed together [and] groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord' (Ephesians 2:21)."

Good News Magazine, "Seven Proofs of the True Church – Proof No. 5-6", Herbert W Armstrong, December 4, 1978

"Of the Philadelphia era of God's true Church we read: 'To the angel of the church....' This word *angel* translated from the Greek *aggelos* means messenger or agent. This is not necessarily always referring

to a spirit angel but can refer as well to a human agent. It is possible that God's principle of duality may apply here...

"Continue with verse 8: 'I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, **and hast kept my word**, and hast not denied my name.'

"... This Church and/or its leader had but little strength. Neither were of great and powerful stature in Satan's world but **those of this era were faithful to the Word of God**. Though much of the original gospel truth, imparted to the original apostles by Jesus in person, had been lost, it was restored through the Bible to this era of God's Church who were faithful in keeping it."

Mystery of the Ages, Herbert W Armstrong, Page 290-291

"Now I'd like to give you one little prophecy in the New Testament in Revelation 3 and verses 7 and 8. **This is the Philadelphia Church**, and **it is speaking of our Church today**, verses 7 and 8.

"Revelation 3:7 And to the angel of the **church in Philadelphia write** ...

"Revelation 3:8 I know thy works; behold I have set before thee an open door ... no man can shut it ... you have but little strength **and hast kept my word** ...

"Has believed what He says and kept His Word, and has not watered it down and has not compromised. And when I found it watered down, brethren, we got back onto the track. We're almost back there, if not entirely; and we must get all the way back."

Sermon, "Microwave From Tucson", Herbert W Armstrong, March 2, 1981

"However, as the second temple *Zerubbabel* was building was a typical forerunner of the temple to which Christ shall come, even so **Zerubbabel was the typical forerunner of one Christ would use in building the far more glorious temple to which Christ shall come in His GLORY!**

"Zechariah 4:9 'The hands of *Zerubbabel* have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it....' **And as Zerubbabel's hands did finish that second temple, so shall the one Christ uses in building the temple to which He shall come in His GLORY!**

"And the Church of God of the present day shall be a 'building fitly framed together [and growing] unto an holy temple in the Lord' (Ephesians 2:21)."

Plain Truth Magazine, "7 Proofs of God's True Church: Part Six", Herbert W Armstrong, August 1979

"Hold this prophecy of Malachi 3 in mind, and turn to Haggai 2, beginning verse 3. Zerubbabel was governor of a colony of Jews sent from Babylon back to Jerusalem 70 years after destruction of Solomon's temple, to build a new temple...

“Verse 3, the former temple of Solomon was then as nothing compared to its original physical glory. God commands Zerubbabel to be strong and work to build the temple (verse 4). Verse 6 goes into a far-future prophecy of a time just before Christ's Second Coming, when God will shake the earth and shake all nations, and the GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN OF THE FORMER" (verse 9). The temple Zerubbabel built of stone, wood and physical materials was nowhere near as glorious as the former temple of Solomon! This is a PROPHECY speaking about the temple to which Christ shall come the second time, in supreme POWER and GLORY—a temple far more glorious than Solomon's ...

“**At Christ's Second Coming, what happens to the CHURCH?** Those dead ‘in Christ shall rise first: **then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds**, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:16-17). And where shall we be WITH Him? Where shall HE be? "His feet shall stand in that day (of His coming) on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem’ (Zech. 14:4). The Church, caught up to meet Him in the air as He is COMING, those who have died will be raised immortal. **But we, if still alive, shall ‘be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye...**and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed’ to spirit GOD PERSONS (I Cor. 15:51-52). **In that CHANGED, glorified SPIRIT immortal condition, we shall be the T E M P L E far more glorious than was Solomon's temple!**”

CoWorker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, March 19, 1981

Will Not Compromise

But there is another fascinating aspect to the prophecy in the book of Haggai. During the course of his life, Mr. Armstrong understood that he was chosen by Jesus Christ to be an apostle and to lead His people for one main reason. He knew that **God had picked him because he would not compromise on the truth.** It is the calling card of a true servant of God. You will soon see how this is directly connected to the prophecy of the end-time Zerubbabel:

“But there has been an effort to water down the truth. That's another thing that has happened in the last 9 years. We're trying to water down the truth of God with false doctrines that have been creeping in and ministers are teaching them, around the world even ministers of this Church! Now, believe you me, I am going to get after those things, and fast!

