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BICOG Publication

Many of the Armstrong elements in the Churches of God today especially the big splinter groups believe that Herbert W Armstrong was the end time Zerubbabel. These tend to spiritualize vast amounts of scripture to suit their worship of the man, Herbert W Armstrong.

Is this interpretation of Scripture true?

Why oh why are the churches of God so determined to worship a man? Do not get me wrong, many of the things Herbert Armstrong taught were true-the doctrines that were taught according to the Bible! It's the *other* things that I take issue with.

In these series of articles and broadcasts, I am determined to expose the man made doctrines for what they are, man made, and not of God. To expose to the churches of God the *cult* like attitude and worship of a man that exists among the church of God today. The doctrines of 19 year time cycles, Petra, Elijah, the Apostle, 1975 in Prophecy, God works through one man only, the one church only doctrine, church eras, and this one of Zerubbabel can all be proven to be doctrines of men, and not of God.

Who was Zerubabbel?

Zerubbabel was, "The grandson of King Jehoiachin (taken to Babylon in the first Exile in 597 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar; 2 Kings 24:10-17) and the son of Shealtiel (Ezra 3:2), second son of Jehoiachin (1 Chronicles 3:16-17). He is named in Ezra 2:2 among the leaders of those who returned from Exile. The list in Ezra 2:1-67 (compare Nehemiah 7:6-73) probably names people who returned in 539, the first year of the reign of Cyrus the Great, ruler of the Persian Empire (Ezra 1:1), or between 539,529, despite the contention of many American scholars that the list belongs to an unmentioned second return led by Zerubabbel in 521/20.

"According to Ezra 3:1, Zerubbabel and Jeshua (or Joshua, the high priest) rebuilt the altar and in their second year (538?) laid the foundation of the Temple, but their work was halted by opposition from persons who had remained in Palestine during the Exile (Ezra 4:1-6, Ezra 4:1-6,4:24). Darius (Persian emperor from 522–486 B.C.) granted the Jews permission to continue rebuilding the Temple (Ezra 6:1-12). Under the urging of Haggai (Haggai 1:1, Haggai 1:1,1:12-15; Haggai 2:1, Haggai 2:1,2:20) and Zechariah (Zechariah 4:6-10), Zerubabbel, now governor (Haggai 1:1) in place of Sheshbazzar (Ezra 5:14), resume the task (Ezra 5:1-2), completed in 515 B.C.

"Zerubbabel himself, however, disappeared from view. He was a Davidic prince, so it is possible that the Jews tried to crown him king during the civil war surrounding the rise of Darius as emperor (522/21). Zechariah 6:9-14 may reflect the wish to crown Zerubbabel, but his fate remains unknown." (Holman Bible Dictionary, under "Zerubabbel," p.1440, emphasis added).

Zerubbabel's work was mainly to rebuild the temple of God and the altar of God so the worship of God could begin in Jerusalem once again (Ezra 3:1-4; 4:1-4, 24).

In the books of Haggai and Zechariah there are prophecies that were given about Zerubbabel and Joshua. Today these prophecies have been severely spiritualized and twisted to suit certain beliefs of the Armstrong elements in the splinter groups of the churches of God today.

One splinter group, the Philadelphia Church of God claims that the end time Zerubbabel is Herbert W Armstrong, and the other called the Restored Church of God claims the same thing and added to that, David C. Pack & Gerald Flurry claim they are the end time Joshua!

In this booklet we will examine their faulty theology, and we will see being guided *solely* by the scriptures who really is the end time Zerubbabel and Joshua.

Armstrong's Theology Examined

The theology of the *Armstrongite* people, who have *taken over* the church of God, is suited to fit their beliefs. They claim that the mainstream churches of the world do this, yet they do not see themselves doing the same thing.

In his booklet, Zechariah-The Sign of Christ's Imminent Return, Gerald Flurry writes, "When the Bible refers directly to Christ doing the building, it is usually stated as 'not made with hands' (2 Corinthians 5:1), or something is accomplished 'without hands' (Daniel 2:45), or 'a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands' (Hebrews 9:11).

'The *hands* of Zerubbabel have laid the *foundation* of this house; his *hands* shall also *finish* it...' (Zechariah 4:9). It is clearly talking about a hands-on operation.

"This verse twice mentions *hands*, designating a starting and finishing of a project. The *Anchor Bible Commentary* says *hands* is LITERAL, and expresses *participation* in temple building (book of Zechariah). That is, it was *built through a human being* with 'hands,' not built 'without hands'—as Christ does it directly.

"Mr. Armstrong STARTED AND FINISHED AN ERA that 'restore[d] all things.' HE STARTED IT AND FINISHED IT before he died, with the power of God's Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6). His *hands* laid the foundation and *his hands* FINISHED THE HOUSE—the Philadelphia era.

