

Zerubbabel and the Two Witnesses

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Zechariah 4 outlines an awesome vision which discusses Zerubbabel, a candlestick, seven lamps, a bowl, two olive trees, golden pipes and golden oil. In this booklet we will discuss the Biblical explanation of all these components, including clear irrefutable Biblical proof on the identity of Zerubbabel and the two witnesses.

As we discuss this exciting vision, get ready to be awe inspired by what God is communicating to His people through His inspired Word.

[Note: For the clearest understanding of this subject and others pertaining to it, we recommend that the FCGL booklet entitled “The Day of the Lord cometh...” is read and proved in conjunction with this work].

Chapter 1

The Biblical identity of Zerubbabel

The story of Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah around the time of the rebuilding of the second temple, is told in Ezra 2:2 to Ezra 5:2. Zerubbabel is also mentioned in Nehemiah 7:7; 12:1, 47; Haggai 1:1, 12, 14, 2:4, 21, 23; Zechariah 4:6-10; Matthew 1:12, 13; Luke 3:27. As we read through these scriptures we see that God’s primary concern is the building of the temple. While the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah detail the historical account of Zerubbabel and the building of the temple, they also contain an important prophecy and urgent message for our time today and for the days immediately ahead.

The Old Testament Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David (Hag. 1:1; Matt. 1:12-16). He was a man who gave hope to God’s nation of Israel (Hag. 2:21-23). He was the individual who initiated and completed the rebuilding of the physical temple (Ezr. 3:8; Ezr. 6:15; Zech. 4:9).

The Old Testament temple was a physical building made with stone. The New Testament temple is *spiritual*. Notice:

“Know ye not that **ye are the temple of God**, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for **the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are**” (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

Here is another scripture which confirms that *God’s Church* today is the spiritual temple:

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for **ye are the temple of the living God**; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I

will be their God, and they shall be my people” (2 Cor. 6:16).

The building of the physical temple in the Old Testament is a forerunner or ante-type of the spiritual temple that was prophesied to be built in the New Testament. This latter temple is made up of children of God in whom dwells His Spirit. This would indicate that, just as there was a Zerubbabel in the Old Testament who built the physical temple, there is also a New Testament Zerubbabel who builds the Church - or - *spiritual* temple.

Notice some key verses on the subject and identity of Zerubbabel, which are found in Zechariah 4:

“...This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. 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. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 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. 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” (Zech. 4:6-10).

The New Testament Zerubbabel lays the foundation of the Church. Zerubbabel’s hands also finish the temple. The question we will answer in the first chapter of this booklet is: who is the *New Testament* Zerubbabel who builds the *spiritual* temple of God?

Many have not accurately understood the scriptural role of Zerubbabel in the New Testament, and have therefore carelessly assigned this name to various individuals who have come on the scene in these latter years. **Assigning names to individuals in error is extremely dangerous because it leads well-meaning and unsuspecting begotten children of God to focus on wrong personalities and also leads them to wrong conclusions of many important prophecies outlined in the Bible.**

As we set out to discuss the identity of the New Testament Zerubbabel we must notice that scripture tells us that Zerubbabel is the individual who brings forth the “headstone” and lays the *foundation* of the temple. As already stated, we are also told that the hands of Zerubbabel will also *finish* the temple. **Both the foundation and the finishing of the temple are done by the same individual.** God’s New Testament Church has been in existence for almost two thousand years. This would mean that the foundation of the Church was laid around two thousand years ago! Of course, the New Testament Zerubbabel must have been around then, when the Church’s foundations were laid.

Notice Ephesians 2:19-21:

“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”.

Chief cornerstone

These verses tell us that the house of God is built upon the *foundation of the apostles and prophets*. Verse 20 tells us that Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone – “in whom the building fitly framed grows unto a holy temple (or Church) in the Lord”. Read that again!

Jesus Christ is the “chief corner stone”! What exactly does this mean? The dictionary gives us the following definitions for “corner stone”:

- 1) specifically: **such a stone laid at a formal ceremony**
- 2) a basic element: **foundation**

Evidently, the chief corner stone is the very first stone that is laid when a building project commences. For example, when a public building is about to be built, such as a government office, library, museum etc., there is often a ceremony to mark the beginning of the project. A mayor, prime minister, president or some other dignitary may be invited to lay the very first stone of such a building. That first stone is the “foundation stone” or “corner stone” of the building.

The dictionary also gives us an example of how the word “cornerstone” is used. Notice:

- 1) Officials held a ceremony to lay the *cornerstone* for a new library.
- 2) Trust is the *cornerstone* (or foundation) of a relationship.

Here are a few synonyms for the word “cornerstone”:

“Basis, **bedrock**, bottom, **base**, footing, **foundation**, **groundwork**, **keystone**, root”.

The New Testament Church began on the Day of Pentecost after Christ’s resurrection almost two thousand years ago. It should be clear in everyone’s mind that no man in this end-time could have laid the foundation stone of the Church of God! Who else other than Jesus Christ was sent to lay the foundation stone of the Church? We have already seen that scripture tells us that Jesus Christ *is* the corner stone of the Church – He is the One who laid the foundation stone. It is through Him that the foundation of the Church was laid.

Ephesians 2:20 concretely states that Jesus Christ is the Chief corner stone! No man can claim to have laid the foundation of the Church other than Jesus Christ Himself!

Headstone

Let us notice Zech. 4:7 again, and see what other information we are told about Zerubbabel:

“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”.

We are here told that Zerubbabel brings forth the “headstone”. What is the “headstone” referring to? Matthew 21:42 gives us the answer:

“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?”

This verse helps clarify Zechariah 4:7. Christ is here speaking about Himself as being the “head of the corner”, or “headstone”. We know that He was the “stone” which was despised and rejected by carnal men. Matthew 21:42 confirms what is stated about Zerubbabel in Zech. 4:7, that *Christ* is also the headstone! Mark 12:10 gives further Biblical evidence of this most important fact:

“And have ye not read this scripture; **The stone which the builders rejected is become *the head of the corner***”.

Christ is the One who was rejected and He is the “head of the corner” or the “head stone” – so says our Bible! For clarity's sake, it may be necessary to give the dictionary definition of the word “headstone” or “keystone”:

- 1) Headstone, the central stone at the top of an arch or the top of a dome
- 2) Something that is necessary at the top of an arch or the top stone of a dome

Evidently, the headstone is vital to hold a structure together. For example, in an archway the “headstone” is the edged stone which is placed right at the top; it is the final stone to be laid, and the whole structure (archway) rests on that one headstone. Without the headstone, an archway collapses. You can also think of the construction of a dome: the headstone in a dome is the edged stone placed at the top of a dome which keeps the structure in place: without it, the dome would cave in! Matthew 21:42 and Mark 12:10 give further scriptural support to Zech. 4:7. What these scriptures tell us is that *Christ* is the “head stone” of the Church – He is representative of the final wedged stone put in place to conclude and support the building of the spiritual temple, the Church. No man can claim to lay the final headstone in the building of the spiritual temple. Christ will do this!