“Jesus Christ is in power. Jesus Christ is the power back of it and He is going to set these things in order. And if any of you want to fight Christ, you start fighting Him and see where you get off. Or if you want to go with the devil, maybe you'll suffer the devil's fate. I am speaking very plainly today. I'm a little wrought up about it.

“Revelation 3:8 I know... [He knows our works. So there are works; and they're good works, and not

rituals.] Behold, [He set this open door.] you have but a little strength, and hast kept my word.

"I was going to say, if there is any one reason why God called me, it is because I was willing to believe what He said, and because I had kept His Word and I have not compromised."

Sermon, "Warning to the Church", Herbert W Armstrong, July 1, 1978

"God revealed truth to me and if there is any reason why He has chose me, there's only one. It's not because of any righteousness of mine, it's not because of any abilities or powers of mine. I've known scores upon scores of men with better minds than I have, better personality, better appearance, more leadership, I'd say about more of everything that you think of humanly. But God has not called them or used them. Why? Why did He pick on one as inferior as I am? **Because I was willing to believe Him.** Adam and Eve didn't believe Him. Jesus Christ talked to thousands who didn't believe Him. **Only a hundred and twenty still believed Him after Christ had talked for three and a half years to multiple thousands of people.**

"But I did believe Him, and I have not compromised with that belief one iota and I've been working hard the last two and a half years to get this Church back on the track after others were getting it off the track. I don't think we are a hundred percent back yet. I don't think we have gotten all of the leaven out yet. But it's going out, believe me; and we're going to get it out.

Sermon, "Revelation 12", Herbert W Armstrong, April 18, 1981

"For some few years now, there had been a certain group at Headquarters, whom my son surrounded himself with, who have wanted to 'water down' God's truths and doctrines. They seem to have wanted to get as close to the ways of Satan as possible, still keeping "one foot" in God's Church, hoping thereby to get into the Kingdom of God.

"I want to get as CLOSE to GOD's true doctrines as possible, and as far away from Satan's ways as possible.

"If there is any reason why the living Christ chose me as His Apostle, it is that I will not compromise a thousandth of an inch on God's true doctrines."

CoWorker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, 1979

Comment: You have just seen how Mr. Armstrong would not compromise on doctrine. He was firm, resolute and determined during his ministry not to make any concessions with the truth that Christ had revealed to the Church through him. To this end he was faithful until his death.

The Seal of an Apostle

There is a fascinating detail that is mentioned in Haggai 2:23 and it is directly connected to the seal of an apostle. But before we study the important point in Haggai 2:23, we must first learn what the seal of an apostle is.

Under the leadership of Mr. Armstrong, the Worldwide Church of God grew to about 140,000 in attendance. No other time in the history of God's Church has there been such enormous growth as this. **Growth in the Church is a sign that God is blessing the Church because it is on track doctrinally.**

Another way of stating this important relationship is that growth in membership always equals a Church that is doctrinally on track and a Church that is doctrinally on track equals growth in membership. The two go hand in hand. The baptisms and the conversions that spring forth from this growth are the defined in I Corinthians 9:1-2 as the seal of an apostle.

God blessed the Church with phenomenal growth in the 20th century. And this is proof that the Church was doctrinally on track. And it is also the proof and the seal of Mr. Armstrong apostleship:

"In I Corinthians, chapter 9, the apostle Paul shows the proof of his apostleship: 'Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord' (I Cor. 9:1-2).

"Just as proofs in the life of Paul set him forth as an apostle of Jesus Christ, **in our time another has also been used by God in a powerful way. Through him, the Worldwide Church of God was established.** Through him, **the doctrines of God were restored to the Body of Christ.** Through him, **directly or indirectly, all of us in the Church have come to the knowledge of the truth,** repentance and baptism. Through him, demons have been cast out and many have been healed - even of cancer. **Isn't that the fruit, the seal of apostleship?**

"It is eminently clear, and has been for some time, **that Jesus Christ and God the Father have specially sent forth Herbert W. Armstrong with a commission, and his fruits have shown that he is an apostle:** For many years, Mr. Armstrong did not claim that he was fulfilling the office. Probably he did not need to, as the Church recognized him as an apostle whether or not he took that title. But in recent years, he has consistently said that he is an apostle. Some few people have resented this."

