

## Place of Safety and the Two Witnesses

Fred R. Coulter—June 6, 1998

How many here want to escape and go to a place of safety? Are you sure? Our experience has been this—and it came about with a slight of hand, if you understand that *the Church of God is a spiritual organization; everyone who has the Spirit of God is in the Church of God*. Fine, so far, then the slight of hand comes this way: ‘This organization is the only true Church of God on earth.’ And since you haven’t looked any place else, you can’t prove or disprove that Church of God Seventh Day, that Sardis Era of the Church, is dead; in Stanberry, Missouri. So you look at Stanberry, MO, and there’s nothing there. You weren’t told they moved their headquarters to Denver, and that they were alive and well and had over 60,000 members. So you figured the only church was the Worldwide Church of God.

Then it came out that ‘only those who are Philadelphians are going to go; only those who are in this organization are going to go to a place of safety. If you leave this organization you’re not going to go to a place of safety.’ Sound familiar? *Yes!* ‘Now, brethren, you’re either going to go to a place of safety or you’re going to go through the Great Tribulation! You’re going to have your fingernails pulled out, your hair pulled out, you’re going to be stretched on a rack, you’re going to be killed, loose your head, burned in a fire!’ No one wants that! Do you want that? *Yes, lead me to the rack! (sarcastically)* No! Nobody! We have a have a little humor in here to understand about it, but it’s really a serious topic.

Let’s turn to Revelation 12:12: “Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath because he knows that he has *only* a short time.... [Now, how long is a ‘short time’? *This ‘short time’ we can tell by the context is a little longer than three and a half years, because time, times and half a time is three and a half years—correct?* ] ...And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man *child* [the Church]. And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly **to her place** in the wilderness, where she is nourished *for* a time, and times, and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent” (vs 12-14). And it is literally ‘the place of hers.’ Now, ‘All you Laodiceans, now you’re going to get it!’ (sarcastically)

Verse 15: “And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and

swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest [remnant] of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (vs 15-17). Look at the word ‘remnant’ (KJV)—Greek is *just the others*—‘remnant’ is an unfortunate translation, because you think of the smaller number left behind—right? But this is no designation of any number at all. This could be more, and chances are probably more.

Let’s go back to v 13: “...when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man *child*.” Now, if you endure that persecution and are faithful, whatever persecution comes, you have a choice. Remember, Peter said, ‘Lord, if it’s necessary I’ll go and die with You, but I’ll never deny You.’ And Jesus said, ‘Tonight, you’re going to deny Me three times before the cock crows twice.’ *No siree!* So when the persecution came and the maid who was the gatekeeper said, ‘You’re one of them, aren’t you?’ *No! No!* And another one said, ‘I saw you were with Him. I was there when He was arrested and your speech says that you’re a Galilean.’ *No! No! I don’t know the Man.* Then the third one said, ‘Of assurity, you are with Him.’ And Peter denied it and blasphemed! Luke has the account that Jesus looked him [Peter] right in the eye, because he was right close by. Peter was inside, and Jesus looked him in the eye and then the cock crowed.

So, when we have persecution come against us, what are we going to do? The easy way is to deny it so you won’t get in trouble. But if you do that, you’re going to get in worse trouble—so keep that in mind. Now, there is a place of safety. We’re going to find out

- Who’s going to make the selection?
- How is it that you’re going to get there?
- Possibly where the place of safety is (Isa. 16—come to Selah, and that is Petra)

One time Garner Ted Armstrong went over to Petra and he was astonished to see, as he was standing there looking at it, here over-flew some helicopters, and he said, ‘this can’t be the place of safety.’ So he threw out the whole doctrine of a place of safety, and said, ‘The place of safety is that God can protect you wherever you are.’ Well, in both cases, he’s wrong! Very simple: What is the will of God? *Whatever the will of God is, that’s what’s going to happen!* If it is Petra, is God capable of putting a

magnetic shield over so that nobody can fly in there? *No question about it!* To go there is going to be a matter of faith, as we're going to see.

Now, it may very well be Petra; we don't know. So I have always advised everyone this, concerning the place of safety: If you know where it is and you don't get there—does the knowledge do you any good? And if you don't know where it is, and you do get there, well then, you find out where it is when you get there—right? But you've made it.

Now, let's cover a couple of things here that I think are going to be very important. Let's go to Isaiah 57, please. For many seniors, the duress, the stress and the strain of going to a place of safety for senior citizens, I do not believe that God is going to put you through that. It's possible He might; if He does then you'll be able to bear it. We have a lot of seniors in the Church, a lot of them up in their 80s. God is now calling them to be perfected, because He wants them perfected and loved in knowledge and Truth as much as possible in the last years of their life. That's very important. And even though you're old and weak and gray, and things may be failing—eyes failing, heart failing. I joke with my wife, I say, 'when I get to that point, I want ten years supply of Nintendo and I want a tricycle with a yellow flag.' You start out in diapers on a tricycle and you end up in diapers on a tricycle! Remember, God still loves you. He's not going to forsake you because you're old and weak. He's just not going to do that. And, therefore, great honor goes to the seniors. You give greater honor to the weak, because God intends that.