If we allow scripture to interpret itself, it is very clear in demonstrating that the New Testament Zerubbabel, or Christ, is the One who laid the foundation of the Church on that first Feast of Pentecost after Christ’s death and resurrection, and His hands will also finish it, just as scripture tells us (Zech. 4:7). No man, other than Christ, has done or will do this!

Alpha and Omega

There is one other scripture which we must refer to while discussing this subject of Zerubbabel. Notice Revelation 1:8:

“I [*Christ*] am the Alpha and the Omega, *the beginning and the ending*, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come”.

Scripture tells us that Christ is the beginning and the ending! He laid the foundation of the building (or temple) and His hands will also finish it. This should continue to solidify in our minds that Christ (or Zerubbabel) is the One who lays the foundation *and* the final stone to end or complete the spiritual temple (Church). He is the beginning and the ending!

Only Jesus Christ can be credited with laying the foundation stone of the Church, and only Jesus Christ can be credited with laying the final stone of that same spiritual temple. *It is blasphemous to credit any other individual with fulfilling such a job!* Jesus Christ is the author and He is the finisher!

The plummet

Let us once again visit Zech. 4:9-10, and notice that the word “plummet” is used in reference to Zerubbabel:

“The hands of Zerubbabel [*or the hands of Christ*] have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts [*referring to God the Father*] hath sent me unto you. 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**”.

Here we see more interesting information about Zerubbabel, which continues to prove that His identity is in fact Jesus Christ. Verse 10 tells us that Zerubbabel has *a plummet* in his hands. What is a “plummet” and for what is it used? A “plummet” is a measuring device that is used in the construction of buildings. The word “plummet” is a translation from the Hebrew word “bedeel” (Strong’s 913), which comes from the word “badal” (Strong’s 914) and means “to separate, distinguish, select, divide, separate”. Certainly, only God can

do this! Only God can “separate, distinguish, select”. *No man can do this!* No man can know the intent of the heart, and judge! Who dare take upon himself such a name and title? Who dare appoint this title to anyone other than a Being in the Godhead? Only God can hold the measuring device known as a “plummet”, in the context of Zechariah 4:10. We cannot attribute any man to holding such a device! Only Christ can measure righteousness (Is. 28:17).

Jesus Christ is the Zerubbabel whose hands laid the foundation of the spiritual building, and whose hands will finish it and, as He carries out that task, He makes use of *a plummet* - the device - that is used in the Bible to spiritually measure individuals in the construction of the spiritual temple.

Zerubbabel is central to the message being conveyed in Zechariah 4. Without understanding the identity of Zerubbabel it is impossible to understand the identity of the two witnesses, which will be discussed in chapter two of this booklet.

Zerubbabel the signet

The book of Haggai also mentions Zerubbabel as *a signet*. Notice:

“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” (Hagg. 2:23).

Here is another verse which so many have misunderstood and taken out of context. The word “signet” is 2368 in Strong’s and refers to a “signature ring”, or a “seal”. A “signet” is used to sign approval on something. The word “signet” comes from the Hebrew word “chotham” (number 2856 in Strong’s) and means “*to close up, to seal, to make an end*”. Haggai 2:23 tells us that Christ is the ultimate stamp of approval who will be sent to us by Almighty God. Only Christ can give the stamp of approval to the building of His spiritual temple (or Church),

including the confirmation and approval of doctrines and teachings. Zerubbabel is God's signet! He will be the One to "seal things off". His hands will complete the building of the spiritual temple. He is the seal, or the final sign of approval sent to us by Almighty God.

Significantly, verse 23 also mentions the phrase "in that day". Notice the verse again:

**"In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee,
O Zerubbabel, my servant...as a signet..."**

In that day! To which day is this referring? As is clearly explained in the *Faithful Church of God in Laodicea's* (FCGL) booklet entitled "The Day of the Lord cometh...", the Biblical phrase "in that day" refers to the period known as the Day of the Lord. "In that day", or in the Day of the Lord, God will send Zerubbabel and reveal Him as His signet. That Day has not yet come, but is almost upon us. When it does come, God will send Zerubbabel as His signet. (On this subject, please also download or request free of charge the FCGL booklet entitled "Elijah").

Christ has many titles

Over recent months we have been shown that Jesus Christ carries many titles. He carries the title of Joshua, Elijah, Eliakim, Zerubbabel and so on. This should come as no surprise to us. We must remember that the Bible is the Word of God, and Christ is that Word! God's Word discusses Christ and reveals His many titles. It is evident that through the many titles given to Jesus Christ, God the Father is differentiating the many roles which Christ fulfills:

Joshua - Christ the High Priest
Zerubbabel - Christ the Builder
Elijah - Christ the Restorer
Eliakim - Christ who governs

As the bride of Christ, we must deeply understand all of His many roles and titles. We must understand His roles and offices if we are to be a help-meet to Him! As we court Christ, we must understand Him and His offices so that we may better be prepared to fulfill the role of His wife which will be given to us in the near future. At the coronation ceremony, many crowns will be lowered onto Jesus Christ's head clearly indicating that He fulfills many offices (Zech. 6:11; Rev. 19:12). Christ's Church consists of the ones who will help Him fulfill all of His roles. Christ's wife will be by His side for all eternity, and as such we must understand and truly get to know our Husband. It is for this reason that God the Father is at this time giving us deep understanding on the various roles fulfilled by Jesus Christ. God the Father wants us to get to know Christ deeply, and intimately, and that is what He is helping us do as He gives us deeper understanding on the various names, titles, offices and duties which Jesus Christ currently fulfills and which He will fulfill in the near future when He returns to this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords. We must be fervently getting ready to help Christ, and that includes understanding what Jesus Christ's work is all about. If we don't understand this, we cannot be the perfect help-meet which God is looking for! Understanding Christ and His various roles is one very important way in which we must get ourselves ready for the soon-coming marriage of the Church of the firstfruits to her Husband, Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:7).

Chapter 2

The Vision of Zechariah 4 explained

In chapter one of this booklet we discussed the identity of Zerubbabel as explained in Zechariah 4. Apart from discussing Zerubbabel and giving us irrefutable proof as to his identity, Zechariah also discusses a number of important components pertaining to an important vision surrounding a candlestick. We will devote this chapter to discuss most of the components detailed in the following scriptures. Here are the verses we will discuss:

“And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold **a candlestick all of gold**, with a **bowl upon the top of it**, and his **seven lamps thereon**, and **seven pipes to the seven lamps**, which are upon the top thereof: And *two olive trees by it*, **one upon the right side of the bowl**, and **the other upon the left side thereof**. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord...Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these *two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof*? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the **two golden pipes empty the golden oil** out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, **These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth**” (vs. 1-5, 11-14).

“And I will give power unto my *two witnesses*, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the *two olive trees*, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:3-4).