Good News Magazine, "How Many Apostles Were There?", February 1980, Page 11

"Directly, or indirectly, you are all MY children in the Lord. This Church is GOD'S Church. Jesus Christ is its living HEAD. He chose and has used me as His Apostle — as His human servant and instrument through whom HE, not just I, raised up all this Church. It was God the Father who called me, and later all of you. Jesus Christ founded and built God's Church. **He raised up and built the present Philadelphia era of God's Church. But He used me as the human instrument in so doing.**

"WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR BELIEF — THE DOCTRINES WE ALL HOLD SO DEARLY? Every doctrine — every point of belief — you received directly or indirectly through me as Christ's Apostle!"

The Worldwide News, "Satan Intensifies Persecution", Herbert W Armstrong, June 16, 1980

"The great Work of God proceeds full steam ahead all over the world. In the first five months of this year a new all-time record was set in number of letters and cards received worldwide. A total of 3.8 million cards and letters were received, as against 3.1 million last year. In 1984 we averaged 465

baptisms per month worldwide — and **for the first four months of 1985 the average was 597 baptisms per month. God is adding an average of one new large church congregation per month.** This year our ministers have averaged 1,972 new contacts requesting a visit, compared to 1,292 last year.”

Co-Worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, July 25, 1985

The Signet

And now, it is time to uncover the fascinating detail that is mentioned in Haggai 2:23. And it is directly connected to the seal of an apostle. In Haggai 2:21, God states that he will shake the heavens and the earth. As Mr. Armstrong stated in some of his statements that we have just read, what comes after this verse is prophetic in nature and pertains to the one who would come as a type of Zerubbabel at the end of the age. These verses are so significant to God’s people at the end of the age that they are worth noting here.

Hagai 2:21 Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth;

Hagai 2:22 And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

Hagai 2:23 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, **and will make thee as a signet**: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.

It is worth mentioning that ancient kings would sometimes wear a signet on their fingers. A signet is a ring that has a specific seal on top of it. And the seal on these rings was used as a stamp by these rulers to authenticate documents, decrees and orders that they would write while they were in office. Since it has already been established the Haggai 2:21-23 is prophetic in nature, the signet/seal identified in Haggai 2:23 can only be referring to the seal of Mr. Armstrong’s apostleship, since he was the one who was a type of the ancient Zerubbabel prophesied to appear at the end of the age:

“Speaking prophetically of OUR DAY, RIGHT NOW, God said: ‘Speak to Zerubbabel, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth, and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them [kings]...’ (verses 21-22) ...

“Then God continues, ‘In that day...’ meaning our day, now, at this TIME OF THE END, ‘saith the ETERNAL of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, ... saith the Eternal, and will make thee as a signet **as a seal, or stamp of official approval**’: for I have chosen thee, saith the ETERNAL of hosts’ (Haggai 2:23). There will have to be a Zerubbabel of today — the time actually here referred to.”

CoWorker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, August 29, 1974

The Authenticity of the Truth

The Zerubbabel of the 20th century will be made the equivalent of a signet, which is a ring with a seal or stamp on it. This is the notable detail in Haggai 2:23 and it is the connection that verifies, that validates, that all of the Biblical teachings that God revealed through Mr. Armstrong were authentic and correct, just like the signet that was used by ancient kings was used to confirm the authenticity of a document. This signet confirms what Mr. Armstrong said numerous times, i.e. that Jesus Christ was the true author of the truths that were established in the *Worldwide Church of God* under his leadership:

"In our day, Jesus Christ taught His chosen *apostle* through the written Word of God. The Worldwide Church of God — the same Church as founded in A.D. 31 — received its DOCTRINE through God's chosen Apostles!"

The Worldwide News, "God Commands That We Avoid Certain Ones!", Herbert W Armstrong, February 25, 1980

"Brethren, think a moment. HOW did the first Church of God receive its doctrines — its teachings — its beliefs? Answer: Only through the APOSTLES. And how did they receive this teaching? Direct from JESUS in person. He is the WORD of God. The Bible is the SAME Word of God in writing! **How did YOU receive the true teachings of Christ? From God's apostle. How did I receive this wonderful truth? From the SAME JESUS, only IN WRITING.** The Bible is a coded book. The Catholics and Protestants have access to it, but can't UNDERSTAND IT!"