Isaiah 57:1: "The righteous perish, and no one lays *it* to heart, and merciful men *are* taken away; none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.... [and it's going to be evil! It's going to be horrendous! It's going to make Indonesia look like a Saturday night party.] ...He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds, each one who walked in his uprightness" (vs 1-2). That's just an allegorical way of saying 'you're going to die.' You don't have to be fearful of death. God is going to spare you, taking the righteous from the trouble to come.

Psalms 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." So, it's precious.

For those who are not going to go to *the place of safety*—because of age; because your life is going to come to an end—you will go to *your place of safety* being the grave; and you're in safekeeping, wouldn't you say, awaiting the resurrection—no question about it. It's left to the rest who are behind, however it's going to fall.

Psalms 91:1—and let's answer the question

about God being able to protect us. We have to ask: What is the will of God? Here's part of the will of God, but does this apply to everybody at all times? We'll find out in just a bit. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I will trust.'.... [Notice the faith and dedication to God. So this is the attitude that we need, and I can assure you that if you do go to *the place of safety* you're not going to get there without this attitude.] ...Surely He will deliver you from the fowler's trap... [the trap where you put out seed. Kids used to do that. They'd get a stick and string and a box and then they put out the grain and let the pheasants or the quail or the wild turkey get in there under the box and then pull the string and the box slams down on them. That's a 'fowler'] ...and from the destroying pestilence" (vs 1-3).

God is going to have to protect us from a lot of these plagues that come along. Today we have bacteria that can kill you in hours! Bacteria that once it gets in your system your flesh is just eaten right off the bone! Well, God will protect us from it, if you have this attitude of trusting in Him.

"He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge... [sounds very similar to the two wings of an eagle—doesn't it? But it's not exactly the same—similar, but not the same.] ...**His Truth shall be your shield and buckler**" (v 4). That's very important! No one's going to go to a place of safety unless they believe the Truth, love God and love the Truth. Do you think that? *Absolutely!* Do you think today that if you got Rod Meredith, Gerald Flurry, David Hulme, Les McCullough, whoever else you wanted to name and you divided up Petra—you take your people and go over here, and you take your people and go over here, etc.—who's in charge? *I am! I am! I am!* They'd kill each other right in the place of safety! You're better off being persecuted and martyred. So that scenario is not going to work. You have to have 'His Truth as your shield and buckler.'

"You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day, nor for the plague that walks in darkness, nor for the destruction laying waste at noonday" (vs 5-6). That's like all this weather we have going on.

I talked to a man who was coming home from Pentecost services in Ohio, and a tornado was coming right down in front of him on the highway. They slowed the car down and prayed immediately asking for God's protection, and that tornado took a 90-degree right turn ahead of them and went off into the brush-land. So, if you believe God, He'll protect you from those.

“A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand; it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes you shall behold and see the recompense of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, Who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling, for **He shall give His angels charge over you** to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and asp... [this verse is like the victory of overcoming everything] ...the young lion and the jackal you shall trample underfoot.... [That’s being victorious over Satan and all the powers of the world] ...‘Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him... [so there are elements of being taken to a place of safety—aren’t there?—as well as elements of being protected on an ongoing basis. You have both things in here.] ...I will set him on high because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation” (vs 7-16). Of course, the longest life is eternal life.

Let’s talk about going to a place of safety. Years ago, before 1972, we had to make sure that we had all the phone numbers of all the brethren. Many of the brethren had their ‘Petra boxes’; some of them carried them with them in the trunk of their car when they went to Sabbath services—didn’t they? Some of them had three years supply of birth control. No kidding! I mean, well prepared!

Let’s go to Matthew 10; this becomes very important. We used to put out articles—remember this: we’d send out *United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* and *1975 in Prophecy* and you’d see those gory pictures and it would say that if you don’t ‘repent you’re going to be destroyed and go through the Tribulation.’ Then the article will follow: *There is a Way of Escape!* Boy! I want that! The way of escape is, you join this church. So what happens? *I think a lot of people came into the Church because they didn’t want to die!* I mean, who wants to go through the Tribulation? *Nobody!*

Matthew 10:37: “The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.... [This whole thing is worth a whole sermon in itself.] ...The one who has found his life shall lose it... [If you join an organization so that you can go to a place of safety, **you’re not going!** Why? *Because you’re seeking to save your physical life!*] ...and the

one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it” (vs 37-39). That’s that attitude, ‘Lord is my shield and buckler’ in total attitude toward God.

Let’s find out, for those who are going to a place of safety, how you’re going to get there. We used to say we’d get the word from Herbert Armstrong and Stanley Rader would have the 747s all ready to go. We’d call the members and they would get their stuff and be ready to go, and we’re off to a place of safety. Picture this scenario if that were true: The minister, in his political wisdom, while making the calls for those to go to Petra, knew that you were a ‘renegade’ in his own mind. You may be faithful to God, but in his mind you’re a renegade. So he comes to your name and telephone number and says, ‘Whoop! I’m not calling him; he’s going into the Tribulation.’ So he goes into the Tribulation; he finally makes it, and on the Sea of Glass Christ comes up to him and says, *Oh, I’m so happy that you’ve made it. I’m sorry that you had to go through the Tribulation.* ‘What do you mean, Lord?’ *Well, the minister, when He came to your name, he bypassed your name!* or to another person: *Your phone was out of order and he couldn’t get you so you couldn’t go to a place of safety—but, I’m so happy you’re here.* Is God going to leave it to that? *Of course not!*

