

## God's spiritual temple - not yet complete!

Some of the splinter groups use Zechariah 4:9 to support a message that Mr. Armstrong completed the commission of preaching the gospel to the world. While this may have very well been the case, does Zechariah 4:9 have *anything* to do with the gospel message? Notice the words of this verse:

"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".

The subject spoken of in this verse is 'this house'. What is this referring to? Is it referring to the gospel message? Let us allow scripture to explain:

"For the time is come that **judgment must begin at the house of God**: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 4:17).

"Ye also, **as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house**, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5).

"And having an high priest over the **house of God**" (Heb. 10:21).

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the **house of God, which is the church of the living God**, the pillar and ground of **the truth**" (1 Tim. 3:15).

1 Timothy 3:15 clearly states that *the House of God is the Church of the living God!* Clearly, "this house" referred to in Zechariah 4:9 is referring to God's Church (or those called out of this world and baptized in the Body of Christ). It has nothing to do with the gospel message!

Let us ask another question. Can a (physical) man lay the foundation of God's *spiritual* house or Church? Again, let us allow the Bible to answer this question:

"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" (Eph. 2:19-20).

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, *I [note: this is referring to Jesus Christ] have laid the foundation*, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. **For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ**" (1 Cor. 3:10-11).

Is it not clear that Christ is the Foundation of His house? Doesn't 1 Cor. 3:11 clearly state that *no man* can lay the foundation of the spiritual house? Furthermore, can a (physical) man finish the building of the spiritual temple of God? Notice what the Bible states about whose hands will finish the building of the spiritual temple:

"The stone which the builders refused is become the **head stone** of the corner" (Ps. 118:22).

“And have ye not read this scripture; **The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner**” (Mk. 12:10).

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become **the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing**, and it is marvellous in our eyes?” (Matt. 21:42).

Notice that “the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing”. What is the “head stone” (Ps. 118:22 etc)? The dictionary.com gives the following definition for “head stone”: “The central wedge-shaped stone of an arch that locks its parts together”. The central wedge-shaped stone of an arch is the last stone which is put in place when constructing an arch. The “head of the corner” is the last stone put in place that keeps the construction together. In the case of the *spiritual temple*, the head of the corner is Christ's doing. Christ is the chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20)!

Jesus Christ alone can take credit for building the spiritual temple of God – from the foundation to the very last stone (Eph. 2:20). Notice Ephesians 2:20:

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone*” (Eph. 2:20).

Evidently, Zechariah 4:9 is not talking about the preaching of the gospel, but about the building of the temple. Spiritually speaking, the temple is the Church of God made up of members baptized into the Body of Christ. Only the hands of Jesus Christ can lay the foundation of the temple, and only His hands can finish it! The temple will be completed at the time of the Firstfruits' resurrection.