



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

“Blind” Is Just a Parabolic Image

And the Apostle Paul also, saying, “For though ye have served them which are no gods; ye now know God, or rather, are known of God,” has made a separation between those that were not [gods] and Him who is God. And again, speaking of Antichrist, he says, “who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.” He points out here those who are called gods, by such as know not God, that is, idols. For the Father of all is called God, and is so; and Antichrist shall be lifted up, not above Him, but above those which are indeed called gods, but are not.

And Paul himself says that this is true: “We know that an idol is nothing, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth; yet to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we through Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.” For he has made a distinction, and separated those which are indeed called gods, but which are none, from the one God the Father, from whom are all things, and, he has confessed in the most decided manner in his own person, one Lord Jesus Christ.

But in this [clause], “whether in heaven or in earth,” he does not speak of the formers of the world, as these [teachers] expound it; but his meaning is similar to that of Moses, when it is said, “Thou shalt not make to thyself any image for God, of whatsoever things are in heaven above, whatsoever in the earth beneath, and whatsoever in the waters under the earth.” And he does thus explain what are meant by the things in heaven: “Lest when,” he says, “looking towards heaven, and observing the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and all the ornament of heaven, falling into error, thou shouldst adore and serve them.”

And Moses himself, being a man of God, was indeed given as a god before Pharaoh; but he is not properly termed Lord, nor is called God by the

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prophets, but is spoken of by the Spirit as “Moses, the faithful minister and servant of God,” which also he was.

As to their affirming that Paul said plainly in the Second [Epistle] to the Corinthians, “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not,” and maintaining that there is indeed one god of this world, but another who is beyond all principality, and beginning, and power, we are not to blame if they, who give out that they do themselves know mysteries beyond God, know not how to read Paul.

For if any one read the passage thus—according to Paul’s custom, as I show elsewhere, and by many examples, that he uses transposition of words—“In whom God,” then pointing it off, and making a slight interval, and at the same time read also the rest [of the sentence] in one [clause], “hath blinded the minds of them of this world that believe not,” he shall find out the true [sense]; that it is contained in the expression, “God hath blinded the minds of the unbelievers of this world.”

And this is shown by means of the little interval [between the clause]. For Paul does not say, “the God of this world,” as if recognising any other beyond Him; but he confessed God as indeed God. And he says, “the unbelievers of this world,” because they shall not inherit the future age of incorruption. I shall show from Paul himself, how it is that God has blinded the minds of them that believe not, in the course of this work, that we may not just at present distract our mind from the matter in hand, [by wandering] at large.

Irenæus, “Against Heresies,” Book iii, Chaps. vi–vii, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1867), Vol. 1, p. 420.

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A Note From the Editor

If you are a True Believer who genuinely believes what you find written in *The Voice of Elijah*®, you are eventually going to be confronted by others in the Church who will try to convince you that what you believe is not true. Even if you keep quiet about your beliefs, it will only be a matter of time before someone begins to realize your beliefs are not traditional “Christian” thinking. (They will know this by your actions.) At that point, they will likely question you about your beliefs and you will probably share some of your beliefs with them lest you give the impression that you are ashamed of what you believe.

Over the past eleven years, I have been in this situation on numerous occasions. Initially, I opened myself up to scrutiny by freely sharing information with those I thought were Christians. I did so because I thought they would become as excited as I was about learning the Truth. Sadly, it didn’t take long for me to realize most “Christians” have little interest in the Truth, so I stopped sharing what I was learning with anyone. But that didn’t stop others from noticing my actions. And what they saw is that I stopped attending Sunday School and group Bible studies, relinquished all teaching responsibilities, rejected numerous opportunities for church leadership, withdrew from church social activities, and basically became indifferent to anything associated with church.

The point is, even after I decided to keep the Truth to myself it was still obvious to some that my beliefs had changed because my actions gave me away. What I’m saying is this: If you honestly believe the Truth and respond to the conviction it produces in you, there will inevitably be changes in your life that other “Christians” will notice. And if any of those changes fail to meet with their approval, they will eventually ask you to explain what is going on. When that time comes, I have a few suggestions for you based on personal experience.

Let me start by drawing your attention to some advice the Apostle Peter offered Believers in his day:

To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. For,

“LET HIM WHO MEANS TO LOVE LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS

REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING GUILE.

AND LET HIM TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD;

LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.

FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE UPON THE RIGHTEOUS,

AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER,

BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.”

*And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? **But even***

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if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, {you are} blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.
(1 Peter 3:8–17)

This passage offers encouragement to True Believers along with advice on how to deal with unbelievers who “slander” them and “revile” their “good behavior” in Christ (vv. 14–16). While it is easy to think of “good behavior” strictly in terms of proper moral conduct, the fact is, Peter has in mind any kind of proper (good) behavior that is in accordance with the Word of God—The Apostolic Teaching. That behavior includes not only good moral conduct, but also other kinds of behavior that cannot be deemed right or wrong—except by legalists.

Since the legalists of Peter’s day were the Jews, they are undoubtedly who he has in mind when he alludes to those who “slander” and “revile” Believers. The Jews reviled Believers in the Early Church because they considered The Apostolic Teaching to be heretical and a threat to their Pharisaic beliefs. It’s too bad they had no idea The Teaching was once part of their spiritual heritage.

It’s also too bad that the Church today is every bit as ignorant of its spiritual heritage as the Jews. By that I mean the Church, like the Jews, once possessed a complete knowledge of the Truth of God’s Word but abandoned it in favor of Satan’s lies, just like the Jews did. That’s why the Church today is essentially the spiritual equivalent of the Jews in Peter’s day. And that’s why the advice Peter offers Believers in dealing with the Jews can be applied to Pretenders in the Church today.

Pretenders are not currently slandering and reviling True Believers who believe The Apostolic Teaching because the Truth has not yet become a threat to them. And the reason it hasn’t is because they are still blissfully ignorant of the danger The Teaching poses to their “easy-believism” faith. But once the Truth becomes a threat to the lies they want to believe, you can be certain they will revile it and slander anyone who believes it. That’s why you need to be careful about sharing what you are learning from *The Voice of Elijah*®.

As I have already stated, if you truly believe The Teaching, it will only be a matter of time before Pretenders around you begin to realize that your beliefs differ from theirs. Then they will ask you to explain what you believe and why you believe it. When that time comes, here are a few words of advice based on personal experience.

First, don’t argue with Pretenders. Trust me, it is fruitless. Second, don’t attempt to explain everything you believe. They won’t understand it anyway, and you will appear to be a complete loon if you hit them with a bunch of unconventional beliefs that make no sense to them. Instead, pick one belief that you understand fairly well and share that belief along with a few Scripture passages that support it. Don’t think that you have to convince others that what you believe is true because you don’t (and you aren’t likely to succeed even if you try). Remember this: Pretenders aren’t going to ask about your beliefs because they have an interest in changing their beliefs. They will ask about them because they think you may need to be set straight.

That brings me to my final point: Don’t let Pretenders convince you that your beliefs are false. Be prepared to defend your beliefs as Peter suggests in verse 15 above. But understand this: The purpose of any defense is to protect that which might otherwise be harmed, destroyed, or taken away. Therefore, your responsibility is to protect the Truth so that Satan doesn’t snatch it away. That’s exactly what he will have accomplished if Pretenders cause you to doubt what you believe. Let those who have ears hear.

Allen Friedman

Jesus Is the Carpenter Who “Built *The House*” of God

In the first chapter of his work, the Prophet Zechariah plainly states the message God called him to proclaim:

So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “Proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion. But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.” Therefore, thus says the LORD, “I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it,” declares the LORD of hosts, “and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.”’ Again, proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.”’”

(Zechariah 1:14–17)

As that passage indicates, the two questions with which the Book of Zechariah is concerned are the restoration of the city of Jerusalem and “*The House*” of God which is to be “built” in it. But it is impossible to understand what Zechariah wrote concerning “*The House*” of God which was to be “built” in Jerusalem if one ignores the historical context in which he wrote. As Ezra plainly explains, Zechariah’s purpose was to encourage the Jews to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem after their return from the Babylonian Captivity:

When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them, then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and

began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them supporting them. At that time Tattenai, the governor of {the province} beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues came to them and spoke to them thus, “Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?” Then we told them accordingly what the names of the men were who were reconstructing this building. But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report should come to Darius, and then a written reply be returned concerning it. {This is} the copy of the letter which Tattenai, the governor of {the province} beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues the officials, who were beyond the River, sent to Darius the king. They sent a report to him in which it was written thus: “To Darius the king, all peace. Let it be known to the king, that we have gone to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God, which is being built with huge stones, and beams are being laid in the walls; and this work is going on with great care and is succeeding in their hands. Then we asked those elders and said to them thus, ‘Who issued you a decree to rebuild this temple and to finish this structure?’ We also asked them their names so as to inform you, and that we might write down the names of the men who were at their head. And thus they answered us, saying, ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. But because our fathers had provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, {who} destroyed this temple and deported the people to Babylon. However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this house of God. And also the gold and silver

utensils of the house of God which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, and brought them to the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor. And he said to him, "Take these utensils, go {and} deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt in its place." Then that Sheshbazzar came {and} laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from then until now it has been under construction, and it is not {yet} completed.' And now, if it pleases the king let a search be conducted in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, if it be that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this house of God at Jerusalem; and let the king send to us his decision concerning this {matter}." Then King Darius issued a decree, and search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon. And in Ecbatana in the fortress, which is in the province of Media, a scroll was found and there was written in it as follows: "Memorandum—In the first year of King Cyrus, Cyrus the king issued a decree: '{Concerning} the house of God at Jerusalem, let the temple, the place where sacrifices are offered, be rebuilt and let its foundations be retained, its height being 60 cubits and its width 60 cubits; with three layers of huge stones, and one layer of timbers. And let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. And also let the gold and silver utensils of the temple of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be returned and brought to their places in the temple in Jerusalem; and you shall put {them} in the house of God.'"