Let’s start with those who are in Judea. Matthew 24:15: “Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy place’...” [that’s 2-Thess., the ‘man of sin, the son of perdition, who says he is greater than God.’ That is the *beast power* whom all the world is going to worship. When he goes and stands in the temple of God and says, ‘I’m God!’ That is the ‘abomination of desolation.’.... [This next phrase, Jesus didn’t say]: ... (the one who reads, let him understand)... [that’s what Matthew put in there when he wrote it. God inspired him to put it there. So, we realize we need some understanding when this comes about.] ...then let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains” (vs 15-16). That is going east. Go down into the valley to the Red Sea and go up the mountains on the other side, and you’re close to the area of Petra. But also in that area, there are caves all over the place—aren’t there?

So they are to leave. How are they to leave? *You have your ‘Petra box’ ready; you have your coat read; you have all the supplies you need.* Be sure and have lots of deodorant, because it’s going to be a stinky place over there. And when you go, all packed up, no one will ever realize that you’re not incognito.

NO! it says: “Let the one *who is* on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his

house... [Nothing! **You're going to go by faith!**—period! This is for those in Judea. The circumstances for those outside of Judea, we're going to see is a little different. How are you going to do it? Walk across the Atlantic Ocean? Can't you see CNN News: 'There's a great phenomena going on. There are thousands of people walking across the Atlantic Ocean and they've been doing this for two weeks! And now they're ready to enter the Mediterranean, yes, there they go.' Five days later: 'They're walking up on the shore of Tel Aviv.' Two days later: 'They're hiking over the mountains and they're on their way to Petra.' **NO!** If you're hire a plane, you're not going to get on because the *beast power* is going to control it. 'Where are you going?' *I'm going to a place of safety.* 'Arrest that man!' **It won't happen!**

Verse 18: "And let the one *who is* in the field not go back to take his garments. But woe to those *women* who are expecting a child, and to those who are nursing infants in those days! And pray that your flight be not in *the* winter, nor on *the* Sabbath; for then shall there be great tribulation..." (vs 18-21). The Great Tribulation is going to start, BAM! Remember Rev. 12, there's a period when there is persecution. Then right after that time the Church is taken to a place of safety and then the war begins against the saints. So in that we discern the will of God.

- It is the will of God that some go to a place of safety
- It is the will of God that others be martyred

You need to ask the question: How can a Laodicean, being weak and faithless, give any kind of witness unless there's some substantial change?

Now, let's go to Luke 17:22, and we're going to find out how people in different parts of the world are going to get to wherever the place of safety is. "Then He said to the disciples, '*The* days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see *it*...' [The end-time includes the Day of the Lord, meaning all three and a half years; the Day of the Lord, in come cases, referring to the last year plus a little time. Here He says, 'one of the days of the Lord.']( We know that this is at the end-time He's referring to, because He says): ...And they shall say to you, "Look here," or, "Look there." Do not go, neither follow *them*. For as the light of day..." (vs 22-24).

Matthew 24:27—we'll clarify this because it's important: "For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west... [What comes out of the east and shines to the west? *The sun!* Lightning can go north, east, south, west, up, down, oblique, lateral, stay up in the clouds,

come on down to the earth. So this is not talking about lightning bolts as we think of lightning in a lightning storm.] ...so also shall the coming of the Son of man be." That's why it's going to be like all of sudden there's a new sun out there which is progressing closer and closer and closer to the earth.

Luke 17:24: "For as the light of day, whose light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven, so also shall the Son of man be in **His** day.... [Notice, we have *days* of the Son of man; then *His* day. So apparently, some of the days are the years that expired by this time it comes.] (Then He interjects something having to do with the immediate thing that He's going to go through): ...But first it is necessary *for* Him to suffer many things and to be rejected by this generation. Now as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man" (vs 24-26). Again, *days!*

"They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all. And it was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day *that* Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed *them* all. This *is* how it shall be in the day *that* the Son of man is revealed. In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away; and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind. **Remember Lot's wife.** Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it" (vs 27-33).

Now, let's stop here and ask a question: How was Lot taken out of Sodom? *The angels came!* That's what He's telling us here. Remember Psa. 91, He gives the angels 'charge over' you. So, when it comes times to go to a place of safety the angels are going to make the selection according, I believe, to the command of Christ, because Christ knows the hearts—right? And He knows who is going to be 'worthy' to escape. So therefore, *no man is going to make the decision.* And it's not going to be by jet plane, because even if you were in a jet plane, if *the beast* knew about it what's he going to do? *Send the fighter planes up there and shoot you out of the sky!*

Notice v 34, we're going to see something here that's very important: "I tell you, **in that night** there shall be two in one bed... [it says 'men' (KJV)—that's okay for San Francisco. This means two, not men, in one bed.] ...one shall be taken, and the other shall be left." What is this showing? *This is showing individual, spiritual relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, regardless if you are*

*married or not*; regardless of how close you are to another person. That means, because you know someone who is very righteous and faithful, that does not guarantee that you're going to be taken to a place of safety. How can it? *Each man is going to stand on his own righteousness; each woman is going to stand on her own righteousness—correct? Yes!* That's why if husband and wife are together in everything, and that they are together in their relationship with Christ, then two will be taken out of the bed. He's making a point here.