Here we see being discussed *one candlestick, seven lamps, a bowl, two olive trees, golden pipes* and *golden oil*. (The “two candlesticks” mentioned in Rev. 11:4 will be discussed on page 21 of this booklet). To understand exactly what is being communicated to us in these verses, we will need to closely examine the various components referred to in this vision. As we do this, we must allow the Bible to interpret itself.

Zechariah 4:2 tells us that there is a **candlestick** (which Rev. 1:20 tells us is representative of the Church of God), and this candlestick has seven lamps (representative of seven coexisting congregations on the mail route in Asia, and prophetically of seven successive, as well as progressively coexisting, congregations throughout the history of the Church - Revelation 2 and 3 refer). Important to note is that there is only **one candlestick** mentioned – not seven! This refers to the fact that God has *one* Church. We must understand: God has one Church represented by the candlestick, which has seven successive and progressively coexisting congregations represented by the seven lamps on the one candlestick. The candlestick and lamps described in this vision are components which are easy to understand.

We are also told that a **bowl** is upon the top of the candlestick, or Church. The word “bowl” discussed in verse 2 is translated from the Hebrew word “gullah” (Strongs number 1543) and could be translated as “fountain” or “spring”. This clearly indicates that the bowl is active and in use. The fact that the bowl could be translated as “spring” or “fountain” indicates that the bowl and its contents are living! The following verses demonstrate that God Himself is a fountain of living waters. Notice:

“For my people have committed two evils; **they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters**, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:13).

“O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken **the LORD, the fountain of living waters**” (Jer. 17:13).

“For **the Lamb** which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and **shall lead them unto living fountains of waters**: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Rev. 7:17).

Remember that in this vision as recorded by Zechariah, the *bowl* is seen as being “upon the top” of the golden candlestick (Zech. 4:2), or upon “the top” of the Church. That in itself should give us a great clue as to what the bowl represents. The words “the top” in verse 2 are also very revealing and further confirm to whom this “bowl” is referring. The words “the top” in this verse are translated from the Hebrew word “rosh” (Strong’s 7218), and could be translated as “the head (in many applications...of rank), captain, chief, first, forefront, high priest, principal, ruler”. This clearly indicates that “the bowl” is the Head, Captain and High Priest of the candlestick or Church – clearly referring to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church (Heb. 9:11) and Captain of our salvation (Heb. 2:10)! Evidently, Jesus Christ is the central figure of the vision detailed in Zechariah 4. God wants to make it amply clear to us that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. He is the High Priest of the Church, and the Bowl is representative of that! As we saw earlier, the Godhead is the fountain of living waters (Jer. 2:13; 17:13). We must never lose sight of this vital truism. God has placed a government structure over and within His Church and Christ is the Head of that structure. This is one of

the main points being communicated in the vision found in Zechariah 4.

Now that we understand that the “Bowl” is referring to Jesus Christ, let us go back and continue discussing what is being communicated to us in Zechariah 4:

“... and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps [*for His seven congregations*] thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps...” (verse 2).

As already mentioned above, the one candlestick has seven lamps (or congregations) which are discussed in detail in Revelation 2 and 3. We are also told that there are seven pipes leading to the seven lamps. These pipes connect the Bowl to each of the seven lamps on the one candlestick. Now notice verse 3:

“And two olive trees by IT [*two olive trees by the one bowl*], one [*olive tree*] upon the right side of the bowl, and the other [*olive tree*] upon the left side thereof”.

Interesting! Scripture is telling us that there are **two olive trees, one on either side of the Bowl**, or of Christ. The text in Zechariah 4 continues:

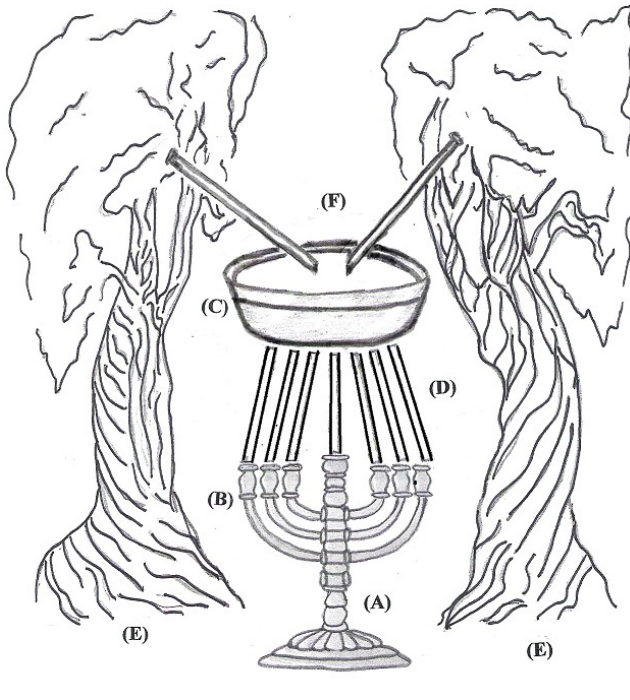
“So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? [*What are these two olive trees – one on either side of the Bowl/Zerubbabel/Christ?*] Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord...Then answered I, and said unto him, **What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?**” (vs. 4-5, 11)

Verse 11 also reveals that, apart from the olive trees standing on either side of the Bowl (vs. 3), they also stand on either side of the candlestick or Church. Some may have been led to believe that the two olive trees are representatives of the last two congregations, Philadelphia and Laodicea. However, we must be very careful of this interpretation! Scripture does not state this! Scripture does not state that the two olive trees stand on either side of the last two lamps, neither does it state that the two olive trees are the last two lamps. The two olive trees are not synonymous with the last two lamps of the one candlestick. This must be made amply clear: scripture states that the two olive trees stand on either side of Christ and on either side of the *one* candlestick made up of seven lamps. In other words, the two olive trees stand on either side of Christ, and on either side of the *whole* Church, which is made up of seven congregations. Scripture couldn't be plainer! (Rev. 11:3-4 will be explained under the sub-head "Two olive trees"). Notice further:

“And I answered again, and said unto him, **What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (Zech. 4:12-14).**

Here we are given more information on the two olive trees. We are told that they empty golden oil out of themselves through two golden pipes. We are also told that the two olive trees are representative of two anointed ones who stand by Jesus Christ, or the Bowl, and by the Church. The identity of the two witnesses should be getting more obvious, but will become absolutely clear in the next chapter. Notice that the two olive trees “stand by” Christ. The phrase “stand by” is translated from the Hebrew word “amad” (Strong’s 5957), and could be translated as “to stand, abide behind, dwell, be employed, be present, serve etc. Evidently the two olive trees

are employed to serve Christ, and stand by Him! Zech. 4:14 tell us that the two olive trees are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. At this point, we would like to introduce the idea that the two anointed ones are possibly angels which stand before, minister unto, and serve Jesus Christ. Please keep this idea in your mind as we proceed. The vision discussed in Zechariah 4 will become absolutely clear, as we allow the Word of God to guide us in understanding. The key is to allow God to guide us and not allow preconceived ideas to cloud His communication. Following is a simple diagram which illustrates what is being communicated to us through Zechariah 4:



Key:

