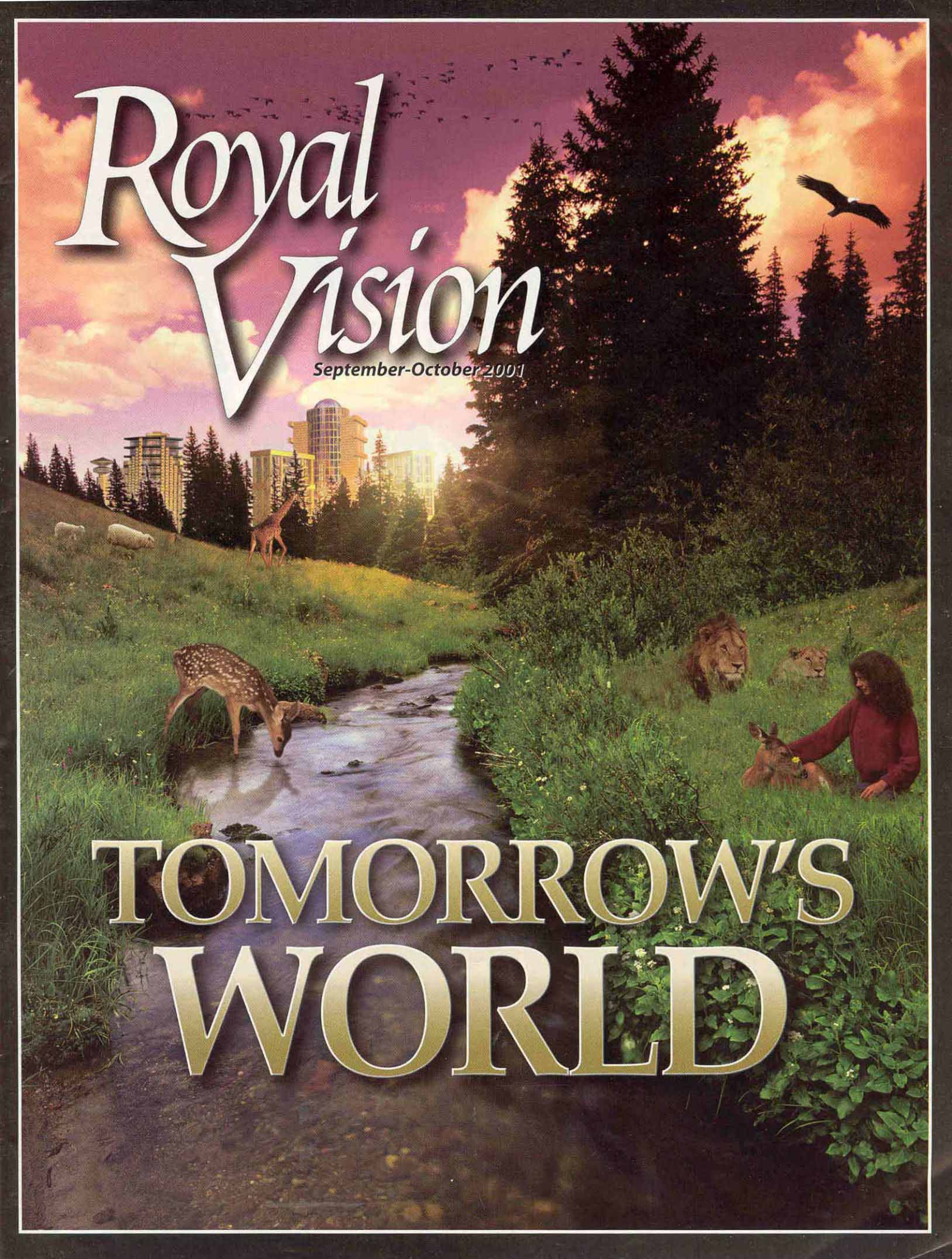


# Royal Vision

September-October 2001



## TOMORROW'S WORLD

# ROYAL VISION

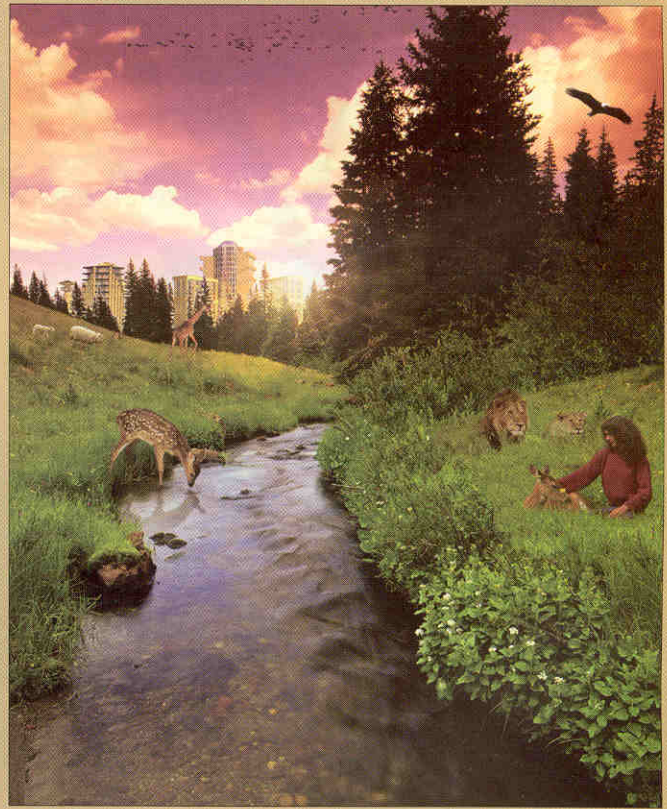
September-October 2001/Volume 4, Number 5

## ARTICLES

- "Why Are You Here?"** 6  
by Ron Fraser
- Remember the Feast of Trumpets,  
and God Will Remember You!** 7  
by John Amos
- Confronting Satan** 9  
by Joel Hilliker
- The Significance of Fasting** 12  
by Eric Anderson
- Guidelines for Effective Fasting** 14
- Tomorrow's World: Grasp the Vision!** 15  
by Ryan Malone
- Four Qualities of Great Leaders** 19  
by Andrew Locher
- Histories from the Bible  
**Joseph Is Alive** 25  
by Dennis Leap

## DEPARTMENTS

- Greetings, Brethren and Co-Workers!** 1
- Prove All Things** 22  
Lazarus and the Rich Man
- The Thief on the Cross** 24
- Q&A** 28
- Letters** 29



**About our cover** The World Tomorrow will be a time of peace and prosperity as this world has never known (see article, p. 15). (Digital illustration by Joel Hilliker and Steve Wilkins/Artville)

**Editor in chief** Gerald Flurry

**Managing editor** Stephen Flurry

**Assistant managing editors** Joel Hilliker, Ryan Malone

**Senior editors** Dennis Leap, J. Tim Thompson

**Contributors** Eric Anderson, Gareth Fraser, Ron Fraser, Andrew Locher, Wilbur Malone, Gary Rethford, Wayne Turgeon

**Proofreaders** Donna Grieves, Melody Thompson

**Prepress production manager** Ryan Malone

**Circulation manager** Jason Hensley

**Royal Vision** (ISSN10979808) is published bimonthly by the Philadelphia Church of God, 1019 Waterwood Parkway, Suite F, Edmond, OK 73034. Periodicals postage paid at Edmond, OK, and additional mailing offices. ©2001 Philadelphia Church of God. All rights reserved.

**Subscriptions:** Subscriptions are sent free to all members and co-workers of the Philadelphia Church of God. Address all communications to the Philadelphia Church of God, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73083.

**Notice:** *Royal Vision* cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited articles and photographs.

**U.S. POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Royal Vision*, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083.

# Greetings, Brethren and Co-Workers! . . .

God has now given me new revelation from the book of Isaiah.

We have taught in the past that the reference in Isaiah 22:20 to an end-time Eliakim referred to Herbert W. Armstrong. On April 4, I began preparation for a sermon expounding that point, and showing how the passage referred to the Philadelphia era of God's Church (Rev. 3:7-13).

The day before the Sabbath I was to speak, I received the new Anchor Bible Commentary on Isaiah. I thought this might give me more understanding on this subject and determined to study it that night. But when I began studying it, I was startled by something that I had not seen before—something that didn't agree with our previous teaching on Isaiah 22.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant *Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah*: AND I WILL CLOTHE HIM WITH THY ROBE, AND STRENGTHEN HIM WITH THY GIRDLE, AND I WILL COMMIT THY GOVERNMENT INTO HIS HAND: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah" (Isa. 22:20-21). This is God talking. But whom is He talking to?