Verse 35: "Two women shall be grinding together; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.... [When do you grind flour? At night? *No, in the daytime!* So we've got night-time and daytime occurring at the same time—don't we?] ...Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (vs 35-36). They're surely not out plowing at midnight—are they?

Just do this: Draw a circle and then draw a line all the way through the circle. On one side put 'n' for *night*; on the other side put 'd' for *day*. This represents the earth as God is looking at it. When it comes to that day—on the day that those are taken to a place of safety—what's going to happen? It's going to daytime on part of the earth and night-time on the other part of the earth. It's going to happen at the same time. So, this is what it's telling us. And ***the angels are going to take us***. It says 'they shall be taken!' That's how it's going to be. When you're on the way, you can ask the angel, 'Sir, where are we going?' And he'll say, 'You'll find out when you land.'

This is where then they get part of the 'rapture' doctrine. It's not! You're not taken up to heaven. What is the next logic question? Verse 37: "And they answered, saying to Him, 'Where, Lord?' And He said to them... ['Petra, you dummy!'] **NO!** ...'Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together.'" How's that for a clear-cut answer? However, know this: One of the greatest nesting areas for eagles and vultures is the area around Petra, but you can't bank on it. What you have to do is *trust God*. That's for those who are going to go to a place of safety.

Now, the other part of God's will is, those who don't go to a place of safety, war is made against them. And it's God's will that you're martyred. And you think, 'Oh my, now what am I going to do?' Let's come back to Matthew 10 and then we'll lead into the two witness, because here's where they begin to dovetail. Remember, when you read what Jesus said, He starts out many times with what is currently taking place, He'll go forward into a prophecy and then He'll come right back to the present time. That's what He does here:

Matthew 10:16: "Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues" (vs 16-17). That started immediately. Remember, it was Saul—who was later called Paul—who was arresting and rooting up and taking to prison and had the orders of the high priest and so forth. Paul himself was beaten in the synagogue—wasn't he? *Thirty-nine stripes, five times! Beaten with rods three times!* So he had a very scarred up back; that's why he had Lucas the physician probably massaged his back quite often because he needed it.

"...for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles.... [Remember Stephen, he was one of the first ones brought up—wasn't he? *Yes, he was!* Where was he brought to? *The high Sanhedrin in Jerusalem!* And God gave a powerful witness with Stephen—right? *Yes!* It's going to happen again.] ...Now when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you" (vs 17-20).

So God will give you the strength and power to witness at that time. Therefore, it's very imperative that you fill your mind with the Word of God, that you know it, because you're not going to be able to say, 'Oh, sir, will you turn to you Bible' or 'give me a Bible.' No! You're going to have to know the Word of God and let the Spirit of God to give you the power that God needs you to have to give a witness to them. And you can look and see just what Stephen said, 'You stiff-necked! You always resist the Holy Spirit'; or as Jesus said, 'You generation of vipers!'; or if you give a witness down in Washington, D.C., 'You ruler of Sodom and Gomorrah!' All these religious leaders in their pomposity, and their great councils with all of their robes and their pious righteousness standing there. They'll be there! They'll be cardinals and bishops and you'll have to look them right in the eye and say, 'You are the agent of Satan the devil. You have done this work. You have caused this upon the whole world, and God is going to come and punish you and destroy you, and your life is at an end! You may take my life. You may cut off my head, ***but God is going to judge you!***' And there will be brethren who will be given that strength! It's going to be something!

Now, if you escape, look what's going to happen here, v 21: "Then brother will deliver up

brother to death; and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death. And you shall be hated by all... [it says in another place, 'of all nations'] ...for My name's sake... [we haven't quite reached that point, yet—have we? It's going to have to be pretty noxious to them—isn't it? So that means that whatever it's going to be, we have time left—but we better use it wisely!] ...but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, escape into another; for truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to the cities of Israel until the Son of man has come" (vs 17-23). It shows it's going to be an ongoing thing.

When you see that DVD *Israel of the Alps*, then you'll understand what it's like to go through martyrdom. They gave witnesses. And the Catholics were right there with their courts, their councils, their judgment. The Catholics gave them a way out. They said, 'If you embrace the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and its doctrines, you shall not be put to death; only, be put in prison the rest of your life.' There was in Inquisition in the past, there will be one in the future.

Now, what's going to happen at the end-time? Let's tie this in with the two witnesses. For the sake of understanding in the book of Zechariah, we're going to go to the book of Exodus, because before we can understand about the two witnesses, we need to understand about the candlestick.

(go to the next track)

How many have seen the book by Moshe Levine, *The Tabernacle* [in the Wilderness]? You'll find that's really quite a powerful thing that he did in working up the whole replica of it. Everything that is gold is done in gold; everything that is linen is done in linen; and so forth—and all the colors and everything there. And he has the candlestick.