"Mr. Armstrong wrote a letter to the Church on March 19, 1981. It said, in part: 'Zerubbabel built the second temple to which Jesus came the first time. John the Baptist prepared the way before the FIRST coming. But WHO was to build the SPIRITUAL temple to which Christ shall soon come the second time? Who was to prepare the way before His Second Coming?

"'Remember, God does things in DUAL stages. As Zerubbabel built the first temple of MATERIAL stone, wood and other materials, he was a forerunner or type of one through whom Christ would raise up or build the SPIRITUAL TEMPLE—His Church of our time, prior to the Day of the Lord and Christ's Second Coming. As John the Baptist prepared the way in the PHYSICAL wilderness of the Jordan River for the first coming of the HUMAN Jesus (both man and God), then coming to His MATERIAL temple, and to His PHYSICAL people Judah, ANNOUNCING the Kingdom of God to be set up more than 1,900 years later, so God would use a human messenger in the SPIRITUAL wilderness of 20th-century religious confusion, to be a voice CRYING OUT the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, about the SPIRITUAL CHRIST, coming in SUPREME POWER AND GLORY to His SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, to actually ESTABLISH that spiritual KINGDOM OF GOD.

Clearly Mr. Armstrong thought that he was end time Zerubbabel that built the church of God. Mr. Armstrong had a lot of truth revealed to him, but then these other claims he makes for himself are clearly off track, one wonders what the motivations were for this. This is what I take issue with, *Amrstrongism*.

But doesn't that contradict what Jesus said, that, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18)? Jesus said HE is going to do it. "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1)?

How do they reason around this? They twist the scriptures! At the beginning of the quote Flurry says, "When the Bible refers directly to Christ doing the building, it is usually stated as 'not made with hands' (2 Corinthians 5:1), or something is accomplished 'without hands' (Daniel 2:45), or 'a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands' (Hebrews 9:11).

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Flurry does not understand what the expression "not made with hands" means. The meaning of this expression in the bible is clear; the Bible explains that when things are *created* some are divine *in origin* (without hands) and others things are of human origin (with hands).

"The phrase work, or works of men's hands, is common in the Old Testament of idols. See Deut 4:28; 2 Kings 19:18; 2 Chron 32:19; Psalm 115:4" (Vincent Word Studies, emphasis his). Idols originate with men, not God. Paul said, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, "And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." (Romans 1:22-23). Out of their own imaginations and wisdom they created false gods and idols; inventions made with "men's

[&]quot; 'Brethren, HAS THAT BEEN DONE BY THIS CHURCH?

[&]quot;'Did God raise up a one-man LEADERSHIP to be used by Him in building this spiritual TEMPLE and in proclaiming after 1,900 years the true GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD in ALL THE WORLD—to even go to kings and heads of nations (Revelation 10:11)—in bringing the Church back to the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED? (Jude 3).

[&]quot; 'HAS THIS HAPPENED, IN YOUR DAYS, AND HAS GOD BROUGHT YOU INTO THIS PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT AS A PART OF IT?

[&]quot;'HAS ANYONE ELSE DONE IT?" (Chapter 2, "Zerubbabel and Joshua," emphasis his and mine).

hands." Idols and pagan worship are *manmade* religions, and do not *originate* with God, "And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell." (Deut 4:28).

Stephen said, "But Solomon built him an house... *Howbeit* the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" (Acts 7:47-48). Solomon built God a temple which was divine in origin, not devised of man. Notice, Stephen says "Howbeit." This in the Greek is "alla" meaning "Neuter plural of G243; properly *other* things, that is, (adverbially) *contrariwise* (in many relations): - and, but (even), howbeit, indeed, nay, nevertheless, no, notwithstanding, save, therefore, yea, yet." (Strong's #235). "Contrariwise" meaning "in the opposite way or order" (Webster). In opposition to the Temple of Solomon, God does not dwell in temples *of manmade origins*.

Notice what Paul says, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in *temples made with hands*;" (Acts 17:24). Did not God tell Moses, "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." (Ex 25:8)? Is this a contradiction? No! Notice the context. Paul was speaking to people who worshipped idols, and superstition (v16). These people made temples for their gods. These temples were built by man's design, out of his *own* heart, and not getting their instructions from God-manmade religions. It was "the times of this *ignorance* God winked at;" (Acts 17:30).

Exodus 25, God says, "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them... According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle..." (vv.8-9). This Tabernacle was of God's making, its origin and design was of God and not ignorantly done from man's own heart. God designed it, and he builds it through man (as we shall see). God is the architect. Barnes says, "The idea is, that they are entirely dependent on God. No matter what their skill, their strength, their industry may be - all will be in vain unless God shall assist them." (emphasis added).

Paul says, "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building... We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." (1 Corinth 3:6; 2 Corinth 6:1). God is the architect; he advises and tells his laborers what to do. God is the one who has developed the structure of the church, how it should function by its teachings and instruction from the Bible. It is he who provides for his church to grow and expand, and it is God who is the builder, NOT MAN. Men are helpers of the builder, the builder and maker is God. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10). The Bible shows that God does build through man, and that what he builds originates from him "without hands."