The Anchor Bible Commentary wrote about these verses, "Note that the beginning of the Eliakim section is still referring back to Shebna" (see verse 15). In other words, verse 21 refers to *Shebna's* robe, *Shebna's* girdle and authority. So Shebna's office and authority were given to Eliakim. This is different from the way I have understood this passage in the past. This is one man being given the priestly vestments of another man. When did this happen in the end-time Church of God?

The expression "in that day" (vv. 20, 25) always refers to this end time. So how is all this happening in God's Church today?

After further study, I came to realize that it is referring not to the Philadelphian era, but to the Laodicean era. Isaiah 22 is talking about three individuals: Eliakim, Shebna and Hilkiyah. We have always taught that Shebna is a type of the present leader of the Worldwide Church of God; and that Mr. Armstrong, the founder of that church, was Eliakim in type (see *Isaiah's End-Time Vision*, pp. 50-54). But what I will explain in this article is that Eliakim is actually a type of my office, and Hilkiyah is a type of Mr. Armstrong's office.

## Connection to Court Case

Interestingly, I began to understand this truth on the same day that the Supreme Court denied our appeal in the *Mystery of the Ages* case. Perhaps there is a reason why these events happened on the same day.

The *Wall Street Journal* reporter who wrote about our case and spent a lot of time with Laodicean church groups told us that the other churches are intently watching this case. The *Journal*, a newspaper produced by Church of God splinter groups, had five articles about the *Wall Street Journal* story in one issue, in addition to reprinting the article itself. One of our members from Tyler, Texas (where many of these splinter groups reside), said she couldn't find that edition of the *Wall Street Journal* anywhere in town—all the copies had been bought. When she later called the *Wall Street Journal* to order a copy, they informed her that they too had no copies left. People are very interested in our battle over *Mystery of the Ages*, and not just church members.

The Laodiceans are receiving a strong warning from this court case—even from outside sources. Why would they be watching us so closely? After spending years in God's Church—unless they never got it or have lost everything—they still remember Mr. Armstrong. And we won't let them forget.

In a way, we are like the Israelites in Joshua 24:32—they carried Joseph's bones out of Egypt all the way to Shechem, because they wanted to remember this great man of God. We too keep

thrusting Mr. Armstrong into the public consciousness through our efforts, to keep his work alive.

### Shebna Tossed

"Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house, and say" (Isa. 22:15). Here is a man over God's house who is also a treasurer. In this end time, there is a Laodicean Church that is rich and increased with goods and motivated by Satan. They love the riches of this world.

God is telling *someone* to "get thee unto this treasurer." God has a great controversy with this treasurer. He is elsewhere called the "son of perdition" (II Thes. 2:3-4).

This passage never talks about Satan. But we know that Judas, the first-century son of perdition (John 17:12), was possessed by the devil (John 13:26-27). He too was a treasurer, overly concerned about physical riches (Matt. 26:14-16; John 12:4-6).

Who in this end time has all the money and goods? The Worldwide Church of God accuses us of stealing *Mystery of the Ages*, but look at the goods they inherited from Mr. Armstrong's work! Still they refuse to teach God's revealed truth and do His work. Who is doing the stealing?

God instructs *someone* to go to this treasurer and deliver this message: "What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre [or tomb] here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?" (Isa. 22:16). God wants one man to go to another and say, *I know you have grandiose ideas, but you are only carving out for yourself an eternal tomb!* God wants this end-time Shebna to know exactly what he's doing. As Mr. Armstrong often said, this is dangerous knowledge—eternal life is at stake!

We have a heavy responsibility: We speak for God! This is not an easy message to deliver, but God commands it. We must faithfully obey and not back down.

The message to Shebna continues: "Behold, the Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee" (Isa. 22:17). In the King James reference, it says this "mighty captivity" is "the captivity of a man." God reinforces this point with Shebna, who apparently is so

mentally off track he doesn't even consider himself a man! That is precisely what II Thessalonians 2:4 states. He acts as if he were God! Is he possessed? The scriptures certainly indicate that he is. God is saying, *by the time I am finished with you, you will know that you are just a pitiful man!*

"He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house" (Isa. 22:18). This man will experience the Great Tribulation. Barnes' Commentary says of this verse, "Lowth has well expressed the sense of this: *He will whirl thee round and round, and cast thee away.* Thus it refers to the action of throwing a stone with a 'sling,' when the sling is whirled round and round several times before the string is let go, in order to increase the velocity of the stone. The idea is here, that God designed to cast him into a distant land, and that he would give such an 'impulse' to him that he would be sent afar, so far that he would not be able

**Look at the free-fall the WCG has experienced since that night! I don't believe that Church will even exist in ten years!**

to return again." And of "into a large country," Barnes says, "Probably Assyria." That is pretty good insight for a commentary, and is probably where this man is going.