(Ezra 5:1–6:5)

My Servant "the Branch"

If one is not aware that the Prophets spoke in parables and that they conducted *parabolic pantomimes* to both conceal and reveal the *meaning* and *significance* of the message they proclaimed, it is extremely easy to misunderstand God's purpose in calling Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the Jews to rebuild the Temple. Unfortunately, a lot of people are in that boat. (That's an idiom.) Therefore, one should ask the question, *Why* did God want the Temple rebuilt? And Zechariah dutifully provides the answer. The Prophet Zechariah describes a vision he saw in which God illustrates His message with a *parabolic pantomime*:

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. And he spoke and said to those who were standing before him saying, "Remove the filthy garments from him." Again he said to him, "See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes." Then I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the LORD was standing by. And the angel of the LORD admonished Joshua saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'If you will walk in My ways, and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing {here}.' Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you—indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.'"

(Zechariah 3:1–8)

That passage is *significant* to an understanding of the Book of Zechariah because its purpose is to explain what God said to the high priest who would officiate in the Temple. That is, Zechariah includes it because he wants us to understand how God viewed the man who would be responsible for overseeing the conduct of the *parabolic* rituals after the Temple was rebuilt. The Prophet plainly states that God considered the high priest and the priests who served under him to be nothing more than "a symbol" which represented "My servant the Branch." So those who want to understand what God *meant* by the *parabolic pantomime* in which the high priest was clothed in clean clothes will have to inquire into the *meaning* and *significance* of the Hebrew term that has been translated "symbol." When they do, the following passage will eventually surface:

Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar, thus says the LORD, 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he

shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.'" **Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the LORD has spoken, 'Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.'" Now it came about when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, that Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." But his hand which he stretched out against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. **The altar also was split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.** And the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and it became as it was before. Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place. For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.'" So he went another way, and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel.** (1 Kings 13:1–10)

The same Hebrew word which was translated "symbol" in Zechariah 3:8 above has been translated "sign" three times in that passage. And its meaning should be evident from the way it is used. It obviously refers to something which presages or foreshadows what is to come. So a better translation of the term would be "harbinger." Knowing that God considered the high priest and his friends to be a harbinger—that is, a *parabolic fulfillment*—of future events, the question then becomes: To Whom is God referring when He says "My servant the Branch":

"Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you—indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, **I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.**" (Zechariah 3:8)

To understand what Zechariah has in mind when he refers to "the Branch," one has to take into account

what other Prophets have said about that Individual. The Prophet Isaiah was the first to mention "the Branch." From what he says, it becomes obvious that "the Branch" is part of a much larger *parabolic image*. Isaiah says this:

In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth {will} be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel. And it will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy. And there will be a shelter to {give} shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain. (Isaiah 4:2–6)

Fortunately, a century or so after Isaiah wrote those words the Prophet Jeremiah drew a rough sketch of the Person that Isaiah and Zechariah *parabolically* refer to as "the Branch." But to flesh out a more complete *parabolic image*, it is necessary to pull together statements that Jeremiah made in two separate passages:

"Behold, {the} days are coming," declares the LORD, **"When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"** (Jeremiah 23:5–6)

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will fulfill the good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time **I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.** In those days Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell in safety; and **this is {the name} by which she shall be called: the LORD is**

our righteousness." For thus says the LORD, "David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to prepare sacrifices continually."
(Jeremiah 33:14–18)

The translator(s) of those two passages has effectively obscured the fact that the Hebrew text is in many cases identical. But in spite of that, the main points "the Lord" makes in both cases can be distilled down to just a few essential statements: (1) God has *promised* He will *parabolically* "raise up a seed/build a house/make a name" for David by causing "a righteous Branch of David to spring forth"; (2) that "Branch" will become King over Israel, assuming as His throne-name "the Lord {is} our righteousness"; and (3) Jerusalem/Israel "shall dwell securely/in safety" when "the Branch" becomes King of Israel.

In the following passage, Zechariah clearly reveals that God had called him to describe in more detail the circumstances surrounding the coronation and reign of "the Branch" which the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah mention only briefly in the passages quoted above:

*Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. **Then the LORD, my God, will come, {and} all the holy ones with Him! And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. And it will come about in that day that living***

*waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be {the only} one, and His name {the only} one. All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for **Jerusalem will dwell in security.***
(Zechariah 14:1–11)

Although the translator(s) of the two passages from Jeremiah quoted above have obscured the *significance* of the throne-name of Jesus Christ somewhat by translating the same Hebrew text in two different ways, Zechariah makes patently clear the Truth they have blurred. When "the Branch" comes to reign over Jerusalem/Israel, He will be called "the Lord." That is, He will go by "*The Name*" of God which Christians pronounce as Jehovah or Yahweh, and Jews refuse to pronounce at all, calling it instead "*The Name*."

"The House" of God Is "The Man"

Only those who have insight into what Moses says concerning "*The Man*" will be able to see that Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah are merely reaffirming what Nathan said to David on the occasion described below. Nathan told David that God intended to "build a house" ("raise up a seed/make a name") for him if he ever needed to have his "house" "built":

Now it came about when the king lived in his house, and the LORD had given him rest on every side from all his enemies, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells within tent curtains." And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your mind, for the LORD is with you." But it came about in the same night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, "Go and say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD, "Are you the one who should build Me a house to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt, even to this day; but I have been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle. Wherever I have gone with all

the sons of Israel, did I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel, which I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'" Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over My people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took {it} away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.'"

(2 Samuel 7:1–16)

The Truth is, Jeremiah's statements concerning "the Branch" are a succinct summary of *the promise* God made to David in that passage. Both Nathan and Jeremiah are *parabolically* describing the Coronation and reign of Jesus Christ as the King and High Priest of Israel. Unfortunately, those who lack insight into the meaning and significance of the three Hebrew idioms "build a house," "raise up a seed," and "make a name" will continue to remain completely ignorant of the incredible *promise* that God made to David. As I have explained on various other occasions, those three idioms mean "engender a son" (Gen. 38, Deut. 25, and Ruth 4). Their ultimate significance derives from the fact that God "built a house," "raised up a seed," and "made a name" for David on two separate occasions: First, through the Virgin Mary, then again when He resurrected "The Man" Jesus Christ from the dead. However,

the second time He "built" His Own "house" as well by transforming the physical body of Jesus Christ into His Own image and likeness just as Moses prophesied in Genesis 1:26–27.

According to the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching of Moses*, the coronation of Jesus Christ as King and High Priest of Israel occurred simultaneously with His Resurrection from the dead, just as the Apostle Paul explains here:

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, {and} being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5–11)

The point that Paul makes in that passage is this: At His coronation as King and High Priest of Israel, Jesus Christ took as His throne-name "the Lord {is} our righteousness" just as Jeremiah said He would. But we don't have to rely solely on Jeremiah. Zechariah clearly indicates that the Coronation of Jesus Christ as King and High Priest of Israel is exactly what God had in mind when He said Joshua and his friends were a "harbinger" of "My servant the Branch":

The word of the LORD also came to me saying, "Take {an offering} from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah; and you go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, where they have arrived from Babylon. And take silver and gold, make an {ornate} crown, and set {it} on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Then say to him, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD. Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace

will be between the two offices." Now the crown will become a reminder in the temple of the LORD to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah. And those who are far off will come and build the temple of the LORD." Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. And it will take place, if you completely obey the LORD your God.

(Zechariah 6:9–15)

That passage plainly indicates that God viewed the rebuilding of the Temple after the Jews returned from the Babylonian Captivity from a slightly different perspective than most folks in the Church today. He saw it as nothing more than a harbinger—a *parabolic pantomime*, or *parabolic fulfillment*—of the activities of a Person Whom He *parabolically* calls "My servant the Branch." As Zechariah explains to the high priest Joshua, that Individual will eventually "come and build the temple of the Lord" with His friends. He will then be anointed as both King and High Priest of Israel—which was something God had specifically forbidden when He allowed Saul to become king in Israel:

Now he waited seven days, according to the appointed time set by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattering from him. So Saul said, "Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering. And it came about as soon as he finished offering the burnt offering, that behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him {and} to greet him. But Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the appointed days, and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash, therefore I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the LORD.' So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering." And Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."