So Zerubbabel with *his hands* built the temple, but the temple itself was of divine origin "made without hands." God was the architect, the designer, and Zerubabbel and the others were *helping* and being *directed* by the builder. When they left the work, God's blessings were not on them, and they were struggling. Haggai's whole ministry was for the Jews to get back to the work of God, and when they did God blessed them (read, Haggai chapter 1). "And the LORD *stirred* up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did

work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God," (v.14). Notice the boss, the master builder got them to work, and he helped them build the house of God *through his spirit* as we shall see. This is what it means, the "Lord building a house." Its origin, its design is of the Lord's doing, "without hands" and men with "hands" *help* the Lord build it. And if they do not get their instructions and duties from God, "they labour in vain that build it" *because there are not directed and led by the spirit of God, as we shall see*.

So Zerubbabel and Joshua were "laborers together" with God building the house. They helped the master builder, with their hands. But God still built it, designed it, and through his spirit leading them, it was of his devising "without hands." Flurry and others don't bother to look at biblical terms and expressions to understand their true meaning, but twist the scriptures to suit their man made beliefs.

And really, what is Gerald Flurry telling people when we understand what these expressions of with or without "hands" mean? That the church originates with man and NOT God? That temple is made with hands, meaning made out of man's own heart? That the church is manmade and not divine? Contradicting what Jesus said that he would build his church, not man! And if that is the case, then Jesus cannot dwell in his church because the Bible says that God does not dwell in temples made with hands! In the case of Zerubbabel God was going to fill the house with his glory, if it were made by human hands, manmade, God would not dwell there unless God was the builder, the architect, and was directing people to "let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." (Ex 25:8). So according to Flurry's logic, his church, and the Worldwide Church of God led by HWA were manmade, and NOT FROM GOD!

The Biblical meaning is clear, the hands of Zerubbabel built the temple, but he was under the guidance, and direction of God Almighty, "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD." (Haggai 1:8). So the temple was made "without hands," God was building through man, as in the case of the Tabernacle in the wilderness God said, "See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

"And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,

"To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

"And in cutting of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship." (Ex 31:3-5). The spirit, the mind of God *took over the mind* of Bezaleel and guided him to build the tabernacle in the wilderness (Rom 8:14). God does not change his ways, (Mal 3:6) certainly he did the same thing with Zerubbabel when he "stirred up" his spirit. If he did not, then God would not dwell there. So really God was building the temple, guiding and building *through* man. Flurry leaves out God totally, and gives the glory to man.

End time Zerubabbel

So who is end time Zerubbabel? Flurry does not believe what the Bible tells him, he writes, "Dr. Donald Ward, president of Ambassador College in the late 1980s, said, 'Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of Zerubbabel.' *But that is spiritualizing away God's truth.* Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of everything—if He lives in us (Philippians 2:5). Still, there was a man named

Zerubabbel who built the restoration temple. And there was a specific man who built the Philadelphia era of God's Church. Mr. Armstrong was a type of Zerubbabel. He believed it and said so himself, many times!" (ibid, emphasis added). The answer he will not accept, Christ is the end time Zerubabbel and Joshua as well as we shall see in the scriptures, Flurry flat out denies it. Notice he says, because Mr. Armstrong believed it, and said it, therefore it must be true? He has that follow me blindly attitude that he wants others to have to follow him. Many people throughout history made many claims, including the claim that they are Jesus, should Flurry believe them as well?

Notice what the Bible says, "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: 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). Clearly an end time prophecy. God will shake the heaven and the earth (see Joel 2:28-32).

The temple and tabernacle of God stood during the time of Moses and Solomon, and God dwelt there (Ex 25:8; 1 Kings 8). The Glory of God would fill the temple (1 Kings 8:10-11).

In the end time God says the church of God is his temple, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are." (1 Corinth 3:17).

God dwells with his church, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22).

The glory of the "latter house" which is the church of God will happen at the resurrection. It is at this time that the church will receive the same glory as Jesus Christ, which is the glory of God,

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the *brightness of thy rising*.

"Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

"Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." (Isaiah 60:1-5). Who does the glorifying? God-Jesus, he is the builder!

Paul wrote, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into *the same image from glory to glory*, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinth 3:18). We will have the same glory as Jesus Christ, who has the glory of the Father (Matthew 16:27).

John says we do not see it now but "we shall be like him" and "for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2).

This happens at the resurrection from the Dead. Paul said, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be *also glorified together*." (Rom 8:17).

- "So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:
- "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in *glory*: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:
- "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.
- "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.
- "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.
- "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.
- "As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.
- "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Corinth 15:42-49). Who raises the dead? Jesus does, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:" (John 11:25). Jesus is the builder!