The last part of verse 18, the Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon renders, "And there the chariots of thy glory shall be converted into ignominy, because thou didst not preserve the glory of the house of thy lord." This is what we're really talking about: *preserving the glory of God's house!* Look at what Satan has done to God's Church. Even while Mr. Armstrong was alive, he had a real stronghold *inside* the Church. We have to work exceedingly hard to preserve the glory of God's house inside **THIS CHURCH!**

"And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down" (v. 19). God will forcibly strip this end-time Shebna of his office.

In all the book of Isaiah, no one is singled out for such severe punish-

ment like Shebna. God does not take his sins lightly!

### Eliakim

It is in the context of this message to Shebna, warning about the Great Tribulation and being stripped of his office, that God says, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with THY [Shebna's] robe, and strengthen him with THY girdle, and I will commit THY government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah" (vv. 20-21).

This prophecy was delivered three millennia ago; yet, look at its detail! There are three specific personalities prophesied here, all connected very closely with God's Church in these end times.

Eliakim means "God establishes." If we really know God, we should be able to see God and how He *establishes*. That places responsibility on my shoulders, but also on yours, to ensure that we allow God to establish Himself in our lives. He wants to rule us and be our Father.

This is the opposite of what is happening with the Laodiceans. They are tossed to and fro, in confusion and misery. They *KNOW* they are wrong, and just *watch* God's people to see what is happening! They sense that God is establishing this work, and that we have the truth they ought to be keeping.

When did God strip this end-time Shebna of his robe and girdle and government? Revelation 11:1-2 discusses an inner court and an outer court. That prophecy was fulfilled quickly after John Amos and I were fired from the WCG. The inner court is where God dwells. God *established* His Church. And where He dwells, you will find new revelation, one-man government, an exciting work and dedicated people. You will find persecution—Satan will be attacking that group—but you will also find people who are bold as a lion! And you will find the key of David vision where God dwells.

### The Transfer of Authority

When John Amos and I were summoned to Pasadena headquarters over *Malachi's Message*, the one who dealt with us was Joe Tkach Jr. Though his father was in town, he never showed up.

At the time, I didn't know just what God would do, but I knew that He was

behind me. I had thought that God might use this meeting to help straighten out the Church. But after I saw the direction everything was going, I realized that was not going to happen. That was terribly discouraging to me.

On December 7, 1989, Joseph Tkach Jr. was already in charge of the WCG in spirit. Two ministers were being fired, and we would later be disfellowshipped, and the top leader of the Church (Joseph Tkach Sr.) didn't even show up! I believe that indicates he had already lost control. We were dealing with Shebna.

I have already fulfilled Isaiah 22:16 in part—delivering a warning to this end-time Shebna. As we left, I told Mr. Tkach Jr., “This is only the first sip of a very bitter cup you’re going to have to drink.” I may as well have told him he was carving himself an eternal tomb! But the warning didn’t stop there: Mr. Tkach Jr. was one of the first to receive a copy of *Malachi’s Message*, in which there is a chapter about a man of sin inside God’s own Church acting like he is God! (II Thes. 2:3-4).

**God’s government is here! That is not a casual statement. If you take God’s government from the Church, it will wreck the Church!**

There was something I didn’t understand then, but do now. According to these verses, I was given Shebna’s authority—his priestly vestments. When did that happen? It must have happened that very night when I was fired—December 7, 1989. Joe Tkach Jr. was given a final chance to repent. He did not, and God stripped him of his authority. From that time to the present, God has been using me to resurrect and do His work! The *fruits* prove that statement absolutely.

Conversely, look at the free-fall the WCG has experienced since that night! I don’t believe that Church will even exist in ten years! And that is just logically following the trajectory they have been on from that momentous night.

When God started this Church, He transferred Shebna’s priestly vestments and His government over to Eliakim. God’s government is here! That is not a casual statement. If you take God’s government from the

Church, it will WRECK THE CHURCH! That is exactly what happened to the WCG. After that night, they no longer had God’s government.