- (A) One candlestick all of gold (Zech. 4:2)
- (B) Seven lamps on the one candlestick (Zech. 4:2)
- (C) A Bowl on top of the candlestick (Zech. 4:2)
- (D) Seven pipes to the seven lamps (Zech. 4:2)
- (E) Two olive trees which stand one on each side of the bowl (Zech. 4:3), and of the candlestick (Zech. 4:11)

(F) Two golden pipes emptying oil from the olive trees (Zech. 4:12)

As you will notice, the two olive trees empty golden oil into the Bowl. Evidently, the two olive trees are representatives of “messengers” who serve Christ and the Church. It might be helpful to think of the two olive trees as “*conduits*” between God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. A physical parallel might help make this easier to understand: Queen Elizabeth II in England sits on the throne of David. Her son, Prince Charles, is heir to the throne. The monarch will sometimes use messengers, servants, or court men to deliver messages or communication to her son when he is not immediately available to her. In like manner, God the Father uses messengers to sometimes communicate with His Son. The two olive trees are representative of messengers, who are engaged in serving Christ and the Church through Him.

Golden oil is emptied out of the olive trees (through their branches) into the Bowl. As Head, Christ leads His Church. (In chapter 4 of this booklet we will discuss the “golden oil”, which is referred to in Zechariah 4 and other scriptures in the Bible).

Two olive trees

The book of Revelation gives us further information on the “two anointed ones”. Notice what the apostle John writes:

“And I will give power unto **my *two witnesses***, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. **These are the *two olive trees***, and the *two candlesticks* standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:3-4).

Through Revelation 11:3, God reveals that **the two olive trees are representative of the two witnesses**. John was also inspired to write that the commission of these two witnesses will last for 1260 days. He also mentions that the two olive trees are “the two candlesticks standing before the God of the

earth”. In trying to make sense of this, many refer to Rev. 1:20 which states that a candlestick is representative of a Church, and thus conclude that the two witnesses are representative of two Churches. They speculate that the two olive trees, or two witnesses, are representatives of the last two congregations of God’s Church, Philadelphia and Laodicea. However, this is not Biblically accurate. Revelation 11:4 needs clarification. It is a well known fact that when we come across what might seem to be an unclear scripture in the Bible, we must allow other scriptures to clarify it for us. Remember, we have seen a number of scriptures proving that God has only *one* Church made up of seven congregations (Zech. 4:2; Matt. 16:18; Rev. 2, 3). **Zechariah 4 is very clear in stating that there is only *one* candlestick – *one* Church – having seven congregations with two olive trees (two anointed ones, or two witnesses) standing on either side of Christ and the Church.** Zechariah 4 clearly indicates that the two witnesses have been standing either side of Christ and the Church ever since the Church’s inception almost 2000 years ago.

The phrase in Revelation 11:4 which states “these are the two olive trees *and the two candlesticks*” thus needs clarifying. Remember: we know that God has *one* candlestick (or Church), and we have clearly also seen that the two olive trees stand *beside* the one Church (not *instead* of it, or instead of its last two congregations). With all this knowledge from other scriptures, God’s Word is clear that the two olive trees cannot be representative of *two* Churches. Again, we know that God only has *one* Church and the two witnesses stand *beside* it, not instead of it, or instead of the last two lamps on the one candlestick (Zech. 4:3, 11). So what does Revelation 11:4 mean, when John states: “these are the two olive trees, *and the two candlesticks* standing before the God of the earth”?

We must understand that the word *candlestick* in Revelation 11:4 comes from the Greek root word “luchnos” (Strong’s 3088), which means “light”! If we place all the scriptures together on the subject and allow God’s Word to

interpret itself, we can understand that the two olive trees are the two anointed ones or two witnesses (Rev. 11:3-4), who stand beside Christ and beside the one Church as “lights” – not as Churches! John is telling us that the two witnesses are lights! They will be *lights* to God’s people having to endure the dark days of the Great Tribulation (Rev. 11). Revelation 11:4 should be more clearly translated as follows:

“And I will give power unto my *two witnesses*, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the *two olive trees*, and *two lights* (Strong’s 3087, 3088) standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:3-4).

Seven congregations - one Church

It is imperative that we understand that God has only one Church, which has seven congregations throughout its two thousand year history: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea (Rev. 2-3). These seven congregations make up God’s one Church throughout the ages (Rev. 2 & 3).

At this juncture, before proceeding, it may be appropriate to comment on a few verses in Revelation 1 to clarify this subject further. Revelation 1:12-13 in the King James version states this:

“And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, **I saw seven golden candlesticks**; And in the midst of the **seven candlesticks** one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle” (Rev. 1:12-13).

In this text, the translators of the King James version use the word “candlesticks” quite liberally giving the impression that God has *seven Churches*. A better translation for the word Church in this context would be “congregation” (Strong’s 1577

= congregation). This must be clearly understood: God has one Church which has seven congregations. This point is very plainly and correctly translated in “The Message” Bible version as follows:

“I saw a **gold menorah** [*candlestick*] with **seven branches**, And in the center, the Son of Man...” (Rev. 1:12-13).

This translation perfectly correlates with the vision outlined in Zechariah 4 and all the other New Testament scriptures referring to God having one Church (one menorah or candlestick) with seven branches (or seven congregations). The translation of this verse in “The Message” Bible does not make reference to seven candlesticks as does the King James translation, but states that there is *one* candlestick with *seven* branches. Again, the only reason that reference is being made to this verse is to clarify and enforce in the reader’s mind the Biblical principal that God only has one Church made up of seven congregations. As seen in Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11:4, the two witnesses stand on either side of Christ and on either side of the Church! Note that Christ is in the center of this vision. Christ (Zerubbabel) builds the Church; Christ (the Bowl) feeds and guides the Church. The two olive trees, or two witnesses, serve Christ. They will stand on the earth as lights to God’s begotten children who will not have been found faithful to be taken to a Place of Safety. They will proclaim God’s Truth and perform miracles, signs and wonders for a period of 1260 days during the dark days of the Great Tribulation.

Chapter 3

Identity of the two witnesses

The question on many peoples' mind is: who are the two olive trees on either side of Christ and either side of the Church. While we briefly introduced this subject in the last chapter, and also alluded to their identity, we will devote this chapter to giving irrefutable Biblical proof as to their identity and give a clear indication as to when they will appear on the scene.

For the sake of clarity, we will again reproduce a portion of Zechariah 4, while highlighting the sections which will be discussed in detail in this chapter:

“And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And **two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.** So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord...Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these **two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?** And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, **These are**

the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (vs. 1-5, 11-14).

We have already seen that the two olive trees represent the two witnesses. Now we will allow other scriptures in the Bible to guide us in revealing the identity of these two witnesses.

Two witnesses will perform miracles

In Revelation 11, the apostle John gives us more necessary information on the two witnesses:

“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will” (vs. 5-6).