Exodus 25:31: "And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand shall be made of beaten work; its shaft, and its branches, its cups, its knobs, and its blossoms, shall be from it. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it..." (vs 31-32). There were three branches on each side. You've seen a picture of the candelabra. They have six places where there would be fire on each side—three on each side—and then one in the middle. What it was: At the base of it was a bowl containing the olive oil. Then the wicks came up from the olive oil into the seven candlesticks. The priest would go in and right as sunset had ended—'ba erev'; at 'ben ha arbayim' he was to light the candles. They're not wax candles as we think of, but just knobs with flowers on them and it was very decorative, and then the wick would come up into each one of these and

that's what they would light. It gives a description of it here, but it's awfully hard to understand the description. Wait until you read the section on the altar of burnt incense with the 'ribs thereof' and the 'rings thereof' and the 'crown thereof. You read that and you think hummm; but then you see the picture of it, then you really understand—it's really quite magnificent.

Verse 37: "And you shall make the seven lamps of it. And one shall light the lamps of it, so that they may give light in the space in front of it." That is over toward the Holy of Holies. This was in the Holy place. Remember, inside the tabernacle were two places:

1. in the back part was the Holy of Holies where the ark was;
2. in the front part you have the golden candlestick, the show bread, the altar of incense.

The priest went into the front part called the Holy Place every day; went into the Holy of Holies once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Now, let's go to Revelation, the first chapter, and let's understand something concerning these candlesticks. They should rightly be called 'lampstands.' We have assumed in the past, because there are seven lampstands, that it must be the same as the candelabra that was in the temple. But it's not! Notice this, Revelation 1:13: "And in *the midst* of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man..." This implies that these lampstands were set in a circle. How can you be in the middle of a candelabra with three on each side and one in the middle? You can't, so this has to be that they're set in a circle and Christ is in *the midst* of it.

Revelation 2:1: "To the angel of the Ephesian church, write: These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who walks in *the midst* of the seven golden lampstands." That is different. We're going to see a little later when we come Rev. 11 that we made an assumption concerning the two candlesticks or two lampstands. We're going to see that those two lampstands have nothing whatsoever to do with the Churches. When you just do concordance study and you get a word you think that all things equal the same, but they don't!

Let's come back to Zechariah 3 & 4, the reason being is because this tells us precisely who the two witnesses are. We will see when we come to the book of Revelation that there is a temple that is going to be built. When the temple is built, no for sure it's a short time. Brethren, we need to understand when God begins to deal with the people. Now, He's cut off the Jews in Israel. When He

begins dealing with the Jews again it's going to be a miraculous thing; and God is going to deal with them exactly as He did Saul. While at this time they are the enemies, God is going to convert them and it's going to be awesome, indeed!

Zechariah 3:1: "And He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD... [Some people have said, 'This has got to be Garner Ted Armstrong because of all of his sins.'

[Transcriber's note: since this sermon GTA is deceased.] No, he's not a high priest—spare me! See, you go along and you try and read yourself into the Scriptures, or read your organization into the Scriptures, and you make gross, gross errors! The Scriptures tell us exactly who it is. A high priest has got to be of the line of Levi of the house of Aaron—correct? Can't be any other!] ...and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said to Satan, 'May the LORD rebuke you, Satan! May even the LORD Who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! *Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?*'" (vs 1-2).

So, here was one who was destined to go to the Lake of Fire just as sure as could be, and God converts him. Imagine: One day he's standing there in the temple like Zechariah offering whatever offering his going to offer and all of a sudden an angel of the Lord comes and converts him. He comes out of the inside of that temple and says, 'Jesus Christ is Lord! And He is coming!' That is going to shock the world! But that's how quick the change is going to take place. There will be others who will believe him.

Verse 3: "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And He answered and spoke to those who stood before him, saying, 'Take the filthy garments from off him.'.... [Miraculous conversion—right? *Yes!*] ... And to him He said, 'Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with ceremonial robes.' And I said, 'Let them set a clean mitre on his head.' And they set a clean mitre on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. And the angel of the LORD charged Joshua, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts... [Notice, he has a message of repentance—right?]: ..."If you will walk in My ways... [rather than yours] ...and if you will keep My charge... [rather than yours] ...then you shall also judge My house..." (vs 3-7). Not only that, he is going to judge the world, as we will see, as one of the two witnesses. Not judge the world for salvation, but witness and judge the world of its condition.

"...and shall also keep My courts, and I will give you places to walk among these who stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows who sit before you.... [So others of the

priesthood are also going to be converted—right? *No question about it!*] ...for they *are* men wondered at... [and they will! I tell you what, you picture this in Jerusalem, and you picture all of the orthodox believers out there in the court, and the priest comes out and declares Christ as the Savior, and those other priests who are converted with him, say, 'Yea, verily, yea!' They're going to be wondered at and amazed. They're going to say, 'How did this happen?'] ...for behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch.... [that's leading up to the return of Christ] ...For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua: On one stone *are* seven eyes.... [This ties in with Rev. 4 & 5, as we saw—right?] ...Behold, I will engrave its engraving *upon it*," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day" (vs 7-9).

God is going to do a miraculous thing, brethren. In zeal they have gone wrong. In zeal they have followed the wrong thing. In zeal they have been deceived by Satan the devil. God is going to do a wonderful and an awesome thing! It's going to completely backfire, as far as the world and Satan is concerned, on them.