Co-worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, January 26, 1983

"Now *HOW* did God put *His* doctrines and teachings into His Church in A.D. 31? - before many in the Church turned to another gospel (Galatians 1:6-7) ? **And HOW did the living Christ put God's doctrines and teachings into His Church TODAY** before these 'intellectual liberals' began trying to compromise and water down?"

"Only by His chosen apostles!"

Good News Magazine, "And Now Christ Sets Church Back On Track Doctrinally", April 1979, Page

"As I wrote at the beginning of this Pastor's Report, the living Jesus Christ CALLED ME. He used a method such as NONE of you had to go through. He completely UPSET me! He made me see that just about ALL that I had been taught about religion was WRONG..."

"You, dear ministers and wives, did not have to go through what God put me through. **I learned TRUTH a doctrine at a time. Through me it was handed to all of you 'on a platter'** — all together.

"Now if you don't understand and believe that, I wonder what you are doing in Christ's ministry.

"The living CHRIST put HIS TRUTH into God's Church through me."

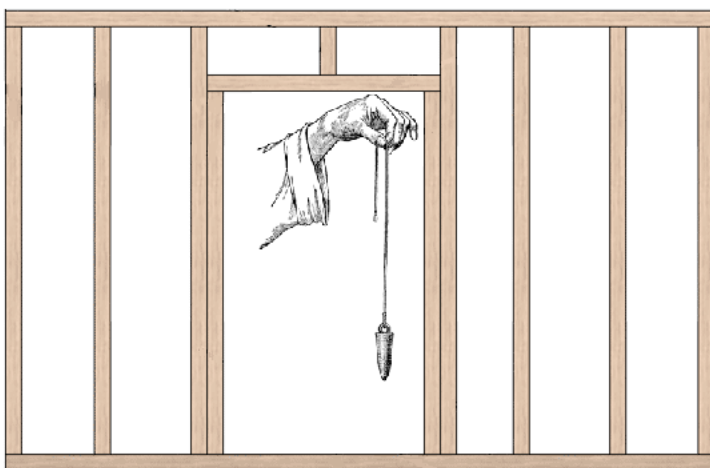
The Plummet

There is a second fascinating point in Zechariah 4:9-10 and it involves a plummet. Mr. Armstrong frequently mentioned that the ancient Zerubbabel was a forerunner of one who would come in the end-time and build the spiritual temple that Christ would return to. As he began to understand this prophecy, Christ revealed to him that he was the latter day Zerubbabel spoken of in these end-time prophecies.

When I was in my 30's, I built a 10 by 10 shed in the backyard of our house. This was not a prefabricated structure. It was a small building that I put together from the bottom up. It was the first and the last structure that I built. My father-in-law was instrumental in guiding me with some of the details necessary to erect a solid and well built shed.

There are numerous construction related lessons I learned when I built this shed but there is one that is still in the forefront of my mind. As the framing went up and as I measured out a rectangular opening for a door, I noticed that door that I had purchased did not quite fit around the opening in the frame. Even though I had measured the opening properly, the framing around the door opening was not plumb and the slight deviation prevented the door from fitting into the frame opening. This deviation was hard to see without the use of a tool.

I asked my father-in-law for his assistance with this problem. This is when he taught me how to make and use a plumb line. He grabbed a string and placed a weighty object on one end of it. He then hung the string by the two side door posts and the weighty object stretched the string down in a straight line. With this plumb line, it became apparent that the side posts were not perfectly straight. At the top where the string began to hang down, the deviation was only slightly apparent but the further down the string went, the more noticeable the deviation became. The following picture illustrates this point:



So what does this have to do with the prophecy concerning Zerubbabel? Zechariah 4:9-10 describes the foundation of a temple that is laid and completed by Zerubbabel. Furthermore, it depicts a plummet in the hand of the end-time Zerubbabel. These scriptures are so important, they are worth noting:

Zechariah 4:9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.