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25). *Again it is God-Jesus who builds this latter house and gives it its glory, not any man.* This is what Haggai meant when he said, "the desire of all nations [Jesus Christ] shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." Jesus is going to come and glorify his church-the temple of God

Then it says, "...and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts." What place? Jerusalem! It is there that the church of God will dwell and administer the government of God (see Rev 14:1; Matthew 5:35).

In the Kingdom of God, the church of God, is also called the city of God as well, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," (Hebrews 12:22-23). The Church is called ZION, THE CITY OF GOD!

Back in Isaiah 60:14 this city is called "The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel," This city is revealed in Revelation 21 and 22.

In this city it is revealed that, "And I saw *no temple therein*: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the *temple of it.*" (Rev 21:22). There is no physical temple of gold and precious stones, *God himself and the Lamb will dwell in it!*

Back in Isaiah 60 it says of Zion, the city of God, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." (v.13). Notice the city is beautified for his feet, the place where he dwells will be glorious. So God is temple in it who is the source of all glory, dwelling in the city of God the Church which is full of his glory as well.

In conclusion, to settle the mystery of this "latter house." The Church is the Temple which God dwells. The Church is also called the "city." When this city comes down-the new Jerusalem, God is going to be the Temple in this city, therefore God dwells in his Temple, and God is the Temple of the new Jerusalem, a glorious city with a glorious latter "house," or Temple which is God Himself!

The Signet?

Then God says, "And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying,

"Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, 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; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

"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." (Haggai 2:20-23). Notice that God does everything in these passages, and he is speaking of the same time of the shaking of the heavens and the earth.

Here Flurry says that Zerubbabel is Mr. Armstrong and that the "signet" is the Law and government established by Mr. Armstrong and is God's own "signet" or signature. (Haggai; Proof of God's work today, p.5). Then he says that, "if you find God's work today, it will have the same government that was established through Mr. Armstrong" (ibid, p.5). Of course since he claims he is the successor to Mr. Armstrong, then what he says is law as well.

But seriously now, what do these passages really say about this end time Zerubbabel?

Flurry says, "The word of the LORD IS TO ZERUBBABEL (Zechariah 4:6). *It doesn't make sense if Christ is talking to Himself*. Christ is talking to *a man* who fulfilled that office in this end time. Also, Zechariah 4:9 is not referring to Christ directly finishing the house, but to a man— *Zerubbabel*—finishing the house...It's *illogical to say Zerubbabel is Christ*." (ibid, chapter 2, emphasis added). Can you believe this? Flurry conveniently forgets all the prophecies in the Bible of God giving prophecies of about the Messiah, and everyone knows the "Lord" of the Old Testament was Jesus Christ of the New Testament.

One example in Jeremiah, "Behold, the days come, *saith the LORD*, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

"In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby *HE* shall be called, **THE LORD** OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jer 23:5-7). Here the "Lord" is speaking about the Messiah, the "Branch." It says "He" the Messiah shall be called "The Lord."

Are we to reason like Flurry? Is God speaking of someone else? No! Many times God speaks in the third person in the prophecies. Jesus did it all the time. He always said the "Son of Man" would do thus and such, speaking in the third person "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." (Matthew 9:6). We don't do that today but it was commonly done in ancient times. This is one example in the prophecies of God speaking in the third person even though he is speaking of himself. So again Flurry's reasoning is flawed.

Now the scripture says that God, "will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee," The person will be like a "signet." Flurry says, "The seal represents his authority or government" (ibid, p.5). But Flurry misses the entire point God is making!

First, the time setting is key, "At that time, when the dominion of the heathen had thus collapsed, Jehovah would take Zerubbabel and set or make him as a signet-ring" (K& D Commentary). This happens at the second coming of Jesus Christ, see Daniel 2 and Revelation 19.

Notice what this same source says about the signet ring and its spiritual *biblical* interpretation, and not like Anchor's Bible definition of it which is *literal and misses the entire point of the of the signet*, quoted by Flurry. The passage is a spiritual meaning as God says he "will make thee *as a* signet."

"The meaning of the figurative expression, to make Zerubbabel as a signet-ring, is evident from the importance of the signet-ring in the eyes of an oriental, who is accustomed to carry his signet-ring constantly about with him, and to take care of it as a very valuable possession. It is introduced with the same idea in the Song 8:6, 'Lay me as a signet-ring upon thy breast, as a signet-ring in thine arms;' and it is in the same sense that Jehovah says of Jehoiachin in Jer 22:24, 'Though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim were even a signet-ring upon my right hand, i.e., a possession from which it would be thought impossible that I should separate myself, yet would I tear thee away from thence.' Hence we obtain this thought for our present passage, namely, that on the day on which Jehovah would overthrow the kingdoms of the nations, He would make Zerubbabel like a signet-ring, which is inseparable from its possessor; that is to say, He would give him a position in which he would be and remain inseparably connected with Him (Jehovah), would therefore not cast him off, but take care of him as His valuable possession. This is the explanation given by Koehler (after Calvin, Osiander, and others); and he has also refuted the various explanations that differ from it." (emphasis added). It is at this time that Jesus comes and, "...the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:" (Luke 1:32).