Zechariah 12:6: "In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire among the sheaves. And they shall devour all the people all around, on the right hand and on the left hand. And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her place, even in Jerusalem.... [Boy! That's going to be an astonishing thing—isn't it? *Yes!*] ...The LORD also shall **save the tents of Judah first**... [What did Paul say? Paul said that if 'casting off of them be the salvation of the Gentiles, what do you think their gathering in will be but the salvation of the world.' So when that happens, there is going to be the like that has never happened on the earth from the beginning of time that the Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost. God is not going to give Himself anything but a **powerful witness!** That's why they are called *the two witnesses*. This is going to be astonishing! He's going to save them first.] ...so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the people of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.... [So He's going to save them.] ...In that day the LORD shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem...." (vs 6-8).

That day ties in with this, and then it jumps forward to the Millennium: Zechariah 3:10: "In that day," says the LORD of hosts, 'you shall call, each man to his neighbor, to sit under the vine and under the fig tree.'" No more bombs! No more Palestinians! No more Jews killing Palestinians! No more Palestinians killing Jews! There will be a temporary peace at first, but this is the lasting one

into the Millennium. After all that the Jews have gone through and suffered, brethren, they are going to be so happy. They are going to rejoice! They are going to be so zealous for Jesus Christ that it's going to make us look like Laodiceans of the flunk-out class forever more.

Zechariah 4:1: "And the angel that talked with me came again and awakened me, as a man that is awakened out of his sleep. And he said to me, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see, and behold, **a lampstand**... [Pay close attention to this one, because this one is not like the one in Exo. 25, nor is it like the seven lampstands in Rev. 1—pay close attention to it.] ...all of it gold, and a bowl on its top... [instead of the bottom of it] ...and its seven lamps upon it, and seven pipes to the seven lamps on its top" (vs 1-2). Now we have a different kind of lampstand—don't we? We have one that is set and on top is the oil and then coming out there are seven pipes coming out to the seven lights. The oil being a type of the Holy Spirit, it is coming down in power from God. That's what that symbolizes! So when God unleashes the Holy Spirit in power, this ties in with what Peter said, 'In that day God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh' and so forth. It's going to come! Now, these seven lamps may very well be likened to the seven churches. I don't know, but it's possible. Let's assume for the sake of talking, they probably are.

"And two olive trees beside it, one on the right side of the bowl, and the other on the left side of it.'... [So, right up under it. You've got the bowl of oil on top, you've got the seven pipes coming down; directly below it you have the two olive trees. Where does olive oil come from? *Trees! Trees are a type of life then—right?*] ...And I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, 'What *are* these, my lord?' Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, 'Do you know what these *are*?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, 'This is the Word of the LORD to Zerubbabel... [Who was Zerubbabel? We've got the high priest Joshua—correct? Zerubbabel was the governor of Judea. So you've got the high priest and the governor.] ...saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD of hosts'" (vs 3-6). So, in other words, they're going to come to understand

- it's not going to be by political will, as they're trying now
- it's not going to be by peace agreement, as they're trying now
- it's not going to be by force of armament, as they're trying now
- ***It's going to be by the Spirit of God!***

"Who *are* you, O great mountain? Before

Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain; and he shall bring forth the head stone with shoutings, 'Grace! Grace unto it!'"... [Who's the Headstone? *Christ!* So this is the bringing of Christ—correct?—and the grace of God to the world, as we will see. When we get back to Rev. 11, you're going to see that these two chapters here are very powerful chapters and tell us an awful lot!] ... And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house (vs 7-9). Whichever governor is in power at the time, the Prime Minister of what we call Israel today, who lays the foundation of that temple—when they build that last temple—he is going to be one of the two witnesses. And the high priest at the temple is going to be the other of the two witnesses. We let God define who they are. Wasn't it very presumptuous of us to appoint the two witnesses; or people come along and say, 'I'm the two witnesses.' I mean, God is going to do what He's going to do. Unless they're in Jerusalem, unless they belong to the tribe of Judah or the tribe of Levi, they don't have ghost of chance of even qualifying in the flesh to begin with. It's going to be something!

"...His hands shall also finish *it*.' And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. 'For who has despised the day of small things?...' (vs 9-10). It's going to be a small, itty-bitty, little temple. It's not going to be like Rabbi Solomon, who's been on Pat Robertson's program, where they show this great huge temple and they've wiped away the Mosque of Omar. Never happen! They're not even going to touch the Mosque of Omar. If they did, every Arab bomb in the world would land on Israel within 24-hours. So something else is going to have to work out, and we'll see that. So it's going to be a small, itty-bitty, little temple! And the temple itself really is not very big. And it's not going to be as some people have said, because they want to have the prophecies hurry up and fill their schedule. All they have to do is just build a tent and start offering offerings, and there you have it. NO! It says here he laid the foundation, he's going to finish it; there will be a temple built and completed.

If you know anything that's going on over in Jerusalem, there's the Temple Institute. They've got many of the implements: the pans, the censor, incense, altar of incense made, the two lots for choosing the goat for the Day of Atonement, vestments made for the priests. They have them all ready to go, but it's not time. Remember a few years ago, they had a big furor, they found the red calf, hooray, they found the red calf—it's going to be around the corner. Now, it's three years old, guess what they found? *A white hair. Disqualified!* So

when it's time, it'll be time. Everyone wants to rush God. It's going to happen in *His* time.