(1 Samuel 13:8–14)

That passage tells us Saul lost *the blessing* of God because he "forced" himself to function as high priest in the place of Samuel, thereby usurping a privilege which God must have specifically denied the king of Israel. From that, we know that the kings of Israel were never to function as both king and high priest. Yet the author of the Book of Hebrews explains that God joined those two offices in the Person of Jesus Christ, just as Zechariah said He would after "the Branch" had "built *The House*" of God in Jerusalem.

A Priestly Son, Begotten "Today"

The writer of the Book of Hebrews begins his treatise with a reference to the throne-name that Jesus Christ assumed at His coronation—that is, "*The Name*" of God that He began to "carry" when He became both King and High Priest of Israel:

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in {His} Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

For to which of the angels did He ever say,

"THOU ART MY SON,

TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE"?

And again,

"I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM

AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"?

And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says,

"AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

And of the angels He says,

"WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS,

AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE."

But of the Son {He says},

"THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER,

AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER

OF HIS KINGDOM.

THOU HAST LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND

HATED LAWLESSNESS;

THEREFORE GOD, THY GOD, HATH ANOINTED THEE

WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE THY COMPANIONS."
And,
"THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY
THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH,
AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS;
THEY WILL PERISH, BUT THOU REMAINEST;
AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD AS A GARMENT,
AND AS A MANTLE THOU WILT ROLL THEM UP;
AS A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED.
BUT THOU ART THE SAME,
AND THY YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END."
(Hebrews 1:1-12)

It should not be easy to overlook the primary focus of the Book of Hebrews, but, unfortunately, it is. The author's intent is to show how Zechariah's prophecy concerning the King and High Priest of Israel Who "built the temple" of God has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. That is why he repeatedly mentions the fact that Jesus Christ became a High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek":

So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him,
"THOU ART MY SON,
TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE";
just as He says also in another {passage},
"THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER
ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."
In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.
(Hebrews 5:5-10)

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a {hope} both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all {the spoils}, was first of all, by the translation {of his name},

king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually. Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed the one who had the promises. But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one {receives them}, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need {was there} for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become {such} not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed {of Him},
"THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER
ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."
(Hebrews 6:19-7:17)

The point the writer seeks to make is this: Jesus Christ has become the King and High Priest of Jerusalem. In so doing, He has become just LIKE Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a high priest of the Canaanite god El who also reigned as king over Jerusalem. That is why the writer has continually emphasized the phrase "according to the order of Melchizedek." But one should not overlook the fact that he is quoting the psalmist:

(A Psalm of David.)

The LORD says to my Lord:

"Sit at My right hand,

Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."

The LORD will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion,
{saying},

"Rule in the midst of Thine enemies."

Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power;

In holy array, from the womb of the dawn,

Thy youth are to Thee {as} the dew.

The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind,

"Thou art a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek."

The Lord is at Thy right hand;

He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.

(Psalm 110:1-5)

Did you notice what the psalmist said about Jesus Christ taking His seat at the right hand of the Lord until all His enemies have been subdued? The author of the Book of Hebrews also mentions that event—repeatedly:

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

(Hebrews 1:3)

But to which of the angels has He ever said,

"SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES

A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET"?

(Hebrews 1:13)

Now the main point in what has been said {is this}: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

(Hebrews 8:1-2)

And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE

MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

(Hebrews 10:11-13)

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

Unless one understands the *parabolic imagery* involved, the *significance* of Jesus Christ taking His seat at the right hand of the Father will most likely elude him. It has to do with the fact that although Christ has been crowned King, He must still reign as co-regent with God Himself until all the enemies of the *Kingdom of God* have been destroyed. That will not occur until the End of this Age—that is, until the end of the sixth "day" of Creation. On the seventh "day," Christ will begin His eternal reign over this Creation. As Micah says:

"In that day," declares the LORD,

"I will assemble the lame,

And gather the outcasts,

Even those whom I have afflicted.

I will make the lame a remnant,

And the outcasts a strong nation,

And the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion

From now on and forever."

(Micah 4:6-7)

The Apostle who wrote the Book of Hebrews obviously had an in-depth understanding of *The Apostolic Teaching*. And he has taken great pains to explain various aspects of the *parabolic imagery* associated with the kingship and priesthood of Jesus Christ. However, the other Apostles were just as well aware of the *parabolic image* in which Christ sat down at the right hand of the Father after He had been anointed as both King and High Priest of Jerusalem:

Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

(Romans 8:33-34)

{I pray that} the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. {These are} in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, **when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly {places}, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.** (Ephesians 1:18–23)

If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. (Colossians 3:1–4)

And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of **Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.** (1 Peter 3:21–22)

The point of all that has been said thus far is this: Zechariah prophesied that “the Branch” would “build the temple” of God and then be anointed as High Priest and King over Jerusalem. The Apostles assert that Jesus Christ has already been elevated to serve as co-regent with God Himself until all of His enemies have been subdued. Paul tells us the last of those enemies will be death itself:

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man {came} death, by a man also {came} the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then

{comes} the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:20–28)

Literal House, Parabolic Building

It would be perilous indeed to ignore the obvious import of the coronation of Jesus Christ as it relates to Zechariah’s prophecy: Zechariah says “the Branch” will “build the temple” of God *before* His coronation as King and High Priest of Israel. Therefore, if God has anointed Jesus Christ as both King and High Priest, then God’s “temple” (“house”) must have already been “built.” That conclusion holds tremendous *significance* for events that will shortly take place in our time and, therefore, cannot be emphasized enough.

Both Irenæus and Hippolytus tell us the Antichrist will not only claim to be Jesus Christ, he will also rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. (See *The AntiChrist* or *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*.) What they fail to tell us should be fairly obvious, nonetheless. The Antichrist will rebuild the *physical* Temple in Jerusalem, all the while insisting that he is fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah. When he does that, the only ones who will not be taken in by his subterfuge are those who know the Truth concerning the “temple” of God that Jesus Christ has already “built”—and is *parabolically* still in the process of “building.” That “house” of God is not a *literal* building; it is a *parabolic* one. It is “*The House of Israel*,” the Body of Jesus Christ, which is the family of God. That “house” was “built” when Jesus Christ was resurrected in the image and likeness of God. But it is also continuing to be “built” as others respond to the Gospel message and are thereby added to the *parabolic* Body of Jesus Christ. That is what Isaiah is talking about in this passage:

*Thus says the LORD,
“Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.*

Where then is a house you could build for Me?
 And where is a place that I may rest?
 For My hand made all these things,
 Thus all these things came into being,"
 declares the LORD.
 "But to this one I will look,
 To him who is humble and contrite of spirit,
 and who trembles at My word."
 (Isaiah 66:1-2)

Isaiah's point may have eluded you, so let me state it plainly: God doesn't need or want some dullard to build a *literal* house of stone for Him to dwell in. He desires a *parabolic* "house," that is, a family, in which He can live forever. And the only person who qualifies to become a member of "The House" of God is one "who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." The Apostle Peter was clearly familiar with that *parabolic imagery*. He uses it in this passage:

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For {this} is contained in Scripture:

"BEHOLD I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE,
 A PRECIOUS CORNER {stone},
 AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM
 SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

*This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve,
 "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,
 THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER {stone,} and
 "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE";
 for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word,
 and to this {doom} they were also appointed. But you are
 A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A
 PEOPLE FOR {God's} OWN POSSESSION, that you may pro-
 claim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of
 darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT
 A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had
 NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.
 (1 Peter 2:1-10)*

I can only imagine the intense emotion Peter must have felt as he wrote those words. He was, after all, the disciple whose name Jesus changed from Cephas to Peter. The name Peter *means* "rock," or "stone." And Peter evidently "carried" his new name with full knowledge of the *parabolic significance* Christ attached to it:

*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.
 (1 Peter 1:1-2)*

It is probably not obvious to those who want to understand what Peter wrote about "The spiritual House" of God in some *literal* sense, but he is speaking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* of the Prophets in which Israel is the Firstborn Son of God. That is, Moses and the other Prophets of Israel tell us "The Name" of God will forever dwell in "The House" of Israel because the *Living Word* of God will forever reside in the individual members of Israel. Unfortunately for those today who want to understand them *literally*, they do so by speaking in terms of specific Hebrew idioms and the *parabolic imagery* associated with those idioms.