In fact, "The subject [in Haggai chapter 2] turns from the building of the Temple to the question of leadership in Jerusalem...Jeremiah 22:24-25 had announced that God would tear off

Yahweh's signet ring from Jehoiakin to give it to Nebuchadnezzar. Now Jehoiakin's grandson was promised that the Lord would 'wear him as a signet ring' because God had chosen him' (Holman Bible Handbook, p.495, emphasis added).

This "was not fulfilled" in the time of Zerubbabel, obviously (The prophecy Knowledge Handbook, John F. Walvoord, p.316). Zerubbabel did not receive his throne when this prophecy was given. The Throne was pulled down and taken away and was not re-established. This prophecy was for a latter time.

Many commentaries see this as a reversal of the earlier judgment of Jehoiakin, in Jeremiah 22:24-25. "God reverses to Zerubbabel the sentence on Jeconiah for his impiety. To Jeconiah He had said Jer 22:24, 'though he were the signet upon My right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life." (Barnes Notes). This clearly shows God is speaking of the descendants of David in which Zerubbabel is part of (Matthew 1:12; Luke 3:27). It is to the descendant of David, when the gentile powers are destroyed that this person will be King over all Israel, and that descendant is Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Luke 1:32). He is the end time Zerubabbel and God's own signet, God's own valuable "precious" possession! (1 Peter 2:4), that would rule. Flurry misses the entire point of the signet. God is speaking of wearing him as a signet, and not the function of the signet itself.

But even if that were the case of the signet being God's government, the Bible says that, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: *and the government shall be upon his shoulder*: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." (Isaiah 9:6-7). Does this mean Mr. Armstrong? Is Flurry unknowingly replacing Christ with Mr. Armstrong? This is certainly what this is leading to, in this kind of belief continues to be taught; religions take on a life of their own. But the truth from the scriptures is, that Jesus is Zerubbabel, and the government of God is on his shoulders, administered by him, on his throne to rule the world.

The Book of Zechariah

Now in the book of Zechariah, again the *Armstrongite* people use these scriptures in chapters 3 and 4 to prove their position as well. But what do these scriptures really teach?

"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." (Zech 4:8-9). Of course Flurry readily admits that this is Mr. Armstrong. But as we have proven, this is Jesus Christ!

Jesus said "I will build my church." As noted above, God is the builder, and God works through the church members, his helpers by the spirit of God (Rom 8:14). Later in this same chapter it says, "For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, *and shall see the*

[&]quot;Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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." (v.10).

The "plummet" in the hand of Zerubabbel signifies, "...as a master builder, with a 'plummet' in his hand; which is an instrument used by masons and carpenters, to draw perpendicular lines with, in order to judge whether the building is upright; and is so called from a piece of lead fastened at the end of a cord or thread." (Gill's Commentary). It is the "Lord" that builds the "House" (Psalm 127:1). End time Zerubbabel is the divine Lord of Glory Jesus Christ!

Notice in the hands of Zerubabbel is the "seven" These are the "eyes of the Lord." These seven eyes are also mentioned in Zechariah 3:9, "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone *shall be* seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." This stone has seven eyes. The stone is Christ, and he has seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God.

The Apostle Peter said Jesus is a, "living stone" "Thus the 'stone' is not as other stones senseless, but *living* and full of eyes of perfect intelligence (1Peter 2:4, 'a *living* stone'), who not only attracts the eyes (John 12:32) of His people, but emits illumination so as to direct them to Him." (JFB Commentary).

He also said of Jesus, "Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner...And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." (1 Peter 2:7-8).

He is the rock that followed the Israelites in the time of the Exodus (1 Corinth 10:1-4).

In the book of Revelation it reveals Jesus with "seven spirits" which are the "seven eyes." (Rev 1:4; 5:6).

He is described in the book of Daniel as the rock cut out "without hands" meaning the stone is divine in origin, and smashing the Image at the feet and toes (Daniel 2). So clearly the stone set before Joshua is Jesus Christ.

The stone has seven eyes, so Zerubabbel has in his hands seven eyes, so Zerubabbel is Christ, and he has the seven spirits of God, which Zerubabbel did not have, but Jesus does, so one can conclude that end time Zerubabbel is Christ.

With this knowledge we know now, "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." (Zech 4:9), the hands of Zerubabbel have laid the foundation. This dual prophecy of course is of Christ. Jesus said, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." (Matthew 7:24-25). Jesus and his teachings are

the foundation of the house of God, the church. He is the one who builds it, and sets its foundation.

Then it says his hands "shall also finish it." Zechariah says, "Who *art* thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone *thereof with* shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it." (4:8). The head stone or cap stone represents Zerubabbel *finishing* the work of God. Jesus is the Author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2).