John Amos followed that government from the beginning. We were two *nobodies* in the ministry, and yet he never argued over who was in charge. He was one *nobody* submitting to another *nobody*! That is to his eternal credit, and it demonstrates that we had the government of God right at the start.

Look at the context of these verses in Isaiah 22: It speaks of “in that day” and the Great Tribulation. That clearly puts it in these end times.

Understanding Eliakim does not mean following a man. It means following what “God establishes”! We dare not follow a man. But you know that if I really let God rule me and make the decisions Christ wants me to make, there will be a few decisions that you don’t agree with. Even I probably won’t like all of them, initially. But if we ever fail at this test, like Shebna we will only be carving out for ourselves an eternal tomb!

This is also a strong message for *me*. When God says He has given His government, that means I had better use it! God forbid that I should ever *abuse* His family. But things will only work if we *USE* this government. Can we prove which man on Earth is truly *USING* GOD’S GOVERNMENT—the government that will one day rule the world and the universe?

In Revelation 3:8, God praises the Philadelphians for *not denying His name—His authority or government*. Think about that. Philadelphians are not establishing it *again*. They are *KEEPING* God’s government that was *established* by God through Mr. Armstrong.

IF YOU UNDERSTAND PROPHECY—TRUE PROPHECY THE WAY GOD REVEALS IT—YOU ARE RULED BY GOD. Of course, you must be careful, because Satan is always trying to counterfeit it. But the Laodiceans do not understand God’s prophecies, simply because they have denied God’s authority.

When you have God’s government, the doors will swing open for you. What doors do the Laodiceans have opening for them? Most of their open doors have already been shut. They are spending their time watching doors swing open for *us*!

I believe we will not lose the court case. Yes, our chances of winning are smaller. But that only makes greater

odds for God. He is like the Supreme Court in that He only takes certain cases. But He usually takes them when you’ve already gone into the fiery furnace! *Mystery of the Ages* was an open door for us. God has put it on hold temporarily. But Isaiah 22:22 says that when Eliakim opens a door, none can shut it. We must have faith in that.

### A Father

Eliakim is a father “to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Jerusalem is a type of Israel and Judah. Looking at that spiritually, it is talking about the Church of God (spiritual Israel) and the very elect—the spiritual Jews of Revelation 3:9.

I have written many times that Mr. Armstrong is a spiritual father to us in the Church. That is one reason I had trouble seeing this truth initially. He certainly did fulfill that office.

But even if you had all of Mr. Armstrong’s material, could you come to God today with just that understanding? Some today say *yes*. But the answer is *no*. You need also to come

**If you understand prophecy—true prophecy the way God reveals it—you are ruled by God.**

into God’s Church with *Malachi’s Message* and other new revelation God has given me. In that sense, I am a father.

We must be careful to remember Elisha’s attitude toward Elijah when he said, “My father, my father” (II Kings 2:12). We must retain that attitude. Elisha really understood the depth of the family of God. We must realize that we are in God’s family, and sometimes our heavenly Father charges a man to bring people to Him, directly or indirectly. The job makes that man a *father* to those people.

How well do we understand our spiritual Father? “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). What does that mean? This is more than just looking to Christ. God wants us to see everything through *His* mind—the mind of a FATHER. He is a Father with a family; Christ will be the Husband, we will be the bride, and

we will help bring billions of people into the Father's family.

IF YOU UNDERSTAND GOD THE FATHER, YOU WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING WHOM HE IS USING. But understanding the Father requires fervent prayer and deep study.

We must see this court case from the loving Father's perspective!

Think about it: How much do you love your children, just as a physical parent or grandparent? I feel I love children more and more as I grow older. How could a father not love his children? They bring such joy into your life. And look at how much children need their parents. It is a rough world out there—people are willing to abandon their children to go into the work force, neglecting them and leaving them to grow up alone. That creates TERRIBLE problems in this world!

As I go out and face this world, I want to know that I have a *Father* there, guiding me, encouraging me, helping me! I know God will always be there, because He is a FATHER! If He weren't, He would probably be out in the universe doing something else. But because He has *children*, He looks after them. Yes, Christ is the Head of the Church, but He constantly points us to the FATHER. We must capture this tremendous family vision!

### The Key of David

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open" (Isa. 22:22). Mr. Armstrong received the key of David from Christ. Here it speaks of the "key of the house of David," which means David's royal palace. This verse puts more emphasis on the *royal* aspect of the vision. How much we talk about royalty in this Church!