The connection between the coronation of Jesus Christ and the "building" of the "temple" of God in Jerusalem will not be immediately evident to anyone who is not thinking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* associated with the Hebrew idiom "build a house." As I have stated repeatedly, that idiom actually *means* "engender a son," which is exactly what God did when He resurrected Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness on the third day after His Crucifixion. But even knowing that, if one does not also know that the ancients claimed the king became the son of god when he ascended to the throne, the *parabolic imagery* associated with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as the Firstborn of God will elude him. That *parabolic imagery* is what the author of the Book of Hebrews has in mind when he refers to the Coronation of Jesus Christ with the statement "when He again brings the first-born into the world" (Heb. 1:6). (Read that statement carefully and make a note of it. The word translated "again"

sometimes means "back," and it quite often does so with verbs like *bring*.)

The *parabolic imagery* in which Jesus Christ became the Firstborn Son of God when He ascended to the throne of God is also why Jesus *parabolically* describes His Resurrection in terms of the Hebrew idiom "build a house":

*And the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money-changers seated. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove {them} all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the moneychangers, and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise." His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR THY HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME." The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" **But He was speaking of the temple of His body.** When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken. (John 2:13–22)*

On that occasion, Jesus was ridiculing the Jews because of their abject ignorance of the seven sealed messages concerning Him which the Prophets hid in the Hebrew Scriptures. But He is blatantly alluding to what Nathan had said to David about Him as the One Who would "build a house" for "The Name" of God and thereby ensure that "The House" of David and the Kingdom of God endured forever:

*"When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. **He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.** I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took {it} away from Saul,*

*whom I removed from before you. And **your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.**"*
(2 Samuel 7:12–16)

The author of the Book of Hebrews understood full well that Jesus Christ "built *The House*" of God when He arose on the third day just as He said He would. That is what he is referring to when he writes this:

*Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For **every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.** Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; but **Christ {was faithful} as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.** (Hebrews 3:1–6)*

As you can see, the author of the Book of Hebrews is speaking in terms of the same *parabolic imagery* that Zechariah mentions in Zechariah 3:1–8 and 6:9–15. But it is impossible to understand what he has in mind if one does not know that the Hebrew idiom "build a house" means "engender a son." Even with that information in hand, one will inevitably be left wondering what he *meant* unless one also has insight into *the promise* God gave David through Nathan. Yet the *significance* of Nathan's prophecy is inextricably tied to *the promise* concerning "The Man," Jesus Christ, that God gave Adam and Eve when He banned them from the Garden of Eden:

Then God said, "Let Us make a man in Our image, according to Our likeness, so that they may have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters and over the domesticated animals and over all the Earth and over all the crawling things that crawl on the Earth." Then God created the man in His image. In the image of God He created Him; male and female He created them.
(Genesis 1:26–27) —my interim translation

Just Looking for a City

Those who have not read the articles and books I have written will have no idea what I am *talking about*—just as they are clueless as to the mind-set reflected in the Scriptures. The Prophets describe in great detail God's purpose in the life, death, and Resurrection of "The Man," Jesus Christ. But they speak cryptically, in Hebrew idioms and *parabolic imagery*, so that those who "have insight" (Dan. 12:3) at the End of the Age will have no doubt concerning the Truth they believe. Zechariah describes the End this way:

*Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, {and} all the holy ones with Him! **And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be {the only} one, and His name {the only} one. All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.***
(Zechariah 14:1–11)

The Apostle John describes the same events, but he does so in statements that are clearly *parabolic* in nature. He is speaking in terms of the ancient *sacred marriage* ceremony, and is drawing together quotes from various sources in the Hebrew Scriptures:

*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer {any} sea. **And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.** And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be {any} death; there shall no longer be {any} mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part {will be} in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. (Revelation 21:1–10)*

And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp {is} the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written

in the Lamb's book of life. And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve {kinds of} fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His name {shall be} on their foreheads. And there shall no longer be {any} night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever.

(Revelation 21:22–22:5)

When John says Jerusalem is “the bride, the wife of the Lamb” and “the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb” is the “temple,” or “tabernacle,” in it, he is using the same *parabolic imagery* the Prophets used, and he is saying precisely the same thing. The “temple” and “city” of God are the resurrected Body of Jesus Christ, which is a *parabolic* “body,” made up of many members just as Paul explains in the following passage:

*For even as the body is one and {yet} has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not {a part} of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less {a part} of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not {a part} of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less {a part} of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? **But now there are many members, but one body.** And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those {members} of the body, which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our unseemly {members come to}*

*have more abundant seemliness, whereas our seemly {members} have no need {of it.} But God has {so} composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that {member} which lacked, that there should be no division in the body, but {that} the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if {one} member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. **Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.***

(1 Corinthians 12:12–27)

That passage explains why—*parabolically* speaking—the “temple” of God is also the “city” of Jerusalem. But of course, if one wants to continue thinking *literally*, a city is nothing more than buildings. More rational people will admit a city does not require permanent structures of any kind. We have all heard the expression “tent city.” It expresses the reality that a city is just a gathering of people who live under the terms of a “city” government. That is why the Heavenly Jerusalem is (*parabolically*) LIKE a “woman” through whom God engendered many children for Himself:

Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. This is allegorically speaking: for these {women} are two covenants, one {proceeding} from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. For it is written,

*“REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR;
BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR;
FOR MORE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE
THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND.”*

And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him {who was born} according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say?

*“CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON,
FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE
AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.”*

So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

(Galatians 4:21–31) ■



The Voice of Elijah[®] includes this column to show you how some of the underlying parabolic images of the Gospel message of the Old Testament speak to the times in which we find ourselves. There are a variety of weather images to be found in the parables of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Most are associated in some way with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

A dozen years ago this month, Voice of Elijah, Inc. published the very first issue of *The Voice of Elijah*[®] newsletter. In it, I explained what the Prophets have to say about the Antichrist and how the devastation he is going to bring on the Earth would be *parabolically* fulfilled in the destruction of Iraq and the death of Saddam Hussein. A few months later, the Gulf War began and—as they say—the rest is history. Except for a couple of not-so-minor details, the events the Prophet Isaiah described over 2700 years ago have already come to pass just as he described them.

One of the details that has yet to be fulfilled is the death of the “harbinger” Saddam Hussein and the annihilation of the “good ol’ boy” network in his home town of Tikrit. Another is Iraq’s use of biological, chemical, and/or nuclear weapons against the nation of Israel. (See “Awaiting God’s Glory,” *The Voice of Elijah*[®], January 1991.) So today, we are facing the inevitable consequence of every one of the prophecies that Moses and the other Prophets of Israel recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures: It will be fulfilled exactly as it was written. And, as Jesus said, you can either choose to believe the Truth, or you can face the consequences of your monumental stupidity:

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the

least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches {them,} he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses {that} of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

(Matthew 5:17–20)

I don’t expect events to unfold too quickly in Iraq. Saddam Hussein will most likely play a cat-and-mouse game with the United Nations weapons inspectors until one side or the other makes a mistake. Then a showdown will probably occur in which the use-’em-or-lose-’em option results in an Iraqi first strike against the nation of Israel. It should then be “lights out” for Mr. Hussein and his ill-fated regime. I seriously doubt that the Israeli government will hold back on a massive retaliation after Iraq has launched weapons of mass destruction on that small nation.

In case you haven’t yet noticed, we are living in a much more dangerous world than we did just a few short years ago. The “new world order” we heard so much about in the ‘90s has turned out to be fairly hostile toward those of us who have had the good fortune to live in the United States of America. So I’m not complaining (don’t have all that much to complain about when it comes right down to it). But it does seem to be the case that some of the more liberal “intellectuals” (I use the word advisedly) among us have not yet gotten the message: The Arabs are mad as Hell, and some of them fully intend to do something about it. I use that particular idiom only because it fits so perfectly. Satan is clearly standing squarely behind the polarization of the human population, and he can only be working the Arab Muslim vs. Christian/Jew angle because it plays directly into his hand (another idiom).

As I have said before, I don’t expect the terrorist threat will ever go away. It will be with us right up to the End of the Age. I say that because it obviously fits into Satan’s plan. But the Antichrist must first rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem and take his seat there as the “abomination of desolation” that Daniel (Dan. 11:31; 12:11) and Christ (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14) mention, just as the Early Church Fathers Irenæus and Hippolytus agree that he will:

And not only by the particulars already mentioned, but also by means of the events which shall occur in the

*time of Antichrist is it shown that he, being an apostate and a robber, is anxious to be adored as God; and that, although a mere slave, he wishes himself to be proclaimed as a king. For he (Antichrist) being endued with all the power of the devil, shall come, not as a righteous king, nor as a legitimate king, [i.e., one] in subjection to God, but an impious, unjust, and lawless one; as an apostate, iniquitous and murderous; as a robber, concentrating, in himself [all] satanic apostasy, and **setting aside idols to persuade [men] that he himself is God, raising up himself as the only idol**, having in himself the multifarious errors of the other idols. This he does, in order that they who do [now] worship the devil by means of many abominations, may serve himself by this one idol, of whom the apostle thus speaks in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians:*

Unless there shall come a falling away first, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God.