"That is, he, Zerubbabel, shall finish the building of the temple, as in Zech 4:9 *the headstone* being the last and uppermost stone in the building, which is last laid, and completes the whole; and in the spiritual sense designs, not Christ the headstone of the corner, for it is he that is Zerubbabel's antitype, who brings it in; but the last man that will be converted, when the number of God's elect will be completed in regeneration:" (Gill's Commentary, emphasis added).

The JFB Commentary says, "Antitypically, the reference is to the time when the full number of the spiritual Church shall be completed, and also when 'all Israel shall be saved' (compare Rom 11:26; Heb 12:22, Heb 12:23; Rev 7:4-9)." (emphasis added).

When does this happen? God says, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain:" This great mountain is, "So then the mountain symbolizes every resisting power; Satan and all his instruments," (Barnes). Back in Haggai the second chapter verse 22 it speaks of the "throne" of Kingdoms. "Notice that it is 'throne' in the singular and not the plural. There is one supreme ruler over the earth, permitted by God and carried out by Satan, and it will be replaced by that of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See Rev 11:15)" (Charles Feinberg, The Minor Prophets, p. 247). Enemy forces fighting among themselves (Haggai 2:22) is another characteristic of the time of Christ's return (see Zechariah 14:13). This throne will be the Beast power that fights Christ at his coming (Rev 17:12-15; Rev 13:2). It is at this time that Jesus will complete his work, the church will be glorified when they are resurrected and "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (Rev 20:4). The latter house, the church is glorified!

End time Joshua

In Zechariah the third chapter the prophecy of Joshua the high priest is revealed. The *Armstrongites* have many weird interpretations of who this Joshua is.

Flurry believes that there are two Joshua's, an unlawful one, and a lawful one. He believes the unlawful one is Joseph Tkach Sr. that caused the backsliding of the Worldwide Church of God, and the lawful Joshua is, Flurry explains, "The unlawful Joshua type was revealed in this end time. He caused a split in God's Church after Mr. Armstrong died. That too is why the Zerubbabel type in this end time, Mr. Armstrong, is referred to as a signet.

"Joseph Tkach Sr. and I both were ministers in the Philadelphia and Laodicean eras. The Church split makes part of this end-time Work depart from the way events occurred anciently with Joshua (so far as we can tell from the Bible). That is why it is logical for God to refer to two Joshua's in this end time, even though the biblical history shows that there was only one Joshua anciently.

"The signet makes it very easy to determine which Joshua is lawful.

"In fact, the signet could imply that there are *two end-time Joshua's and God shows us how to know which one to follow*. Otherwise, why even mention the signet?" (Zechariah-The Sign of Christ's Imminent Return, chapter 3 "The Two Joshua's" emphasis added). The conclusion being that he is the end time Joshua! David C. Pack says the same thing! He says we should follow him, *not Christ*-HIM! Again I urge the churches of God to get rid of these cult leaders and get back to the worship of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Paul prophesied, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking *perverse* things, *to draw away disciples after them*." (Acts 20:30). This prophecy says that in the church of God *itself*, men will arise "speaking perverse things" and draw away disciples after themselves! Isn't this exactly what is happening in the church of God today? How twisted and perverted this interpretation of prophecy is, which is really directed into worshipping a man, or men, and not Jesus Christ?

End time Joshua is Jesus Christ

The scriptures when examined tell a completely different story. There is only one Joshua, not two in this chapter. Flurry also claims there is *no record of an unlawful Joshua in the Bible, so it must point to the end time*, "The books of both Haggai and Zechariah are mainly for this end time. So what Zechariah states about Joshua's filthy garments in Zechariah 3 must be for the end time only. *There is nothing in Ezra-Nehemiah about a Joshua with filthy garments*, and Ezra-Nehemiah contains the history of Zerubabbel, Joshua, Haggai and Zechariah" (ibid, chapter 3, emphasis added), which is nonsense. This is a typical move to rewrite history so it can fit his own personal belief about Armstrong, and his position in the church of God of him being Joshua.

Zechariah 3:1-2 says, "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him...And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: *is* not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

The high priest Joshua stands before the Angel of the Lord (3:1). As this particular figure is able to remove iniquity (see verses 3-4), the reference is apparently to the pre-incarnate Christ. Indeed, in verse 2 we see the "LORD" calling a rebuke down from the "LORD"—evidently Christ calling a rebuke down from God the Father.

The rebuke is called down on Satan. "The Hebrew is literally 'the Satan,' meaning 'the Accuser'" (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 1)—or, similarly, "the Adversary" or "the Opponent." The word "oppose" in verse 1 could also, in a legal setting, be rendered "accuse." "Satan's accusation invests [the scene] with a judicial character.

The position of standing at the right side was the place of accusation under the law (Ps 109:6). Satan knows the purposes of God concerning Israel and therefore has always accused the Jews and accuses them still.... Satan is the accuser, not only of Joshua, but also of all believers (Job 1-2; Rev 12:10)" (Expositor's Bible Commentary, note on Zechariah 3:1).