The Laodiceans today are disgracefully divided. They don't want *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, which reveals the key of David. That would unite them. In 1987, about a year after Mr. Armstrong died, they chopped out 70 percent of that book. A year later they shelved it completely while officially saying they were only "reviewing" it. That was a *lie*! Neither do they want *Mystery of the Ages*, which also talks about the key of David. The real reason is, *they don't want God's rule*! God says they are like a dog returning to its vomit (Prov. 26:11).

Some of them ask, *why can't we all*

*get together?* The only way that would be possible is if we ALL united under the key of David throne. THAT IS THE VISION THAT WILL UNITE THIS WORLD! It will unite America and China, Arab and Jew.

It truly angers Satan when we talk about David's throne. He knows that his reign is about over. He has nothing to lose. He is composed of pure hatred. He is stirring up all kinds of hatred in this world—racial and other problems that can only be solved with the key of David. The tighter we hold on to that vision, the angrier he gets—but the less he can touch us.

"And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and *he shall be for a glorious THRONE to his father's house*" (Isa. 22:23).

**If you understand God the Father, you will have no trouble understanding whom He is using. But understanding the Father requires fervent prayer and deep study.**

When you talk about this throne, you're talking about God's government.

God will make this Eliakim as a "nail in a sure place." But in principle, as *we* support Eliakim, that is what God is doing to all of us! People look at us and say, *that Church—they just won't give up!* As we get into more trouble, they will really think we are crazy! But we simply are giving ourselves *passionately* to God, and we are *thankful* to be honored by God. We look forward to being placed into headquarters, ruling beside Jesus Christ forever. This empire will extend into the universe! That is quite a future. No wonder we can be so strong and dedicated—such a nail in a sure place.

### All the Glory

"And they shall hang upon him ALL THE GLORY OF HIS FATHER'S HOUSE, the *offspring* and the *issue*, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons" (v. 24).

Barnes' Commentary says this about the word *offspring*: "All that proceeded from the family; all that were connected with it. Kimchi and Aben Ezra render it, 'SONS AND DAUGH-

TERS.'... The Chaldee, 'Sons and grandsons, youth and children.'" God is talking about FAMILY. The Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary says, "Rather, 'the offshoots of the family, high and low.' The Hebrew for 'issue' [...to put forth, especially vile things, as, for instance, worthless shoots, excrement, Exod. 4:15]."

The "offspring and the issue" refer to two groups: the Jacobite Laodiceans and the Edomite Laodiceans (see Mal. 1:1-3; read our *Obadiah* booklet for a detailed explanation). Both groups are rebelling. One is called "offspring." This group will repent in the Tribulation and be born into God's family. But the others—the "issue"—are so far gone, God calls them SPIRITUAL DUNG! That's all they are to God now! They have no future. The WCG has property worth about \$200 million; yet, when you compare that to what we have spiritually, it is just so much dung!

What are the "vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons"? Anciently, these were items used in the temple service. What do we use today in the temple service? These must refer to all of our books and booklets. All the glory hangs on Eliakim—all the revelation from Mr. Armstrong, plus all the new revelation God has given to me. That is quite a lot of glory! We have it all!

\$200 million amounts to nothing more than a measly bowl of soup—what Esau gave up his birthright for. The Edomite Laodiceans have given up eternal glory for nothing more than dung!

It requires great faith to believe this truth. I have faith that these verses show we will get *Mystery of the Ages* and those other works back. If I am wrong, I will change my views as God directs. I am following the pillar of fire, just as the Israelites did, and if it changes direction, I will still follow it. Perhaps there are things I don't understand at this time. But I do know this: It also says that all of this glory hangs on the office of one man. We must make sure *God* has established that man. If He has, there is a lot of glory there.

Please restudy "That Prophet" (*Royal Vision*, July/August 2000). We must have the content of that subject NAILED DOWN, because I assure you that I will be demonized because of what is written on that subject.

HOW COULD GOD'S PEOPLE TALK

ABOUT THE EVILS OF ONE-MAN RULE? THAT IS OUT OF THE MIND OF THE DEVIL! You don't read that in Isaiah 22—you read just the reverse! We must follow where God has *established* His rule!

As we enter rougher times, it will take power and boldness and courage to survive. I need your prayers, because without God's power I am just as weak and cowardly as anyone. We are in this together. We must all be as bold as lions to accomplish what God has given us to do!