When the two witnesses come on the scene they will have the power from God to cause great destruction according to His plan. They will have the power to perform mighty miracles as God allows them throughout their 1260-day ministry. This should act as a wonderful sign to God’s people during the Great Tribulation. They will be as lights in a dark world!

As we read that which God communicates through these verses, we are given some tremendous details as to the identity of the two witnesses. Notice one further verse in the book of Revelation, which gives us further insight:

“And when they [*the two witnesses*] shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called **Sodom and Egypt**, where also our Lord was crucified” (Rev. 11:7-8).

Notice that God mentions Sodom and Egypt, more commonly known as Sodom and Gomorrah. Why would God mention Sodom and Gomorrah in the context of the two witnesses? What is God trying to communicate to us by giving us this necessary bit of information? As we proceed, we will see that this is quite significant to understanding the identity of the two witnesses. God wants us to make an important connection. Notice the following relating verses from Luke 17:

“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. **Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot** [*referring to Sodom and Gomorrah*]; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; **But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.** Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed [*or when the Day of the Lord is revealed*]. In that day, [*in that day of the Lord – right at the beginning of the Day of the Lord*] he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife. [*Another clear reference to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Why does God keep referring us back to that time...what is it that He wants us to see and understand?*] Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, **in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.** Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said

unto them, Wheresoever the body [*of Christ*] is, thither will the eagles be gathered together” (Luke 17:26-37).

Much of the above text is explained in the *Faithful Church of God in Laodicea's* booklet entitled “*The Day of the Lord cometh...*”. This booklet is available to you free of charge on request, or may be downloaded from the Church website. However, for the purposes of this subject, we will focus on the fact that many details which surround the beginning of the Day of the Lord are evidently similar to the time of the days of Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah. Since God is communicating this parallel to us, there is evidently something which He wants us to understand. As we proceed, we will see that He is giving us a very big clue as to the identity of the two witnesses.

Three proofs on the identity of the two witnesses

Let us now take a look at the account outlined in the book of Genesis on events which took place in Sodom and Gomorrah. The Old Testament account on the story of Sodom and Gomorrah begins:

“And the Lord appeared unto him [*referring to Abraham*] in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day” [*here we see that Christ appeared unto Abraham*]. And he [*Abraham*] lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, **three men** stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd,

and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat” (Gen. 18:1-8).

Here we see that Christ appeared unto Abraham with *two men* at His side. Christ and the two men had a meal with Abraham of beef, butter and milk. The next few verses in Genesis 18 outline a conversation which we do not need to focus on for the purposes of this subject which we are discussing. Verse 20 continues the story flow pertaining to this subject:

“And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; **I will go down now**, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know” (Gen. 18:20-21).

Here we begin to see a direct and perfect parallel with what will take place at the beginning of the Day of the Lord when Christ will come “as a thief in the night”! Notice that Christ told Abraham, “I will go down now”. This is the same as what will happen at the beginning of the Day of the Lord. Christ will come down – He will open the seals in order and will “come and see” (Rev. 6:1, 3, 5, 7). For more details on what will take place during the Day of the Lord, please request or download the FCGL booklet entitled “The Day of the Lord cometh...”. The story continues:

“And the men turned their faces from thence, [*this is referring to the two men who were with Christ*] and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” (Gen. 18:22-23).

Christ said that He “will go down”, and He sent the two men who were with Him to Sodom and Gomorrah. Destruction was about to take place there because of the terrible sins of the people. This is very similar to what will take place at the beginning of the Day of the Lord in this end-time. When Christ comes, “as a thief in the night”, destruction will ensue. As soon as the Day of the Lord begins, the four horsemen of the apocalypse will be released and there will be sudden destruction. Notice 1 Thess. 5:

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then *sudden destruction* cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thess. 5:2-3).

We know that as the Day of the Lord is almost upon us there will be eating, drinking, revelry. It will be a time similar to how it was in Sodom and Gomorrah, and destruction will come *suddenly* as punishment for this world’s sins! Genesis 18 continues to add more details to what happened when the two angels went to Sodom and Gomorrah:

“...Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he

said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place” (Gen. 18:23-33).

Christ knew that there would be very few righteous people found in Sodom and Gomorrah. He indicated to Abraham that there would not even be ten righteous individuals found. Every indication is that there will be very few found accounted worthy to be taken to a Place of Safety in this end-time. This should act as a wake-up call to each of us. This account in Genesis 18 should serve as admonition to God’s people to continue fighting the battle against Satan the devil and his wiles, and ensure a commitment to building holy righteous character. Very few were taken to a place of protection just before destruction came upon Sodom and Gomorrah. The story of Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah continues in Genesis 19:

“And there came **two angels** to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground” (vs. 1).

Notice it! The two men accompanying Christ when He appeared to Abraham *were angels!* These *two angels* were Christ’s representatives, or *two witnesses* of that time, who

were sent to Sodom and Gomorrah. They met Lot at the entrance of the city. Verses 2 and 3 continue:

“And he [*Lot*] said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake *unleavened bread*, and they did eat”.

As discussed in the FCGL booklet entitled “The Day of the Lord cometh...”, the Day of the Lord will most likely begin just before the time of a future Passover – possibly four days before, to correlate with the setting apart of the lambs in Old Testament times (Ex. 12:3)! (Please request or download “The Day of the Lord cometh...” booklet for Biblical proof on this). It is interesting to note that the events surrounding the two witnesses of that day, going to Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah took place around the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is possible that the two witnesses came to Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah on the very Night of the Passover, a Night to be much observed, for Lot “made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat” (Gen. 19:3), indicating this to be a distinct possibility. We must understand that Christ is making a clear comparison between the days of Sodom and Gomorrah with the beginning of the Day of the Lord. He is lighting up our path! The FCGL teaches that God’s faithful people will very probably be taken to a place of protection in the morning after a future Passover is observed, just as had been done in Old Testament times when the Israelites left Egypt. It also seems very possible that the two angels came to Sodom and Gomorrah on a Passover night (Gen. 19:3), and Lot and his family fled the morning after. Verse 4 continues:

“But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old

and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof” (Gen. 19:4-8).

Evidently, Lot buckled up somewhat under the pressure. We see that he wanted to protect the two angels at all costs.

“And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men [*the two angels*] put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. **And they [*the two angels*] smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness [*the two angel witnesses performed this miracle*], both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door. And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place” (Gen 19:9-12).**

The two angels who were witnessing unto Lot, offered him protection from the devastation that was about to befall Sodom and Gomorrah. The two angels prophesied of the destruction, just as God’s end-time two witnesses will do. Notice their prophesying in verse 13:

“For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it”.

It was God’s will that these two angels were used to witness, prophesy and also call down plagues from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah as correction from Almighty God for the sins against Him which were being committed. Does not this demonstrate a clear parallel between what was going on in the days of Lot with what will go on during the Great Tribulation? Isn’t it clear that what scripture states about these two angels is very similar to the work that will be carried out by the two witnesses here in this end time? The next verses in Genesis 19 demonstrate another striking parallel with what will happen when the two witnesses come on the scene. Notice the following section of scripture, while paying particular attention to verse 17:

“And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law. **And when the morning arose, [i.e. the morning after the feast when they ate unleavened bread] then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.** And while he lingered, the men [*the two angels*] laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, **Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed”** (Gen 19:14-17).