The Bible says, "...for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." (Rev 12:10). This is what is happening in these two passages of Zechariah.

Now verse three says, "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel." The reason for Satan's accusation in Zechariah 3 is evidently Joshua's impurity, as symbolized by his defiled garments. Expositor's states in its note on verse 3: "The Hebrew word soim ('filthy') is 'the strongest expression in the Hebrew language for filth of the most vile and loathsome *character*' (Feinberg...). Some interpreters maintain that Joshua was covered with excrement—only in the vision, of course! Such clothes represent the pollution of sin (cf. Isa 64:6). To compound the problem, Joshua, contaminated by sin, was ministering in this filthy condition before the Angel of the Lord." The Bible says that Joshua sinned. Is there proof of this in the Bible? Yes!

Joshua had been guilty of sin, having previously abandoned the reconstruction of the temple while continuing in priestly service. "The high priest represented the people before God (see Ex. 28:29) and under no circumstances was to become defiled or unclean (Ex. 28:2; Lev. 21:10-15)" (Nelson, note on Zechariah 3:3). Haggai was upset with the people and its leaders for abandoning the work of God (Haggai 1:1-11). Also God rebuked the priesthood for the unclean offerings of Israel (Haggai 2:10-17). Also, "... Aaronic priesthood had been reduced, as the defilements of sin with which Joshua was encompassed, especially, perhaps, his error in allowing his descendants to intermarry with heathens (Ezra10:18)."(Pulpit Commentary).

It is interesting to consider also the high priest as representative of the nation, for the figure of Joshua is clearly being used that way in this passage. The whole nation, this priestly nation (see Exodus 19:6), stood guilty before God. God said the, "LORD that hath *chosen Jerusalem* [as in Haggai 2:9-not Pasadena California as Flurry claims] rebuke thee: Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" (v.2). God had earlier told the people of Israel in Amos 4:11, "I overthrew some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning." The "fire" refers to the Babylonian captivity. Metaphorically, Israel was snatched as a burning stick from that fire. However, this event may also look back to the deliverance from Egypt (cf. Deut 4:20; 7:7-8; Jer 11:4).

In Zechariah 3:4, the Angel of the Lord (see verse 3)—again evidently the One who would become Jesus Christ—removes Joshua's iniquity. At the beginning of this verse, He tells "those who stood before Him" to take away Joshua's filthy garments. At the end of verse 4 states, it is Christ Himself who actually removes Joshua's *iniquity* and clothes him with new garments—through His sacrifice (whereby He would actually bear the defilement of all of humanity's sins as the sin-bearer and take them with Him to the grave) and then living His resurrected life within those who will receive Him.

"And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by." (v.5). Joshua was to be clothed with rich garments—God's representative clothed in God's righteousness. God's servant went from filthy garments to festive garments. The festive garments (the Hebrew word is used only here and in Isa 3:22) speak of purity, joy, and glory; but their chief significance is that they symbolize the restoration of Israel to her original calling (Exodus 19:16; Isa 61:6). There is a

contrast here: Joshua in filthy garments—Israel as a priest but defiled and unclean; Joshua in festive garments—Israel's future glory in re-consecration to the priestly office.

Now notice what the Angel of the Lord told Joshua in verse 8: "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: *for they are men wondered at*: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH." "Wondered at" in "Hebrew ['ansheey (H376) mowpeet (H4159)], 'men of omen,' 'sign,' 'pertent,' or 'wonder' - i:e., having a typical character (Isa 8:18; Isa 20:3; Eze 12:11; Eze 24:24)." (JFB Commentary). Isaiah and Ezekiel were "signs" to Israel about future events.

Isaiah prophesied about "Immanuel" (Isaiah 8:8) "God with us" (v.10). The "stone of stumbling" and "rock of offence" (v.14). These were "Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion." (v.18). These were prophetic signs of the future ministry of the Messiah Jesus Christ. The same is said of Joshua. He was a sign of the future Priest Jesus Christ!

"Joshua the high priest typifies Messiah, as Joshua's 'fellows' typify believers whom Messiah admits to share His priesthood (1Peter 2:5; Rev 5:10)." (JFB Commentary). Just *One* Joshua, not two-and he was a symbol of the coming high Priest, pure and without sin, Jesus called the "Branch."

The "Branch" becomes Priest & King

The Branch is a symbol of Messiah son of David, (See Isa 4:2; Jer 23:5; Jer 33:15).

Zechariah chapter 6 gives another prophecy about this BRANCH, "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*." (vv.11-13). The Branch is the descendant of David, Jesus Christ, and he rules on the throne of David, "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." (Jer 23:5). Why does he call the High Priest's position the "Branch" as well?