Zechariah 4:10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the **plummet** in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; they *are* the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

Since these verses are prophetic in nature, the foundation it is referring to is for the spiritual temple that Mr. Armstrong was used to build. It has always been understood that the house of God, which is the Church of God is the “pillar and ground of the truth”, I Timothy 3:15. The truth is the foundation upon which the Church of God is built. Another key verse is Ephesians 2:20. It states that the Church is built upon a foundation, which is the teachings and the writings of the “apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone”.

Therefore, the foundation that Mr. Armstrong established, upon which the *Worldwide Church of God* was built on was the truth, the true teachings that came from God in the 20th century. The plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel is a way to validate whether a new doctrine that is established by another apostle is “plumb” or “straight”. In other words, any new teaching that is introduced by another apostle must line up perfectly with the truths revealed to Mr. Armstrong. Any new teaching that doesn’t line up perfectly should be considered a false doctrine.

In summary, we already know that any truth that is revealed has to come through the office of an apostle. And now we have learned that it also has to lineup perfectly with the truths that were revealed to Mr. Herbert W Armstrong, because the “plummet” that is in the hand of Zerubbabel is used to validate truth:

“This building is being built by the spirit of God! Not by might and power. Not by brick, and mortar, and wood, and plaster, and other physical materials, but by the Spirit of God!

“Zechariah 4:7-9 Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shall become a plain: and he shall bring forth the HEADSTONE thereof with shoutings, saying, Grace, grace unto it. [Which is Christ, of course. Speaking of Christ's coming, and bringing forth Christ in OUR GENERATION.] (8) Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (9) The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the Foundation of THIS house; [What house is it talking about? The one to whom Christ is coming.] His hands shall also finish it: And thou shalt know that the [Eternal} of hosts has sent me unto you.

“I have taken great courage in reading that, more than once. Maybe you can understand why.

“Zechariah 4:10 For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the **plummet** in the hands of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the [Eternal], which run to and fro over the whole earth [and so on].”

Bible Study, “Zerubbabel’s Temple”, Herbert W Armstrong, July 1978

The Temple Made Ready

Mr. Armstrong understood that the most important aspect of the prophecy in Haggai and Zechariah 4 involves the preparation of the temple by the end-time Zerubbabel. He knew that Jesus Christ is returning to a spiritual temple, the Church. Mr. Armstrong recognized that he was playing a direct role in preparing Church. And this involved and began with getting the Church “back on the track” by restoring all of the true doctrines that had been watered down during the liberal years of the 1970’s.

He also recognized that Jesus Christ is returning to a spiritual temple with members that are both alive and dead. The apostle Paul makes this abundantly clear in I Thessalonians 4:16-17.

I Thessalonians 4:16 “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in Christ shall rise first:**”

I Thessalonians 4:17 “Then **we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds**, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Therefore, the temple that Mr. Armstrong is responsible for preparing is the temple that will be alive at the second coming of Christ. The following are his words on this subject:

“GOD ALMIGHTY brought me back from DEATH! He brought me back, not only to FINISH carrying His Gospel of the Kingdom of God into all the world, but also BECAUSE HIS CHURCH WAS NOT ‘HOLY, NOT HAVING SPOT OR WRINKLES OR ANY SUCH THING.’

“Just as sure as He set Zerubbabel to build the physical second temple to which Christ came 1,900 years ago, so He has raised me up to build His SPIRITUAL TEMPLE — the Household of God, ‘which groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD.’ And it MUST BE MADE READY for the MARRIAGE when Christ returns, AND WE HAVEN’T MUCH TIME!”

The Worldwide News, “And Now – Christ Sets Church On God’s Organizational Track”, Herbert W Armstrong, April 23, 1979

“But my efforts as Christ's apostle have also been heavily devoted to preparing God's Church - the spiritual Temple to which Christ will come.

“The living Christ as HEAD of this Church has been using His chosen apostle to set HIS CHURCH on GOD'S track!

"I could write much more along this line, but I want to leave that thought with you now. As we come to God's Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost) - May 26 this year - **let us bear forcibly in mind we in God's Church must be MADE READY** - for Jesus Christ is coming SOON."