The two angels who were witnessing unto Lot and his family told them not to look back, but to *flee to the mountain*. Lot and his family were urged to run for their lives and not waste any time! They were very probably told not to return to their house to take anything, but to simply run! Scripture clearly indicates that the two witnesses were very urgent at this time – just as it will be urgent in this end-time as the Day of the Lord begins and the Great Tribulation looms. Notice the following verses in Matthew 24 which describe this:

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea *flee into the mountains*: **Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes**” (Matt. 24:15-18).

Is this not an identical warning to that given by the two angels witnessing to Lot and his family in Genesis 19:17? Notice it again:

“And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, **Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; *escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed***” (Gen. 19:17).

In the Great Tribulation, the two witnesses will be given power from God to bring about plagues and destruction because of the sin on this earth. God is telling us that these scenes of Sodom and Gomorrah will be seen all over again here in this end-time. God is also making a striking parallel between the two witnesses of that time, with the two witnesses who shall come on the scene in this end-time, right at the beginning of the Day of the Lord! Notice further:

“And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar” (Gen. 19:18-22).

This is all talking about escaping the coming calamities on Sodom and Gomorrah, which is so similar in context to what is going to take place here in this end-time. Here is a clear historical parallel from which God wants us to learn so that we can be ready for the future. In the above verses we notice that Lot was seemingly hesitant, demonstrating man’s carnal nature.

“The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. **Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground**” (Gen. 19:23-25).

Here we see a continuous direct parallel to the events which are to take place on this earth during the coming Great Tribulation. The story continues:

“But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the

smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt” (Gen. 19:26-29).

This is the devastation that overtook Sodom and Gomorrah because of its sin. It is the devastation that will overtake this world because of the sin and immorality which it is committing. Sadly, Lot’s wife was wrapped up in the system she was asked to flee from, and as a result suffered a terrible curse, that of being turned into a pillar of salt.

From the parallels we have seen thus far, and from what scripture has to say about the identity of the two witnesses, it becomes increasingly evident that the two witnesses in this end-time will be *angels* sent to this earth in human form. Just as two angels were sent to witness unto Sodom and Gomorrah, every indication is that two angels will be sent to fulfill the prophecy of the two witnesses here in this end-time (Rev. 11:3-12). Remember, on more than one occasion in the New Testament pertaining to the two witnesses and the time of the end, God directs our attention to the time of Sodom and Gomorrah. There is a message which He evidently wants His people to understand. As we closely look at the story of Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah we see that two angels were sent by God to witness unto Lot and his family, and then the rest of the city, and also perform miracles during that time of destruction. This is identical to the way it will be in this end time when the two witnesses come on the scene. This is the **first proof** that the Bible gives to demonstrate that the two witnesses in this end-time will be angels. We will now look at a further two proofs, which clearly indicate and confirm that the two witnesses will be angels. As we go along, you will notice that the proofs given are irrefutable!

The *second proof* is that scripture clearly demonstrates that the two witnesses will not be resurrected with the saints! Notice the following scriptures, while paying particular attention to the highlighted text:

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. **And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.** And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. **And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet;** and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them” (Rev. 11:3-12).

When the two witnesses will have finished their testimony, we are told that they will be killed by the beast and their dead

bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days. Notice the very revealing detail regarding their resurrection: scripture states that after three days and a half, the two witnesses will be resurrected *to their feet!* This is conspicuously different to the events that take place when the firstfruits are resurrected. We are told that the two witnesses will not immediately be raised incorruptible and ascend in the clouds, but will be raised to their feet! God here gives us a glaring clue to confirm that the two witnesses will not be a part of the firstfruit resurrection. We will state again: the firstfruits will not be resurrected to their feet as will the two witnesses. Notice what scripture states about the resurrection of the firstfruits. Carefully observe that the firstfruits will be raised incorruptible and not raised to their feet:

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [*who are still living*] shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:52).

Scripture does not state that the dead in Christ will stand on their feet at the resurrection. It states that the dead in Christ will be raised incorruptible! Notice further:

“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:* 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” (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Please note that the above verses state that the dead in Christ will rise first to meet the Lord in the clouds/in the air! This is not what scripture states about the resurrection of the two witnesses! *The two witnesses will be resurrected to their feet and do not immediately go up in the clouds as do the firstfruits.* This clear distinction in the resurrection of the

firstfruits and of the two witnesses should prove beyond doubt that the two witnesses are not resurrected at the same time as the firstfruits, clearly indicating that they are *not* firstfruits!

The **third proof** given in scripture indicating that the two witnesses will be angels is by far the most conclusive and should leave readers with absolutely no doubt in their mind of their identity. Let us once again re-visit some verses in Zechariah 4:

“And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: **And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof...**Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these **two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?**...Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (Zech. 4:2-3, 11, 14).

In the above verses we are clearly told that the two witnesses stand on either side of Christ (the Bowl), and on either side of the Church (candlestick). Note that the two witnesses do not stand on either side of the last two lamps or last two congregations (Philadelphia and Laodicea) as many mistakenly believe. Scripture is clear in stating that the two witnesses stand either side of the Church! We must understand what God is communicating to us in these verses if we are to truly understand the identity of the two witnesses. Let us discuss what is stated in Zechariah 4 verses 2, 3, 11 and 14.

The Church has been in existence as a spiritual organism since the very first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection. That is the day when God gave His Holy Spirit to His people who were assembled together in unity

(Acts 2:1-3). God's Church has been in existence ever since that Day of Pentecost (Matt. 16:18). Throughout its almost 2000-year history, the Church of God has seen seven consecutive and progressively coexisting congregations namely Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. These seven congregations make up the seven lamps found on the *one* candlestick (Church) which is discussed in Zechariah 4. Zechariah 4 is clear in stating that the two witnesses stand on either side of the candlestick, and either side of the seven lamps or seven congregations! Since the seven congregations together span a lifetime of almost 2000 years, the two witnesses must also be in existence throughout those almost 2000 years, otherwise the verses in Zechariah 4 discussing the two witnesses in relation to the Church are void! If we understand what God is communicating through Zechariah 4, we should easily understand that the two witnesses stand on either side of the one Church of God which has been in existence for almost 2000 years. The two witnesses have stood by the Church throughout its history – so says Zechariah 4! No two men have lived throughout the history of the Church from its inception on that first Day of Pentecost after Christ's death and resurrection to the time that Christ returns on a future Feast of Trumpets some 2000 years later! This is further evidence – irrefutable proof - that the two witnesses in this end-time are not men, but angels! They have been Christ's helpers, standing on each side of Him and on each side of the Church throughout its 2000-year history! We must understand what God is communicating to us through Zechariah 4 and other scriptures in the Bible. God has made the identity of the two witnesses clear to His people, as He lights up their path and shows them what lies immediately ahead so that they are not caught unawares (Ps. 119:105; 1 Thess. 5:4).