(2 Thessalonians 2:3b-4)

*The apostle therefore clearly points out his apostasy, and that he is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped—that is, above every idol—for these are indeed so called by men, but are not [really] gods; and that **he will endeavour in a tyrannical manner to set himself forth as God**. Moreover, he (the apostle) has also pointed out this which I have shown in many ways, that the temple in Jerusalem was made by the direction of the true God. For the apostle himself, speaking in his own person, distinctly called it the temple of God. Now I have shown in the third book, that no one is termed God by the apostles when speaking for themselves, except Him who truly is God, the Father of our Lord, by whose directions the temple which is at Jerusalem was constructed for those purposes which I have already mentioned; **in which [temple] the enemy shall sit, endeavouring to show himself as Christ, as the Lord also declares:***

“But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, which has been spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand), then let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains; and he who is upon the house-top, let him not come down to take anything out of his house: for there shall then be great

hardship, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be.”

(Matthew 24:15-17, 21)

(Irenæus, “Against Heresies,” Book v, Chap. xxv, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), The Ante-Nicene Fathers (1867), Vol. 1. See also The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist, pp. 55 ff., and The AntiChrist, pp. 15 ff.)

*And even as Christ chose His apostles, so will he too assume a whole people of disciples like himself in wickedness. Above all, moreover, he will love the nation of the Jews. And with all these he will work signs and terrible wonders, false wonders and not true, in order to deceive his impious equals. For **if it were possible, he would seduce even the elect from the love of Christ.***

But in his first steps he will be gentle, loveable, quiet, pious, pacific, hating injustice, detesting gifts, not allowing idolatry; loving, says he, the Scriptures, reverencing priests, honouring his elders, repudiating fornication, detesting adultery, giving no heed to slanders, not admitting oaths, kind to strangers, kind to the poor, compassionate. And then he will work wonders, cleansing lepers, raising paralytics, expelling demons, proclaiming things remote just as things present, raising the dead, helping widows, defending orphans, loving all, reconciling in love men who contend, and saying to such, “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath;” and he will not acquire gold, nor love silver, nor seek riches.

And all this he will do corruptly and deceitfully, and with the purpose of deluding all to make him king. For when the peoples and tribes see so great virtues and so great powers in him, they will all with one mind meet together to make him king. And above all others shall the nation of the Hebrews be dear to the tyrant himself, while they say one to another, Is there found indeed in our generation such a man, so good and just?

That shall be the way with the race of the Jews pre-eminently, as I said before, who, thinking, as they do, that they shall behold the king himself in such power, will approach him to say, We all confide in thee, and acknowledge thee to be just upon the whole earth; we all hope to be saved by thee; and by thy mouth we have received just and incorruptible judgment.

And at first, indeed, that deceitful and lawless one, with crafty deceitfulness, will refuse such glory; but the men persisting, and holding by him, will declare him king. And thereafter he will be lifted up in heart, and he

who was formerly gentle will become violent, and he who pursued love will become pitiless, and the humble in heart will become haughty and inhuman, and the hater of unrighteousness will persecute the righteous.

Then, when he is elevated to his kingdom, he will marshal war; and in his wrath he will smite three mighty kings, —those, namely, of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia. And **after that he will build the temple in Jerusalem, and will restore it again speedily, and give it over to the Jews. And then he will be lifted up in heart against every man; yea, he will speak blasphemy also against God, thinking in his deceit that he shall be king upon the earth hereafter forever; not knowing, miserable wretch, that his kingdom is to be quickly brought to nought, and that he will quickly have to meet the fire which is prepared for him, along with all who trust him and serve him.** (Hippolytus, "On the Day of the Consummation," in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1886), Vol. 5. See also *The AntiChrist and The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*, pp. 217 ff.)

The Apostle Paul describes those same events in his letter to the church at Thessalonica, emphasizing God's purpose rather than Satan's:

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for {it will not come} unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.** Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains {will do so} until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; {that is,} **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for**

this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.
(2 Thessalonians 2:1–12)

After Satan has rebuilt the Temple and taken his seat in the Holy of Holies, the majority of "Christians" and Jews will accept him as Jesus Christ, the Messiah of the Jews. It is not yet clear how he will be able to gain acceptance from a majority of Muslims, but he will. His claims will not convince the more radical Arabs, however; and they will continue to struggle against what they view as a repugnant American/British/Israeli hegemony.

If Arab terrorism continues after the Antichrist comes to power—and it will—that resistance will provide Satan the pretext he needs to seek United Nations approval to go after everyone who voices opposition to his government. True Believers will be in that camp, in spite of the fact that we pose no physical threat of any kind to his regime. Notice I said "physical threat." We will pose the gravest possible *spiritual* threat to Satan's dominion, and he is already well aware of that. Therefore, after he sets up shop in the Temple, he will be absolutely brutal in his efforts to track us down, root us out, and either extract a recantation or execute us. Unfortunately, his forces will have the assistance of all those Christians, Jews, and Muslims who have been deluded into believing he is Jesus Christ.

The question you should be asking is this: What should I do to prepare for the time when Satan takes his seat in the rebuilt Temple as the "abomination of desolation"? For what it's worth, Jesus said this:

And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what {will be} the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them, "**See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.** And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for {those things} must take place, but {that} is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are {merely} the beginning of birth pangs. Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will

be hated by all nations on account of My name. And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come. **Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There {He is,}' do not believe {him.} For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, {or,} 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe {them.} For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.'**

(Matthew 24:3-31)

The details of that passage make a whole lot more sense if one knows that Jesus begins by giving an overview of events leading up to the End of the Age.

He then switches over and gives specific instructions as to what True Believers should do after the Antichrist rebuilds the Temple and takes his seat in it. But take note of this: The greatest danger confronting True Believers both before and after the Antichrist becomes king of the Jews is the very real possibility that an impostor will delude them. Jesus warned concerning that because it is a fate which will befall many. In fact, most "Christians" will ignore Jesus' warning completely and fall for Satan's ruse. Too bad for them, but they deserve it. As Paul told the Thessalonians, they will be deluded because they did not place an appropriate value on the Truth. If they did, they would know there is no way Satan could counterfeit the Second Coming.

Even after True Believers go into hiding, they will still face the danger that something or someone will convince them Jesus Christ has already returned. Obviously, the most likely scenario is that they will be caught and coerced into accepting the absurd claims of the Antichrist. Therefore, True Believers need to be prepared beforehand so that disaster cannot overtake them. To that end, I must remind you Who the One is you are awaiting. When He appears, He will shine brilliantly, LIKE the lightning which flashes during a storm:

"For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. **And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.**

(Matthew 16:26-17:2)

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first {day} of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. **And his appearance was like lightning, and his garment as white as snow; and the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.**

(Matthew 28:1-4)

Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here {it is!}' or, 'There {it is!}' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst." And He said to the disciples, "The days shall come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!' Do not go away, and do not run after {them.} For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day."

(Luke 17:20–24)

Matthew is describing how Jesus showed Himself to Peter, James, and John as "the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." At the Second Coming—just as at that time—the Living Word of God Whose power binds this Creation together will manifest Himself in the raging intensity of a nuclear fire:

{This is} a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. For after all it is {only} just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and {to give} relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed.

(2 Thessalonians 1:5–10)

Keep that passage in mind when the Idiot starts pretending to be Jesus Christ. If you take a good long look at him, it will be obvious he isn't the One he claims to be. However, when he is cast out of Heaven, he will do his best to give you a good imitation:

And the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning."

(Luke 10:17–18)

At best, Satan's charade will be temporary. Otherwise, he would destroy the very beings he is trying to delude. The One Who is the Living Word of God will appear at His Second Advent in the full splendor of the image and likeness of the God He is, seeking vengeance and the destruction of all things mortal:

See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned {them} on earth, much less {shall} we {escape} who turn away from Him who {warns} from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." And this {expression}, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.

(Hebrews 12:25–29)

When Christ arrives in "clouds of glory," He will appear as a brilliant light, shining like the sun. And you will know it is Him, without a doubt. Just don't settle for anything less. If you do, your mortal body will not be transformed; it will be reduced to ashes:

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is {to be} revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

(1 Corinthians 3:10–15)

But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

(2 Peter 3:7) ■



The Voice of Elijah® publishes articles based on the findings of *The Elijah Project*, a private research group headed by Larry D. Harper. In this column we seek answers to general-interest questions concerning the findings, purpose, and philosophy of this project.

Editor: There was a comment recently on the “Read Comments” section of our website that questioned why you use the New American Standard translation of the Bible rather than the King James Version. This person said the King James Version is “the only English translation that uses the correct Koine Greek and Biblical Hebrew texts to translate from.” He also suggested that the four kingdoms of Daniel’s prophecy in Daniel 7 are Great Britain, Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United Nations. I know this is all a bunch of foolishness, but since these comments were made on our website for everyone to see, I thought you should be given the chance to respond to what was said. Do you have anything to say about these comments?