Good News Magazine, "What Does Pentecost Mean to You?", May 1985, Page 6

"You read of this in Haggai 2. In reference to the temple, God said through Haggai, 'For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come [till the treasures of all nations are brought hither (Moffat translation)]: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts' (Haggai 2:6-9).

"But THIS IS NOW PROPHECY—no longer HISTORY! It is speaking of OUR TIME, late in the 20th century! This 'latter house' is the temple to which the GLORIFIED CHRIST shall come at His second coming—soon now, in our lifetime. **It is speaking about the temple to which the GLORIFIED Christ shall come in our day!**

"Brethren in Christ, WE ARE THAT TEMPLE!

"In the past year Jesus Christ our HEAD has moved swiftly through me, whom He brought back from death, **to set many parts of the Church back on GOD'S TRACK!** True, many blemishes have been removed—many spots, and wrinkles ironed out. Praise GOD for that! BUT WE ARE NOT YET READY!"

Co-Worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, July 24, 1979

"Am I too old? Am I 'senile'? Who else do you know at near 87 years of age who in one year turns God's Worldwide Church around, rooting out the dissidents, the false doctrines, being used of GOD to set His Church BACK ON HIS TRACK? IT IS NOT I WHO DOES IT—IT IS GOD_using me as His instrument. **God brought me back to life from complete heart failure and death, in August 1977 FOR A PURPOSE.** That PURPOSE is to FINISH proclaiming His Message around the world—**to be used in setting His Church back on His track—and in leading you brethren of His Church into a condition where you are finally PREPARED, and MADE READY, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but HOLY—the Bride of Christ who shall have made herself READY!** I will have MUCH MORE ABOUT THAT to write you or say to you later."

Co-worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, April 16, 1979

He that Receives Me

There are some who no longer believe what Mr. Armstrong taught. They reject him as an apostle, as the end-time Elijah, and in the role of Zerubbabel who was to prepare the temple at the end of the age. There are others that water down and reject many of the doctrines that were established in the Church by God's 20th

century apostle. Those that do this may not remember the words of Jesus Christ in the New and in the Old Testament and what was written and taught in the Worldwide Church of Church:

“Here are the words of Jesus Christ, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me’ (John 13:20).”

“Notice that Jesus is referring to the one that He sends. If we receive the one that He sends, His apostle, then we are receiving Jesus Christ and the Father. On the other hand, if we reject the one whom Christ has sent, we reject Christ.”

“This lesson is made clear in the Old Testament account of Samuel. After the people had rejected Samuel, God told him, ‘they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them’ (I Sam. 8:7).”

Good News Magazine, “How Many Apostles Were There?”, February 1980

“Down through the ages God has sent servants to carry out His Work and His will, but most people rejected them. This was true of the prophets and of Jesus Christ Himself and all His apostles and ministers down to and including the present time. But those who have Jesus living His life in them will not make this mistake. They recognize and accept those Jesus Christ sends. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me’ (John 13:20).”

Good News Magazine, “How to Try the Spirits”, September 1980

Conclusion

The prophecy in Haggai 2 and Zechariah 4:9-10 that was revealed to the Church in the 20th century has been uncovered. It was Mr. Armstrong who was chosen and sent forth by God to lay the foundation so that the spiritual temple could be built. He is the signet that proves the truths revealed in the Philadelphia era are the authentic doctrines that came from God.

And through the Co-worker letters that he wrote, through sermons that he gave, through articles that were written in the *Plain Truth* and *Good News* magazines, and through the literature that was established in the *Worldwide Church of God* which are still available in digital format, his hands shall finish the spiritual temple that he started, the temple that will be alive and that will meet Christ in the air at His second coming.

And this small remnant of the Philadelphia era of the Church of God will rejoice when they see the plummet of truth in the hand of Zerubbabel. And even though Mr. Armstrong is no longer with us, his words in the following letter now ring true with incredible implications from a prophecy that will soon see it's grand finale because his hands will finish the spiritual temple he started:

“So I want to ask you to continue to PRAY, very specially and fervently for me personally, that God will grant me these additional years of vigorous, youthful life, that, as a parallel to His servant Zerubbabel of some 2,400 years ago, **since my hands began this Work, my hands may FINISH IT!**”

CoWorker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, August 29, 1974

*With sincerity and love
And in Christ's service,*

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