“...For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of the LORD which run to and fro through the whole earth” (v 10). What does this tell us? I think that this tells us that *the two witnesses are going to have special communication given to them so they will know where to call the plagues of fire when it's time to do it.* And whatever the ‘seven eyes of God’ are, that go to and fro on the earth, they are going to get the information and then it's going to be given to the two witnesses. When we come to Rev. 11, they are going to be doing some awesome things, indeed!

“And I answered and said to him, ‘What *are* these two olive trees on the right side of the lampstand and on its left side?’ And I answered again and said to him, ‘What *are* the two olive branches beside the two golden pipes, emptying the golden *oil* out of themselves?’” (vs 11-12). What this is, is this: These two olive trees are producing olive oil going right up into the reservoir to come down to the seven lampstands. In other words, God is really going to pour out the power of His Holy Spirit at that time, and it's going to be something!

He gives the answer: “And he answered me and said, ‘Do you not know what these *are*?’ And I said, ‘No, my lord.’ And he said, ‘These *are* the two anointed ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth’” (vs 13-14). Now which two have we talked about? *The high priest of the temple and the governor of Judea!* Those are the only two. There are some subordinates with them that believe, but these are the two outstanding ones—correct? *Yes!*

Now, what's going to happen at that time? Those who have gone to a place of safety will have gone. Whatever timeframe it fits in, I don't know exactly. We can't be very specific with that. But now those who are left behind are going to have to give a witness—aren't they? At that time, God is going to pour out His Spirit in great, great things that are being done. The time of the end is going to be the most horrendous time of the whole history of the world till that time. So therefore, it's got to have the greatest witness—right? It's got to have the most powerful witness—correct? God is going to do it!

Let's go to Revelation 11:1: “Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, ‘Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. But leave out the court that *is* within the temple *area*, and do not measure it...’” (vs 1-2). That's where the Mosque of Omar is today, so they're going to build the temple right alongside it. I've seen pictures of the alternate plan that that's

what they're going to do. I can tell you this: There isn't going to be any temporary peace agreement between the Palestinians and Jews until the Jews guarantee they will leave the Mosque of Omar and the Palestinians and Arabs agree that they will not stop them from building the temple at a location right alongside of it.

Another thing that is very interesting, too, which I haven't been able to substantiate—it has been reported that the area where the Mosque of Omar is may very well be the Fort Antonio, so that's why the stones are still there, not taken down from that point going on over where the western wailing wall is—where the Jews go pray today—then going out that way is where the Mosques of Omar is. So they could build from this side of the wailing wall and build the temple right there because that is probably where the temple was built previously, right there.

“...But leave out the court that *is* within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the Holy City *for* forty-two months” (v 2). Let's understand something: In treading under the city 42-months, who is the power that does that? *The beast power*—correct? When does the *beast* come to the end of his life? *On the day of Trumpets when he's cast into the Lake of Fire.* So his 42-months begins at a different time. If you look at the Revelation Chart that I've put out, that's how I came to understand it because I asked the question: Why do we assume that the 42 months and the 1260 days are identical timeframes. If they were why not say, ‘both 1260 days’ or ‘both 42 months.’

Since the first resurrection is on Pentecost, then you come to the last Pentecost and you go back 1260 days and that's when the two witnesses begin, which is well before the time of the ‘abomination of desolation.’ So you've got that space of time that God is going to do a tremendous witness. There is going to be a mass conversion of Jews, because of the two witnesses. So what I did, in making up this chart, everyone wants to know when it begins. But the Bible tells us more clearly when things will end. We know the end of the two witnesses and then they're resurrected on Pentecost. So they have to be killed three-and-a-half days before Pentecost—correct? Then you count back 1260 days. We know the end of *the beast* is going to be at Trumpets so you count back 42 months from there.

Yes, it is two months before Adar 1, so that would put it somewhere in January—1260 days until the resurrection plus three-and-a-half-days, the two witnesses.

Then the ‘abomination of desolation’—if it

is according to the other things—will take place beginning on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. He will stop the sacrifices when? What do they on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan? *Select the lambs!* What do you think the Jews are going to do when that takes place? *They are going to have an assassination party against the beast for doing it—right?* And that's later when he gets the 'deadly wound.' I think they're going to come nigh on to killing him if they don't, and then the pope's going to resurrect him, and he goes to the temple and says, 'I'm God.'

“...and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.... [no 'pomp and ceremony and circumstances.'] (this tells us clearly; ties it in with Zech. 3 & 4): ...**These are the two olive trees, and the two lampstands...**” (vs 3-4). The olive trees having the power of God's Spirit, and they are going to be two lights to the world. And when that happens, for that brief period of time, the Church is going to be infused with the Spirit of God like never before. There will be healings! There will be conversions! There will be witnesses going on! There's going to be mass conversions in Israel! What do you do when someone come to repentance and God leads them to repentance? What has to happen? *Have to be baptized!* Who's going to baptize them? The two witness have their work to do, *this is where Elijah comes in.* Who was *the Elijah* during the time of Jesus? *John the Baptist!* He didn't know that he was Elijah—did he? So sometimes you do things and you don't even know who you are, but God does! That's what's important—right? Where did John the Baptist come from? Who was his father? *One of the priests—correct?* Of the tribe of Levi—correct? So therefore, I believe that the coming Elijah is going to be of one of the priests, who is also converted, and he does the work of the baptizing and teaching the children of Israel, or the Jews, at that time when the two witnesses come on the scene.