Here is a point by point recapitulation of the major points which have been covered in this booklet thus far:

1. Zech 4:2 tells us that Jesus Christ is the Head of the one candlestick, or Church.
2. The seven lamps (or seven congregations) form the one candlestick, or one Church (Zech. 4:2).
3. Zech. 4:3, 11, 14 tell us that the two olive trees are not Churches, and do not stand beside the last two congregations (Philadelphia and Laodicea). We are told that the two olive trees are two witnesses (Rev. 11:3-4) who stand on either side of Christ (the Bowl) and on either side of the entire Church (candlestick) made up of seven congregations (Ephesus to Laodicea).
4. Zech. 4:6-10 discusses the Church's foundation: it was laid millennia ago by Zerubbabel (or Jesus Christ) through the apostles and prophets. We are also told that the Church will be "finished" by Jesus Christ at the resurrection.
5. Zech. 4:10 tells us that the plummet is in the hands of Zerubbabel (Christ). A plummet is a measuring device used to build. Only God can measure His called-out ones as He builds and completes His temple.
6. Rev. 11:4 tells us that the two witnesses are lights in a dying world during the Great Tribulation.
7. If the two witnesses stand on either side of the seven lamps that make up the one candlestick, it would follow that these two witnesses have stood on either side of the Church since its inception on the Day of Pentecost in the year of Christ's death and resurrection. This clearly indicates that the two witnesses are not men, but angels.
8. Rev. 11 tells us that the two witnesses will appear in this end time to fulfill a 1260-day commission.
9. Luke 17:26-30 compares and contrasts the beginning of the Day of the Lord to the time of Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah as recorded in Genesis 18 and 19.
10. Genesis 18:2-3 state that three "men" appeared unto Abraham: Christ, and two angels who witnessed to Sodom and Gomorrah (see also Gen. 18:20-22; Gen. 19:1), further indicating that the two witnesses in this end time will be angels.

11. Genesis 19:12-23 demonstrates that the two angels guided Lot and his family to a place of protection, as will the two witnesses in this end-time guide God's faithful to a place of safety to be protected from the Great Tribulation.
12. Gen. 19:13, 24-25, 28-29 show that the two angels (witnesses of that day) were used to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah just as the two witnesses will be used for 1260 Days of Tribulation to deliver the curses from God on this sin-sick world. Through their preaching and performing of miracles they will be lights to those in the Great Tribulation.
13. The difference in events which take place between the resurrection of the two witnesses and the resurrection of the firstfruits proves that the two witnesses are not firstfruits and will not be part of the firstfruits resurrection (Rev. 11:11; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Zechariah 4 contains a very important vision for God's Church. God has now clarified the vision for His people as He lights up their path for what lies immediately ahead. God has promised not to leave His people in darkness: "ye, brethren, are not in darkness" (1 Thess. 5:4). Thank God for the deep understanding which He is giving those who care to listen to His communication.

Sequence of events

To summarize what has been discussed, here is an outline of a very possible sequence of events:

- **10th day of the first month**

The Day of the Lord may very well commence on this day in an upcoming future year. The 10th day of the first month corresponds with the Old Testament day of the "setting apart of the lambs" before Passover (Ex. 12:3). Similarly, it would follow that on this day in a future year, God's faithful will be "set apart" to be taken to a place of safety.

Christ will come “as a thief in the night” to mark the beginning of the Day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev 3:3; Rev. 16:15). Every indication is that He will come with the two witnesses (angels) by His side (see parallel in Gen. 18:1-2). The 1260-day commission of the two witnesses (Rev. 11:3) will commence when the Day of the Lord begins – four days before the Great Tribulation. Between the 10th day and the 15th day of the first month, the first four seals will be opened (Rev. 6:1-8).

- **15th day of the first month**

The morning after the Passover meal, God’s faithful will be taken to a place of protection. This is a direct parallel to when the Old Testament Israelites fled Egypt, and presumably also when Lot and his family were offered a place of protection (Ex. 12:22; Gen. 19:15).

The fifth seal, or Great Tribulation, begins on the day when God’s faithful are taken to a place of protection.

At this time, the Midnight Cry will begin to go out through the two witnesses (Matt. 25). The timing of the Midnight Cry is in direct parallel to the Midnight Cry which took place when the Israelites fled Egypt (Ex. 12:30).

- **Day of Pentecost, preceding Feast of Trumpets three and a half years later**

The firstfruits resurrection will take place on the Day of Pentecost. (Please download or request the FCGL booklet entitled “God’s Feast days: Pentecost” for a full explanation and proof of the Pentecost resurrection).

- **Four days before Feast of Trumpets 3 ½ yrs later, when Christ returns as King of kings**

The two witnesses will be killed (Rev. 11:7) and will lie in the streets for three and a half days (Rev. 11:9). During this time the world will “make merry” and “give gifts” because these two prophets would have finally been put to death (Rev. 11:10).

- **Feast of Trumpets**

The two witnesses will be resurrected *to their feet* on the Feast of Trumpets when great fear will fall upon those who see them (Rev. 11:11). The two witnesses will thereafter be called up to heaven (Rev. 11:12).

On a future Feast of Trumpets, Christ will return to this earth with His wife, as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Chapter 4

Matthew 25 – Parable of the Ten Virgins

Now that we have clear understanding on the identity of the two witnesses, it is possible to completely understand the prophecy outlined in Matthew 25. In this final chapter, we will discuss the parable of the ten virgins:

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh (Matt. 25:1-13).

This is a parable which discusses the situation in this end time, including the time during the Great Tribulation. The ten virgins – made up of five wise and five foolish – are all currently slumbering and sleeping. This is very evident and can be seen all around us in this end time. Most of God’s people seem to be tired, and have for the most part given up on

proving all things (1 Thess. 5:21). Many reject deeper understanding being communicated by God. They seem happy to simply follow the advice and teachings of their physical leaders rather than proving what is taught in their Bible. Many feel safe and comfortable in larger groups.

A number of leaders of the various WCG splinter groups have dangerously taken the liberty of appropriating Biblical titles to themselves. These titles are clearly not theirs to take, yet their followers are happy to endorse those titles and teachings even though they can so easily be proven to be illegitimate. In so doing they are rejecting their Head, Jesus Christ (Rev. 3:14-22). Most followers simply seem not to care! Furthermore, many claim that the Elijah has already come and restored all things so they do not feel the need to continue proving anything further which their Creator may be trying to communicate at this time. The desire to “prove” is no longer there. This attitude is very dangerous and unbiblical! These are only a few of the many examples which demonstrate that the majority of God’s people are currently slumbering and in a deep state of sleep. Scripture is clear in stating that “while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept” (Matt. 25:5). This is evidently taking place right now. The parable of the ten virgins should act as a strong warning to all of God’s people who are admonished to do what they can now, before the clock strikes midnight! Once midnight strikes, it will be too late for the Laodiceans and those other congregations who deny Christ’s name – authority, to forego the calamities of the Great Tribulation. God’s people must be ready *before* midnight strikes (Matt. 24:44)! Now is the time to test and prove all things and ensure that we all remain spiritually alert and following our Head, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:6 goes on to tell us that at midnight a cry is made. As proven in our booklet entitled “The Day of the Lord cometh...”, the midnight cry will go out through the two witnesses the moment God’s faithful few have been taken to a place of protection. It is at this point that the ten virgins will all

wake up (verse 7). Sadly, it will be too late for any of them to escape the correction of the Great Tribulation. Scripture indicates that, when the Great Tribulation begins, the wise virgins will have “oil” in their lamps while the foolish virgins will be caught “empty handed” (vs. 8). Notice the relevant verses in the parable:

“And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves” (Matt. 25:8-9).