Elijah: It would be interesting to know how Satan was able to so completely delude this individual. I would not be surprised to find that the Dispensational Theory of biblical interpretation played a significant role. Since I have already shown that for what it is, I’ll say no more here. [See “Wanna Hear the Whopper the Liar Came Up With? (I Doubt You’ll Believe It),” *The Voice of Elijah®*, October 1996.] The nonsense regarding the King James Version being the only legitimate translation of the Bible has been circulating in the Church for well over a century. It was the knee-jerk reaction that some conservatives had to the equally ridiculous liberal

notion that the Scriptures somehow needed a bit of revision to make them more understandable to the modern mind-set. Unfortunately, the ultra-conservative assertion that the King James Version is somehow better than all other translations is so completely ridiculous that I won’t even bother to waste time refuting it. The liberal’s position was at least based on a desire to make sense of the Scriptures. The conservative response is, at heart, just a denial of the need to search for Truth—no matter where it may be found.

Just over thirty years ago, a committee of extremely well-educated scholars thoroughly examined and compared the more than five thousand extant Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Their goal was to determine which ones most likely represented the original manuscripts. Their conclusion was that no one extant Greek manuscript was completely free from error. In light of that, the question I have for anyone who wants to defend the King James Version is this, What person or persons determined “the *correct* Koine Greek and Biblical Hebrew texts to translate from”? And why was his decidedly arbitrary decision in that regard so much better than that of any other person or persons? Was he somehow divinely inspired to pick that manuscript over all the thousands of other available manuscripts? If so, what evidence is there that he was divinely inspired to do so? Did he do miracles like Mother Teresa? (Better be careful with that one. From what I hear, even Mother Teresa’s supposed healing of a woman in India is being questioned by the woman’s own husband.)

A wee bit of logic should convince any reasonable person it is time to take a deep breath, step back, and accept the fact that this person’s assertion is just another example of ignorant folks expecting everybody else to take an absurd “leap of faith” on the basis of nothing more than “this is what I think,” or “this is what I’ve been told.” (See “Satan’s Fools Are Satan’s Tools,” *The Voice of Elijah®*, April 1994.) Folks who believe such nonsense aren’t looking for Truth; they have already settled for a completely ludicrous tradition.

Editor: Years ago I listened to a series of audiotapes that were put out by a pastor who apparently thought he was capable of explaining the Book of Zechariah to his congregation. Even though I was totally unaware of The Teaching at the time, it was obvious to me after a few tapes that this guy had no business trying to explain the Book of Zechariah to anyone. Sadly, this sort of ignorance

abounds in the Church today, but that's a topic you have discussed countless times before. My question relates to the Book of Zechariah itself. I know you are eventually going to get around to it, but can you explain what the Book of Zechariah is talking about? What is the overriding theme in this book?

Elijah: The "overriding theme" of the Book of Zechariah is the coronation of Jesus Christ, which occurred immediately after He "built *The House*" of God just as He said He would in this passage:

And the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money-changers seated. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove {them} all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the moneychangers, and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise." His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR THY HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME." The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken.

(John 2:13–22)

Since the author of the Book of Hebrews explains a lot more about those events, I'll take up your question concerning the Book of Zechariah in the main article for this issue.

Editor: This next question is from a subscriber who seeks clarification on something you said in the January 2002 issue of *The Voice of Elijah*®. In the course of explaining a specific point the Apostle Paul makes in the Book of Romans, you said "this is exactly the same point he (Paul) makes to Peter in the second chapter of the Book of Galatians." The subscriber is confused about how Paul could make a point to Peter in Galatians when the Book

of Galatians was not written to Peter, but to the churches of Galatia (Gal. 1:2). Would you please clarify this?

Elijah: That's fairly easy to do. In the second chapter of the Book of Galatians, Paul recounts an occasion on which he confronted Peter in Antioch because Peter was acting hypocritically in regard to Gentile Believers. In that account, Paul tells us what he said to Peter at that time:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he {began} to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how {is it that} you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? We {are} Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles; nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be! For if I rebuild what I have {once} destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the {life} which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness {comes} through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

(Galatians 2:11–21)

Editor: Here is another subscriber question: Since you stated that Believers from the time of Jesus Christ's death and Resurrection must become "one" with Him under the terms of the Old Covenant in order to be resurrected under the terms of the New Covenant, how is it possible for both Covenants to remain in use? According to Hebrews 8:13, God "made the first (covenant) obsolete"

once the New Covenant became available. Would you please explain this?

Elijah: I had a bit of difficulty knowing how to answer this question at first because it confused me. I could not imagine myself ever having written any such thing. Therefore, I conducted a computer search through the back issues of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletter, looking for a single instance in which I “stated that Believers from the time of Jesus Christ’s death and Resurrection must become ‘one’ with Him under the terms of the Old Covenant.” I could not find any such thing. Instead, I found I had made these statements:

Parabolically speaking, the Prophet Jeremiah merely signed off on an affidavit that he had his scribe Baruch draw up. In it, he affirmed that the true Prophets of Israel all agreed that God had good reason to “cut off from” Israel all who had sinned and then to “cut off” Israel completely whenever He chose, sending Him to suffer as a sacrifice so that everyone—Jew and Gentile alike—might have opportunity to join themselves to Israel under the terms of the New Covenant.

*(“Contrary to What You May Have Heard, Jeremiah Was No Bullfrog,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1997, p. 12)*

Therefore, although Believers become “one” with Christ by accepting the terms of the New Covenant, the statutes, judgments, and commandments of the Mosaic Covenant are what collectively “binds” them to Corporate Israel. And that “law” demands that Corporate Israel must die for the sins of the individual members of Israel.

*[“There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in ‘The Way’),” **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 2000, p. 19]*

Hosea has in mind a parabolic image in which the Man Israel, that is, Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of God, becomes “one” with “The Woman” under the terms of the New Covenant; and “The Woman” then faithlessly functions as a zonah in an idiotic bid to “raise up a seed” for a foreign god.

*(“Questions & Answers,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 2001, p. 20)*

I explained that Paul is speaking in terms of some rather detailed parabolic imagery when he says that. In that

*parabolic imagery, individual Believers become members of the Body of Jesus Christ—“The One” Who is Corporate Israel—under the terms of the New Covenant. However, Jesus Christ—Corporate Israel—died for the sins of the individual members of Corporate Israel under the curse of the Old Covenant. And He was resurrected—as the sole surviving Member of Corporate Israel—under the terms of the New Covenant. Therefore, individual members of Corporate Israel—Believers who had parabolically become “one” with the Man Israel under the terms of the New Covenant before the time of His death—escape death by parabolically dying in the Man Israel and being resurrected in “The Man,” Israel. (“The Law’ of This, ‘The Law’ of That, So Much ‘law’ One Can’t Keep Track,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, April 2001, p. 3)*

Just for good measure, I repeated that last passage in a subsequent issue of *The Voice of Elijah*® newsletter:

In that parabolic imagery, individual Believers become members of the Body of Jesus Christ—“The One” Who is Corporate Israel—under the terms of the New Covenant. However, Jesus Christ—Corporate Israel—died for the sins of the individual members of Corporate Israel under the curse of the Old Covenant. And He was resurrected—as the sole surviving Member of Corporate Israel—under the terms of the New Covenant. Therefore, individual members of Corporate Israel—Believers who have parabolically become “one” with the Man Israel under the terms of the New Covenant before the time of His death—escape death by parabolically dying in the Man Israel and being resurrected in “The Man” Israel.

*(“Two Agreements Made: One a ‘Covenant,’ the Other a ‘Testament,’” **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 2002, p. 3)*

The question your reader poses illustrates how easy it is for students of the Bible to confuse the Scriptures’ historical record of events that have occurred in the four-dimensional reality in which we live with its *parabolic* description of what those events signify with regard to the fifth dimension. Or vice versa. To put it another way, your reader seems to have confused statements that have been made—by me or by the Prophets and Apostles—concerning the historical

record of the Scriptures with things that I (and others) have explained concerning the *parabolic statements* of the Prophets and Apostles.

Keep in mind that the only thing *parabolic* about *the promise* itself is its *content*. *The Teaching* is by its very nature a *parabolic* description of spiritual reality. That is, it is a *parabolic* explanation of what *the inheritance of the promise* and *what was promised* was, is, and will be *LIKE* for those who *inherit the promise* and *what was promised*. But *the promise* itself is a *literal* part of this reality. As evidence of that, I point to the fact that a summary of *the promise*—the Gospel—is still today being *literally handed down* from one person to the next as it has been for thousands of years. In fact, one can track the *history* of *the promise* all the way back to Adam and Eve. Therefore, the *inheritance of the promise* on the part of Believers is *literally* a part of the historical reality in which we live. It is a body of information which can be—and has been—*handed down orally* and in written form just like any other body of information.