This is not an easy job. We have had more trials this past year than ever before. And yet, we have also had more blessings. Being denied by the Supreme Court, and then receiving this revelation on the same day, helps me to realize more deeply that God is alive and truly loves us. Christ is about to return, and bring all His saints with Him. Don't tell me we can't stand up and do God's work, because I know we can.

The Supreme Court decision is another test for us. Can we see what is really going on? Can we see where all the glory is? Do we know that God is guiding this Church? If so, then there is no bad news. We had a less than 1 percent chance of being heard. Now I believe it's less than .000001 percent—and those are perfect odds for God! That's really where He begins to move in and perform mighty works!

But to be effective, and to really have God behind us, we must remain pure. "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; *be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord*" (Isa. 52:11).

When Solomon's temple was destroyed, Gentiles stole the temple vessels. In Ezra 1:5-7, when the Jews rebuilt the temple, God made those men bring the vessels back! Ezra is a prophetic book, because it is about temple building. The characters in Ezra are also discussed in the minor prophets. I BELIEVE WE ARE CERTAIN TO RECEIVE THOSE STOLEN VESSELS BACK AGAIN.

Remember, though, what a battle those Jews had to rebuild that temple! They built with one hand while they held a weapon in the other! (Neh. 4:17). We simply *will not* finish this work without a war. Anciently, the temple building actually stopped. But they didn't give up at that point. Just because *Mystery of the Ages* isn't here right now doesn't mean God wants us to stop. We must *fight* and *fight* and

*fight* until we know that GOD is the one who has stopped it. He doesn't want us to let Satan-inspired men stop His truth! He wants people who will stand up and fight to give this world the truth that they so desperately need!

Some Laodiceans call us and say, "We really hope you win this court case." I have to wonder, do they really? They are sitting out there on the fence doing nothing. They don't have the courage to join the fight for God. Doesn't God expect more? He wants DEEDS. How can we be *neutral* in times like these?

Remember Amos 9:11: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins,

**How could God's people talk about the evils of one-man rule? That is out of the mind of the devil!**

and I will build it as in the days of old." If you're going to build this tabernacle "as in the days of old," you would have to have the books and booklets you once had. "That they may possess the remnant of Edom..." (v. 12). That MUST include *Mystery of the Ages* and Mr. Armstrong's other books and booklets. That is what I believe, and faith firmly dictates that I continue to believe that until God says otherwise.

#### Famine of the Word

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 22:25). I believe this is talking about the famine of the word (Amos 8:8), when God's continual work is taken to a place of safety. If there is more to it than that, then God has yet to show me.

When I see the court decision, I get a taste of what the famine of the word will be like. Some people call in who are genuinely upset that they cannot receive Mr. Armstrong's books. *You mean, I can't even get a copy and read it?* they ask. They are already experiencing a famine of the word to a degree.

I firmly believe that in the future we will face an even more significant

battle with this end-time Shebna. Amos 7:10-11 shows a priest of God going to a leader of the land and trying to get God's work shut down. In verses 12-13, he speaks directly to God's prophet, telling him to prophesy not. We do have a work of prophecy, and we are not trying to hide it. We talk about the rising beast, and we warn that the nations of Israel are quickly losing their power. We are making ourselves a target for some intense persecution.

I was wrong about two personalities and which era Isaiah 22 refers to. We will have to amend those parts of our *Isaiah* booklet. But I again ask, *Why would God give me this understanding on the very day that we were denied by the Supreme Court?*

Remember the example of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were being cast into the fiery furnace, which was so hot that the guards who brought them there were burned alive. The three must have known they were going to die. Then they were actually thrown in. Surely that would have seemed like the end. But then Nebuchadnezzar and the others looked into the furnace and saw them still alive, walking around in the fire. And on top of that, they saw a fourth figure walking around with the three they had just thrown in. Jesus Christ was right there in the furnace with them! (Dan. 3:23-25).

Christ wants us to know that we are His family. When we trust Him, HE WILL GET RIGHT INTO THE FURNACE WITH US. We must see where He is. This is a test of our faith. We *need* these tests. They indicate how truly precious we are to God. These things do not happen to the Laodiceans. They have never experienced anything like what I experienced on April 3. God is saying, *It's okay—I'm right here in the furnace with you.* What else matters?

Mr. Amos has these words written on his gravestone: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). I know Mr. Amos is going to be there with Christ on that throne. Will we be there with him?

*Gerald Flurry*

Gerald Flurry  
Editor in Chief