Interestingly, the wise virgins don’t give the foolish virgins of their oil “lest there be not enough”. The obvious question is: why wouldn’t a brother give oil to another brother when in need? Obviously, it is not possible for oil to be given by the wise virgins, otherwise they would surely give some to their brothers.

At this juncture it is important to look into the qualities of oil to understand what the foolish virgins will be lacking, and what the wise virgins cannot give. Scripture mentions eight different examples for the use of oil, which we must examine:

- 1) Ordination – setting apart for holy use (Lev. 8:12)
- 2) Anointing – for healing (Jm. 5:14)
- 3) Symbol of abundance; [Note: the lack of oil is a sign of famine] (Joel 2:19)
- 4) Added to offerings (Lev. 2:4)
- 5) Cleansing agent (Lev. 14:16-17)
- 6) Food (Deut. 7:13)
- 7) Illumination (Ex. 27:20)
- 8) Medicinal ointment (Luke 10:34)

When we think about the spiritual application of “oil”, we can quite easily understand that no individual can ‘give’ oil! As we endeavor to understand the analogy in the parable of the ten

virgins, we must apply the above uses of oil in a spiritual context as it is intended in Matthew 25. We must understand that it is only *God* who can **anoint** the Laodiceans eyes' with eye-salve so that they can see; it is God who has to give them **medicinal ointment** to heal them of their ways, and Who must **illuminate** the path of those in the Great Tribulation through understanding. God must give them the spiritual **abundance** that they will need to feed them spiritually in understanding His Truth (Deut. 7:13). The fact that the foolish virgins do not have oil in their lamps is a sign of spiritual famine. Many of the Laodicean leaders are currently not allowing God to feed the flock under their care (Jer. 23; Ezek 34 etc). Some leaders place themselves as a barrier between the brethren and God. Furthermore, most of God's people are currently blatantly rejecting God's Truth which is being presented to them, and as a result they are starving themselves spiritually of deeper understanding of God's Word! As God's people reject God's Truth they reject Christ as their spiritual Head! In this sense, the wise virgins cannot help the foolish virgins. God has to anoint the eyes of the "foolish" virgins before progress can be made. The foolish virgins will have to go to God in deep repentance, and come under the authority of Christ before they can be helped! Any help given before this takes place will be a futile endeavor – this is why the wise virgins cannot give oil!

In Matthew 25:9, we see that the wise virgins counsel the foolish virgins to "go ye rather to them that sell, and *buy* for yourselves". The foolish virgins are admonished to go and "buy" oil. The Hebrew word for "buy" is "agorazo" and means "to redeem". This means that in the Great Tribulation the wise virgins will advise the foolish virgins to go and redeem themselves before God! They must place themselves under Christ's authority, overcome, grow and build character – things the foolish virgins will have to do for themselves. This situation refers to the relationship between the individual and God. The counsel given by the wise virgins to the foolish virgins is identical to the admonishment given to the Laodicean congregation by Christ Himself. Notice:

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write...**I counsel thee to buy of me gold** tried in the fire, **that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see**” (Rev. 3:14, 18).

That “golden oil” (Zech 4:12) must be “bought” (Matt. 25:9) from Christ! In Revelation 3:18, Christ tells the Laodicean congregation to go to Him to buy gold tried in the fire. This is a perfect parallel with what is stated in the parable of the ten virgins. Only *His* oil will make God’s people “rich”, spiritually speaking, and they must get it from Him (Joel 2:19). It is *God’s* oil that acts as “medicinal ointment” which is to be used to “anoint the eyes” so God’s people can see spiritually (Lk. 10:34). This is the only way He can illuminate their spiritual path (Ex. 27:20). God’s oil will “cover the shame of thy nakedness” as He feeds them Truth. It will clothe them with Truth. We also already saw that “oil” is a cleansing agent (Lev. 14:16-17). Christ tells the Laodiceans to go to Him to buy what is needed to clean their spiritual raiment and make it white! In the parable of the ten virgins, the wise are admonishing the foolish virgins to look to Christ, the spiritual Head of the Church – something that the Laodiceans are failing to do (Rev. 3:20). This is where they are to “buy oil” and this is how they can begin to redeem themselves – by looking to Christ, the spiritual Head! The foolish virgins are to “go ye rather to them that sell” (vs. 9), indicating that they are being directed to the Work Christ will be performing during the Great Tribulation through His two messengers, the two witnesses, who will be Christ’s representatives on earth at that time. The two witnesses will be *lights* during the dark days of the Great Tribulation. In the Great Tribulation, some evidently take the counsel given by the wise virgins and go to redeem themselves.

Matt. 25:10 further tells us that “while they went to buy [redeem themselves], the bridegroom came; and they that were

ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut”. Those who redeem themselves in time will be part of the future firstfruits resurrection; the rest will be shut out of the marriage to Jesus Christ. Notice: “Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not” (Matt. 25:11-12). This is the very sad ending for those who go into the Great Tribulation and do not allow themselves to be corrected by Christ and be redeemed.

At the time of the resurrection, God’s Church will be complete (Rev. 19:7). At that point, Zerubbabel would have finished measuring His people and the construction of the spiritual temple will be complete. Meanwhile, however, God continues to call and measure. Matthew 25:13 is admonition and a strong warning for all of us at this time to ensure that we watch and prepare ourselves by building righteous character and take on the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5), so that the parable of the ten virgins is not realized in our lives and we don’t have to go through the fiery trials of the Great Tribulation to purify ourselves:

“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (Matt. 25:13).

Matthew 25:13 is admonition for all of God’s people today. God gives us this warning so that the parable and prophecy outlined in Matthew 25:1-12 is not realized in our lives! God wants more than anything that all of His people wake up in time and repent so that they will not have to be corrected through the fiery trials of the Great Tribulation. Through this deeper understanding, God has imparted this urgent warning – it is now up to us to decide whether we will take heed and apply it. God is waiting to see our individual decisions, and what actions we will take. Will we respond to Him, or remain callous to His warning and counsel? Now is the time to get busy. Time is fast running out!

We are here to help! Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions. Our address is: Faithful Church of God in Laodicea, P.O. Box 31135, Edmond, Oklahoma 73003, USA. Email: info@fcogl.org. Our web address is: www.fcogl.org