In contrast to the *parabolic* content of *the promise*, the fact that the Old Covenant became obsolete when Christ died is a historical fact. And there is nothing at all *parabolic* about that historical fact. On the other hand, the fact that a True Believer becomes “one” with Christ under the terms of the New Covenant is a *parabolic* description of what the spiritual reality of the new birth IS *LIKE*. And—speaking *parabolically*—that spiritual union occurred just prior to the Crucifixion when Jesus Christ—as the sole remaining Member of *Corporate Israel*—stood squarely under the curse of the Old Covenant. At that time, Jesus ratified a “new covenant” with the Twelve, a covenant in which they became “one” with Him and one which made provision for others to do the same. He then conducted the *parabolic pantomime* of the Last Supper to illustrate His purpose and also prayed that all future Believers would become “one” with Him just as the Twelve had at that time:

“And I am no more in the world; and {yet} they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, {the name} which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We {are.} While I was with them, I was keeping them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My

joy made full in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil {one.} They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, {art} in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me.”

(John 17:11–23)

Anyone with any common sense at all should be able to see that Christ is speaking in terms of some extremely specific *parabolic imagery*. He is referring to the spiritual reality that a True Believer experiences when he believes the Truth of the Gospel. At that time, the Believer becomes “one” with “The One” Who is the Truth; and he experiences a spiritual transformation which IS a lot *LIKE* he has already died (*in Christ*) and gone to Heaven (to use an English idiom that aptly describes the *parabolic image*).

As your reader accurately pointed out, the author of the Book of Hebrews explains in the eighth chapter of his work that the Old Covenant “became obsolete” when Jesus Christ died. That is a *literal* description of a historical event that occurred in the four-dimensional physical reality in which we live. But the Apostle goes on in the ninth chapter to explain the *significance* of that event as it pertains to spiritual reality of the fifth dimension. That is, he *parabolically* explains *why* the Old Covenant “became obsolete” at Christ’s death. It is because the terms of the New Testament—which was not only a “covenant” but also the *last will and testament* of Jesus Christ—were invoked so that Believers could become “one” with Jesus Christ and thereby *inherit* both *the promise* and *what was promised* under the terms of that will:

*But Messiah, having arrived as high priest of the coming good things by means of the greater and more complete tent not made with hands (that is, not of this creation); He entered once for all into the holy (not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of His Own blood), obtaining eternal redemption. Because, if the blood of goats, bulls, and ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled purify with regard to purity of the flesh, how much more {will} the blood of the Messiah, who (by means of the Holy Spirit) offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Because of this, **He's mediator of a new testament, so that (a death having taken place for the ransom of those who transgressed against the first testament) those who have been invited might receive the eternal inheritance. Because where there's a testament, the death of the testator must be endured! Because {only} a testament {made} by the dead is valid. It has no meaning whatsoever while the testator lives!** (Hebrews 9:11–17) —my interim translation*

The author of the Book of Hebrews is clearly explaining the meaning and significance of some fairly specific *parabolic imagery* which is related to the *parabolic pantomimes* of the Tabernacle. In what he says, he explains the significance of the historical death of Jesus Christ as it relates to *the promise*. I realize, however, that it is extremely easy to get confused if one is not able to “see” the same *parabolic imagery* he had in mind. As crazy as it sounds to those who have been condemned, I have been called to make that possible for the Redeemed. Just remember this: Patience is a virtue. The articles I write are not intended for anyone to understand fully on one reading. They are reference materials which will make a whole lot more sense later on—when I start drawing pictures. That is, when I will start outlining the *parabolic images* of *The Teaching*.

Unless I am mistaken, your subscriber is referring to what I said in the following passage from the January 2002 issue of *The Voice of Elijah*®. (See “Two Agreements Made: One a ‘Covenant,’ the Other a ‘Testament,’” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2002.) In my comments, I am summarizing what I said in a previous article. [See “There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in ‘The Way),” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2000.] Pay close attention to what I wrote, because I definitely state that Believers become “one” with Christ under the terms of the New Covenant:

Without insight into the parabolic equivalencies that exist between the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of the man Adam at the End of the Age, one has no way at all of understanding what Paul is talking about when he says this:

Therefore, what will we say? Should we remain in **the sin** so that **the favor** would increase? Certainly not! We who have died to **the sin**? How can we still live in it? Or do you not know that as many as have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him because of the baptism into **the death** so that just as Christ was raised from the dead because of the glory of the Father, so also we could walk in newness of life.
(Romans 6:1–4) —my interim translation

I explained that Paul is speaking in terms of some rather detailed parabolic imagery when he says that. In that parabolic imagery, individual Believers become members of the Body of Jesus Christ—“The One” Who is Corporate Israel—under the terms of the New Covenant. However, Jesus Christ—Corporate Israel—died for the sins of the individual members of Corporate Israel under the curse of the Old Covenant. And He was resurrected—as the sole surviving Member of Corporate Israel—under the terms of the New Covenant. **Therefore, individual members of Corporate Israel—Believers who have parabolically become “one” with the Man Israel under the terms of the New Covenant before the time of His death—escape death by parabolically dying in the Man Israel and being resurrected in “The Man” Israel. Or, as Paul explains the parabolic imagery, they joined themselves to one “male” (the physical body of Jesus Christ) so that when He died, they would be “free from the Law” and belong “to another male” (the resurrected Body of Jesus Christ):**

Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know law—that **the Law is master of the man as long as he lives? For the married female is bound by law to the living male. But if the male dies, she is released from the Law of the male. So therefore, while the male is living, she will be called an adulteress if she belongs to another male. But if the male should die, she is free from the Law, so that she is not an adulteress although she belongs to another male.**
(Romans 7:1–3) —my interim translation

Paul's argument in Romans 6–8 is based almost entirely on the parabolic equivalency that describes how the death of the man Adam at the End of the Age IS LIKE the death of Jesus Christ. However, there is an additional parabolic equivalency that points out the correlation between the physical death and Resurrection of Christ and the death and resurrection of the Believer. Consequently, anyone who is unaware of those two parabolic equivalencies will find it impossible to adequately explain all of the statements that Paul makes in Romans 6–8. Yet his statements can be generally understood if one keeps in mind the things I have already explained.

In Paul's perspective, the reality experienced by individual Believers IS (parabolically) LIKE they died when Christ died and are already living in the resurrected Body of Jesus Christ. That is made possible, however, only because they have been given insight into The Teaching—which is the "Spirit" of Jesus Christ, "The One" Who is "The Man," Israel:

Therefore, my brothers, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of the Christ so that you could belong to another—to the One Who was raised from the dead—so that we could bear fruit for the {Living} God. For when we were in the flesh, the desires of the sins—those which were because of the Law—were working in our members to bear fruit for the death. **But now we have been released from the Law, having died in that {the flesh} to which we were held fast, so that we might serve {as slaves} in newness of spirit and not in oldness of what is written.**

(Romans 7:4–6) —my interim translation

("Two Agreements Made: One a 'Covenant,' the Other a 'Testament,'" **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 2002, pp. 3–4)

As I stated above, in that passage I am merely summarizing what I said in an even earlier article. Therefore, if one wants to understand the *parabolic imagery* that explains how the Old Covenant relates to the New, it is advisable to read that earlier article carefully. When one does that, one will find this passage:

Through their mystical union with the One Who became Corporate Israel in the Person of just one Man, even Gentile Believers parabolically come under the "law" of the Old Covenant. That is because that covenant not only governed Corporate Israel's relationship to God, it also governed the relationship of the individual members

of Israel to Corporate Israel. Therefore, **although Believers become "one" with Christ by accepting the terms of the New Covenant, the statutes, judgments, and commandments of the Mosaic Covenant are what collectively "binds" them to Corporate Israel.** And that "law" demands that Corporate Israel must die for the sins of the individual members of Israel.

As Paul has explained, the death of Corporate Israel—that is, Jesus Christ—has freed Believers from the terms of the Old Covenant so that they can be "bound" to the resurrected Body of Jesus Christ under the terms of the New Covenant. To understand what Paul has in mind, however, one needs insight into the parabolic imagery that God used to explain how Jesus Christ could die for the sins of others.

God's purpose in granting the New Covenant is to allow each and every member of Israel to become an **heir of the promise** so that he, too, might have opportunity to **inherit what was promised.** The terms of the New Covenant are exactly the same as the terms of the Old Covenant, except for the fact that the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel make abundantly clear that God would ratify the New Covenant only with individual members of Israel, not with Corporate Israel. One should not overlook the significance of that fact: Jesus Christ did not accept the terms of the New Covenant as Corporate Israel. He accepted them as the sole remaining Member of Corporate Israel. Therefore, He was an **Heir of the promise** under the terms of both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

In a neat bit of sleight of hand on God's part, Jesus Christ died under "the curse of the Law" as Corporate Israel, thereby permanently releasing the members of His Body from all liability for their transgression of "law." Parabolically speaking, the members of Corporate Israel died when Christ died. Since the members of His Body bore no guilt for sin, they were free to be joined with "The One" Who was resurrected as the Firstborn Son of God under the New Covenant. They, too, could **inherit what was promised as an heir of the promise.**

["There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in 'The Way')," **The Voice of Elijah**®, January 2000, p. 19]

It is possible that your reader confused the *parabolic image* in which the "law" of the Old Covenant "binds" a Believer to Corporate Israel with the *parabolic image* in which a Believer becomes "one" with Christ

under the terms of the New Covenant. Those are two completely separate *parabolic images*. The first has to do with the Believer *parabolically* residing “in Christ” as a member of the Body of Christ. The second has to do with (the Spirit of) Christ *parabolically* residing in the Believer. Both go back to the same *parabolic image*—that is, the Spirit of God residing in “The House” of Israel. The only difference in the *parabolic imagery* is one I have already pointed out: Under the terms of the Old Covenant, the Spirit of God resided in Corporate Israel; under the terms of the New Covenant, the Spirit of God resides in the individual members of Israel.