God also says, he will build the "temple of God," the future true building of the spiritual temple by Messiah (Matt 16:18; 1Cor 3:17; 2Cor 6:16; Eph 2:20-22; Heb 3:3). The Keil & Delitzsch Commentary of the Old Testament writes, "This Sprout will build the temple of the Lord. That these words do not refer to the building of the earthly temple of stone and wood, as Ros. and Hitzig with the Rabbins suppose, is so obvious, that even Koehler has given up this view here, and understands the words, as Hengstenberg, Tholuck, and others do, as relating to the spiritual temple, of which the tabernacle and the temples of both Solomon and Zerubbabel were only symbols, the temple which is the church of God itself (Hosea 8:1; 1Peter 2:5; Heb 3:6; and Eph

2:21-22). Zechariah not only speaks of this temple here, but also in Zech 4:9, as Haggai had done before him, in Hagg 2:6-9, which puts the correctness of our explanation of these passages beyond the reach of doubt." (emphasis added).

Zerubbabel builds the temple (Zech 4:9), but also Joshua is the builder of the temple of God. Why do both of these figures have the same task?

Jesus is the Branch ruling on the throne of David, but Jesus is also High Priest, "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;" (Heb 8:1).

Notice back in Zechariah it says, "...he shall grow up out of his place" (6:12). The Branch shall also take the place of the High Priest. The Keil & Delitzsch Commentary of the Old Testament translates it, "from His place will He sprout up... The crowning of Joshua the high priest with a royal crown, which did not properly belong to the high priest as such, as his headdress is neither called a crown ('ătârâh) nor formed part of the insignia of royal dignity and glory, had a typical significance. It pointed to a man who would sit upon his throne as both ruler and priest, that is to say, would combine both royalty and priesthood in his own person and rank" (emphasis added).

The "Branch" the royal line of David would also sit on the priestly throne. God says, "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone *shall be* seven eyes:" (Zech 3:9)? Notice first *that it is God* who lays down the stone, in whom Zerubbabel was a type of Jesus who is God-the Messiah, and it is him who lays the foundation stone for the temple-Church of God, not a man. This is why God lies before Joshua, Zerubbabel, and his throne, to merge the two thrones into one.

Zerubbabel, who laid the foundation of the temple and had the plummet in his hand, is the one with the "seven eyes." He is a type of Jesus Christ in the end time. It is his throne God presents before the high Priest and in that day the iniquity of the land will be gone in "one day," and "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree." (v.10) This is a symbol of the Kingdom of God (Micah 4:4). It is in this day that both thrones will be merged into one.

Notice verse 13, God says that he "shall sit and rule upon his throne" and "he shall be a priest upon his throne" Jesus is to rule and reign on the throne of David, but also he is our high Priest, he is Priest and King. "Crowns" (v.11) are presented in the coronation ceremony. They were set on the head of Joshua. Two positions of power merge into one, as the latter end of that verse proves.

"...and the counsel of peace shall be between them *both*" (v.13) - Two thrones, two positions of power, of the high Priest and the King. K&D Commentary says, "In this majesty He will sit upon His throne and rule, also using His regal dignity and power for the good of His people, *and will be a Priest upon His throne, i.e., will be at once both Priest and King upon the throne which He assumes.*" (emphasis added).

Now we can understand why Zerubabbel and Joshua were both symbols of the coming Priest and King Jesus-God will merge both positions into one! Again K&D Commentary says, "Mōshēl and Kōhēn, who sit upon the throne, united in one person, in the Tsemach. Between these two there will be 'ătsath shâlōm. This does not merely mean, 'the most perfect harmony will exist' (Hofmann, Umbreit), for that is a matter of course, and does not exhaust the meaning of the words. 'Atsath shâlōm, counsel of peace, is not merely peaceful, harmonious consultation, but consultation which has peace for its object; and the thought is the following: The Messiah, who unites in Himself royalty and priesthood, will counsel and promote the peace of His people." (emphasis added).

This source as well says, "...as the clause is intended to declare that Messiah should, like Melchizedek, combine the offices of Priest and King (Psalm 110:4; Heb 5:6, Heb 5:10). The counsel of peace shall be between them both. The two offices or dignities are meant, which are combined in one person. The Messiah, in his two offices of Priest and King, has one common design, to bring peace to his people (Isa 9:6; Micah 5:5, where see note)." (Pulpit Commentary, emphasis added).

So the whole meaning of these prophecies is clear. Jesus is to build the church of God, from start to finish. The finished product will be a glorified church, members resurrected with the same glory as the Father and the Son. Spirit born-again members of God's family, and are to be kings and priests with Christ for 1000 years (Rev 5:10; 20:4).

Jesus when he comes merges the two thrones into one Throne, and will be King and High Priest, and will rule the world in this way-spiritual and civil matters will all be judged under one throne according to God's ways and laws, and we can understand why Zerubbabel and Joshua were both symbols of Jesus Christ, because of the merging of both offices into one, in Jesus. No where do these prophecies indicate that these important positions are given into the hands of mortal men, Mr. Armstrong, Gerald Flurry, David C. Pack or others. This kind of power can only be in the hands of the Divine, Jesus Christ.