Let's go to Malachi, the fourth chapter, please, and let's straighten out something concerning Elijah. Please understand, it was never Herbert Armstrong. Please understand also this: The Jews will never listen to anybody but a Jew—period!—unless God calls them and converts them first. I'm talking about the Jews in Israel. They won't listen to anybody but another Jew or a Levite.

Malachi 4:5: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with utter destruction” (vs 5-6). All of v 6 applied to John the Baptist. Only the first part of v 6 is going to apply to the Elijah at the end, because God is

coming to 'smite the earth with a curse'—the seven last plagues. So what is he going to do? *He's going to show them the way of the Lord* and they're going to be getting rid of Judaism like crazy! They're going to turn to God with all their heart, mind, soul and being. They're going to be baptized and they're going to go out and I think they're going to witness, they're going to preach, they're going to teach. It's going to be a time of the preaching of the Word of God such as never has been.

Now you know why they're going to haul us up to councils, because the Church of God, the Jews who are converted, the two witnesses will become such a stench in the nose of the establishment and the world powers and the world religion that they must get rid of us. Notice what's going to happen:

Revelation 11:5: “And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths...” Now that's going to be awesome thing. Can't you see Peter Arnett there: 'We're standing right here at the ashes of those two who tried to assault these men in sackcloth and ashes. They say they're the two witnesses and we have it on tape—roll it. Look at the fire coming out of their mouth and just killed them. Now look at the ashes, there they are. This is awesome!' It's going to turn the world upside down. If you think they did it during the days of Paul, God is going to give a witness that is going to be so great, it's going to be so powerful, it's going to involve the two witnesses, all the Jews are going to be converted at that time and the Churches of God all around the world with the Holy Spirit of God poured out upon them. And the seven eyes are going to go to and fro and then the information is going to come to the two witnesses and then what happens?

“...and devour their enemies. For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have authority to shut heaven... [So the message comes: need a plague over here. So the two witnesses say, 'no rain'] ...so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will” (vs 5-6). This is going to be an awesome thing, brethren.

I think when we go around a 'play religion' and appoint the two witnesses, we're just being foolish before God. Let God appoint them. I don't want to be one of the two witnesses. Let them do what they're going to do. Besides I'm not a Levite, and I'm not a priest and I'm not the governor of Judea. And I don't want to be Elijah, and I don't want to be Elisha. I just want to do what God wants me to do, and may God bless me and give me understanding so I can teach all the brethren that want to learn. If I can do that and they are edified

and they are ready for this time, then praise God. That's what it's going to have to be. It's going to be an awesome time! This world is literally going to be set upside down before the judgment of Babylon the Great. This is going to happen and it's going to be an awesome thing, indeed, and Satan is going to come in fury! And they're going to be after these two witnesses.

Verse 7: “And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss will make war against them... [They're going to marshal everything that they can.] ...and will overcome them, and will kill them. And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days... [There's still going to be television going on at that time—right? Somehow they're going to see it.] ...for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs.... [They want to rejoice of the death of the two witnesses.] ...And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them... [I think the pope will declare a holiday, make it a holy day, send presents to everybody, rejoice the enemy has been killed] ...and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth” (vs 7-10).

“Then after the three and a half days... [God's got another thing in mind. Can you imagine Christiane Amanpour giving the report: ‘While I'm standing here and watching these dead bodies for over three days, and look, it's moving! Look! They're rolling over! Why, they're sitting up! They're standing up! Look at that! They're alive!'] (And all of a sudden a voice comes out of heaven, after they stand on their feet): ...*the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.... [and the cameraman dropped his camera] ...And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, ‘Come up here!’ And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them *rise*. And in that hour there was a great earthquake... [Just shake the living stones right out of Jerusalem!] ...and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven.... [They'll be instantaneous belief at that time!] ...The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming immediately. Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet...” (vs 11-15). They're raised up just before and they are changed in ‘a moment, in the twinkling of an eye’ on their way up. And truly the very last will be the first!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 12:12-17, 13
- 2) Isaiah 57:1-2
- 3) Psalm 116:15
- 4) Psalm 91:1-16
- 5) Matthew 10:37-39
- 6) Matthew 24:15-21
- 7) Luke 17:22-24
- 8) Matthew 24:27
- 9) Luke 17:24-37
- 10) Matthew 10:16-23
- 11) Exodus 25:31-32, 37
- 12) Revelation 1:13
- 13) Revelation 2:1
- 14) Zechariah 3:1-9
- 15) Zechariah 12:6-8
- 16) Zechariah 3:10
- 17) Zechariah 4:1-14
- 18) Revelation 11:1-4
- 19) Malachi 4:5-6
- 20) Revelation 11:5-15

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 16
- 2 Thessalonians
- Revelation 12
- Psalm 91

#### Also referenced:

- DVD: *Israel of the Alps* (put out by the Seventh Day Adventist Church)
- Book: *The Tabernacle* by Moshe Levine
- Chart on Revelation (can be found at [cbcg.org](http://cbcg.org))