The implications of those two parallel sets of *parabolic images* go directly to the heart of the Apostle Paul’s statements concerning the mind-set Believers should have toward sin and this present life. Physically, Believers are members of the Man Corporate Israel—the deceased physical body of Jesus Christ. Therefore, they should consider their physical, sin-oriented bodies as dead. Spiritually, they have already been resurrected in “The Man”—that is, in the resurrected spiritual Body of Jesus Christ. Therefore, they should reside in their mind, constantly growing in the Truth of *The Teaching* they are being taught—which is the image and likeness of the invisible God. That is the *parabolic imagery* Paul had in mind when he wrote this:

If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, {and} abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its {evil} practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—{a renewal} in which there is no {distinction between} Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.
(Colossians 3:1–11)

Editor: What can you tell us about the parabolic image of True Believers living as “aliens” and “strangers” in the world? My reference for this comes from 1 Peter 1:1 and 2:11 where the Apostle Peter refers to Believers as “aliens” and “strangers,” and also from Hebrews 11:9 where we are told that Abraham “lived as an alien in the land of promise.” I assume there is a correlation between Abraham living as an “alien” in the land of promise and True Believers living as “aliens” and “strangers” in the world—the true land of promise that Abraham’s “seed” will one day inherit (Rom. 4:13). Can you explain what Peter has in mind when he refers to Believers as “aliens” and “strangers”? And to avoid any confusion that might arise, can you also explain what the Apostle Paul has in mind when he says that (Gentile) Believers are no longer “aliens” and “strangers” in Ephesians 2:19?

Elijah: Believe it or not, the passages you mentioned use three different terms to convey the general sense of “alien,” or “foreigner.” However, each of those three terms evoked a slightly different mental image in the mind of the ancient Greeks. So it is necessary to understand those mental images before one can fully comprehend the meaning of the four passages you mentioned. The first of the three terms (*parepidemos*) is the one that Peter uses in this passage:

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.
(1 Peter 1:1–2)

The Greek word translated “aliens” in that passage is a compound term consisting of the preposition *beside* attached to a noun that independently carries the sense of “those living at home.” Together, those two convey the image of a person from some other area—not necessarily from another country—who is living among an indigenous population. Therefore, a better translation of the term would perhaps be “outsider,” that is, someone who has no real interest in the concerns of the community in which he lives. Peter uses the term in the passage above because he is alluding to the fact that a born-again Believer is no longer “living

at home” on this Earth. He is instead yearning for an opportunity to return to his true home.

Peter uses the second term (*paroikos*) along with the first (*parepidemos*) when he says this:

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe {them,} glorify God in the day of visitation.

(1 Peter 2:11–12)

The translator has blurred the meaning of that passage by translating the second term (*paroikos*) as “aliens” and the first term (*parepidemos*)—which he translated as “aliens” in 1 Peter 1:1—as “strangers.” But the general sense comes through, nonetheless. Believers are not a part of the indigenous population of this hell-hole, that is, they do not feel at home in the idiocy that goes on all around us.

The second Greek term (*paroikos*) to carry the meaning of “alien,” or “foreigner,” is another compound noun. The noun derives from a verb which has been formed by the attachment of the preposition *beside* to a verb which simply means “to dwell.” Consequently, the noun has both a general meaning and a specific one. Generally, it means nothing more than “neighbor.” In context, however, it can take on the specific sense of “foreigner,” as it does in the passage above.

Any born-again Believer can easily understand Peter’s mind-set in regard to Believers being “outsiders” and “foreigners” who are living “among the Gentiles,” that is, among those who are not members of Israel. We simply do not fit in. We don’t have the same concerns because we do not have the same mind-set. And we certainly don’t react the same way that they do when faced with the same circumstances. The following passage always comes to mind when I am confronted by the jealousy, hatred, and generally mean-spirited nature of unregenerate people:

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and {if} He condemned the cities of

Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing {them} to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter; and {if} He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard {that} righteous man, while living among them, felt {his} righteous soul tormented day after day with {their} lawless deeds), {then} the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in {its} corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; forsaking the right way they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the {son} of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but he received a rebuke for his own transgression; {for} a dumb donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet. These are springs without water, and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. For speaking out arrogant {words} of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.

(2 Peter 2:4–19)

The third Greek term (*xenos*), which is sometimes used with the sense of “alien,” or “foreigner,” in the Scriptures, has a much more complex usage and meaning. In origin, it has to do with either hospitality extended or hospitality received. Therefore, the term could be used to designate either a host or a guest. Paul uses it with the meaning “host” in this verse:

Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the

brother.
(Romans 16:23)

More commonly, the Greek term *xenos* was used with the meaning of “stranger,” that is, it was used to designate one who should be treated as a guest. It clearly carries that meaning in this passage:

“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me {something} to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, {even} the least {of them,} you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me {nothing} to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ Then they themselves also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”
(Matthew 25:31–46)

You can see from the way Jesus used the Greek term *xenos*, which has been translated “stranger” in that passage, that it conveys the sense of someone who should rightly be treated as a guest. But quite often the

word retains no nuance at all of “guest” and designates only that someone is unknown, that is, a “stranger”:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. And a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”
(John 10:1–5)

Now that you are aware of the varied nuances of the three Greek terms which are translated “alien,” or “foreigner,” in the Scriptures, let’s look at the other two passages you mentioned. When the author of the Book of Hebrews wrote this, he used the verbal form of the second Greek term *paroikos*, which, as I explained, conveys the specific meaning “foreigner”:

By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign {land}, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
(Hebrews 11:8–10)

You are correct in your assumption that the Apostle who wrote that—like Peter in 1 Peter 1:1 and 2:11—is referring to *parabolic imagery* which depicts True Believers as outsiders or aliens, that is, foreigners, who are living in the land God has *promised* they will one day *inherit*. That *inheritance* will not occur until the New Jerusalem has been built and is ready for habitation. A few verses later, he states that clearly:

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that {country} from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to

return. But as it is, *they desire a better {country}, that is a heavenly one.* Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for *He has prepared a city for them.* (Hebrews 11:13–16)

The translator has obscured the *meaning* of that text by adding the word *country* where the author is actually referring to what the *parabolic image* represents. That is, he is referring to those whose mind is set on heavenly things rather than earthly things:

These all died in conformity with belief, not having received the things which were promised, but having seen and welcomed them from a distance and having confessed that they are strangers and outsiders on the Earth. For those who say such things are making it clear that they are seeking their {own} hometown. And indeed, if they had recalled that from which they came out, they would have had time to turn back. But now they are striving for something better, that is, heavenly. Therefore, the {Living} God is not ashamed of them—to be called their God—for He has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:13–16) —my interim translation

In the final passage you mentioned, Paul uses the terms I have told you *mean* “stranger” and “foreigner”:

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both {groups into} one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, {which is} the Law of commandments {contained} in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, {thus} establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner {stone}, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.* (Ephesians 2:13–22)

The *parabolic imagery* Paul has in mind is that in which Jesus Christ is “The House of Israel.” His point is, by believing the Truth of the Gospel, Gentile Believers have become members of the Body of Christ. They are therefore no longer strangers and foreigners to Israel. Instead, they are part of the “one new man” Christ has created by allowing Gentiles to be “grafted in” to Israel, replacing the Jews who had been “cut off from” Israel:

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, {remember that} it is not you who supports the root, but the root {supports} you. You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. (Romans 11:17–21)

My point is, the *parabolic imagery* associated with the Greek terms I have suggested should be translated as “outsider,” “foreigner,” and “stranger” has to do with both people and place. At the present time, the place *promised* to the Redeemed is occupied by folks who feel right at home. Consequently, those who will one day *inherit what was promised* feel like they don’t belong here at all—not because of the place but because of the people. It’s rather difficult for those who know the Truth to fit in when the indigenous population revels in greed, malice, sensuality, and everything else considered “normal.” But their days are numbered:

*Behold, a king will reign righteously,
And princes will rule justly.
And each will be like a refuge from the wind,
And a shelter from the storm,
Like streams of water in a dry country,
Like the shade of a huge rock in a parched land.
Then the eyes of those who see will not be blinded,
And the ears of those who hear will listen.
And the mind of the hasty will discern the truth,
And the tongue of the stammerers
will hasten to speak clearly.
No longer will the fool be called noble,
Or the rogue be spoken of {as} generous.* (Isaiah 32:1–5) ■