

To Make Ready A People

(Day One—FOT)

Norbert Bohnert—September 26, 2026

Greetings, brethren, welcome to the Feast of Tabernacles. I hope you had a great journey out to the Feast site wherever you are, and it is so wonderful to once again be here and share the next eight days with you all for our annual Feast of Tabernacles festival.

Before I get into the main message, I would like, first of all, as we always do for all God's Holy Days, come before Him and fulfill our commitment to our Almighty God and Jesus Christ, Who have called us out of this world ***to be a part of God's master plan for us and also all of mankind!*** As we always do, turn to:

Deuteronomy 16:16: "Three times in a year shall all your males appear before the LORD your God in the place which He shall choose: in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and in the Feast of Weeks, and in the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before the LORD empty. Every man *shall give* as he is able, **according to the blessing of the LORD your God, which He has given you**" (vs 16-17).

We rehearse this every year. God gives us a clear instruction for what we must do and what we must continually do on a regular basis at the appointed days, the appointed times that has been laid out for us in the Scriptures. Brethren, this command is not a burden but a privilege, ***an opportunity to actively participate in working through giving!***

When we bring our offering during the Feast, we are doing more than fulfilling a command. ***We are making a declaration of faith!*** We are saying:

Father, I recognize that You are the Source of every blessing in my life. I trust You to provide for my needs and I joyfully return a portion of what you have entrusted to me.

Let us therefore give with a cheerful and willing heart, not out of compulsion but out of love and gratitude.

Proverbs 3:9: "Honor the LORD with your substance and with the firstfruits of all your increase; and your barns shall be filled *with* plenty, and your presses shall burst *with* new wine" (vs 9-10)

May our offerings today rise before God as a sweet aroma, ***a testimony of our faith, our hope, and our love for Almighty God!*** May he bless each one of us richly, not only in physical things ***but in the spiritual treasures that will endure forever in His Kingdom!***

Let us take now and pause and take up the offering, and then we'll come back with the main message.

(pause for the offering)

To Make Ready A People

This is the lead-up to what these days actually represent, and then how it applies to us today, and certainly our future going forward into the coming Kingdom of God.

Are you prepared for the return of Jesus Christ? Throughout the year, we have been rehearsing through the Holy Day Plan of God, *God's Plan of Salvation!* The ultimate, ***we are called out ones***, and have learned to understand that Jesus Christ is going to return, and He is going to bring the world to be ***at-one with God!***

Brethren, you and I and many others will also be part of that contribution to God's master plan for mankind, and having an important role in the teaching in the wonderful coming Kingdom of God, which we are all so desperately awaiting.

Here we are sitting together another year, observing another Feast of Tabernacles, in anticipation of the rule of the Kingdom of God over the entire earth. There are implications that we must need to think about very deeply over the next eight days, brethren. It has an impact on where we are and what we are doing in 2026, going forward from this point on.

The Church of God exists for a reason. God has a purpose in raising up His Church, and that purpose is much bigger than just our personal salvation. I am thinking of the soon coming Kingdom in terms of personal advantage, perhaps.

It is time for us, at this time now in our lives, ***to realize where we are and where we are going, and to become more serious about the calling that God has given us!*** To bring us into the Body, which we refer to as the Church.

I'd like to begin the Scriptural connections here that I want to make in response to the question I asked earlier. Vital information is given to us in:

Malachi 3:1: “Behold, I will send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you delight. Behold, He comes,” says the LORD of hosts.” Let’s just put that aside, and let’s turn to:

Matthew 11:10: “For this is *he* of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You.’ Truly I say to you, **there has not arisen among those born of women anyone greater than John the Baptist.** But the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.” (vs 10-11)

Verse 12: “For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken with a *great* struggle, and *the* zealous *ones* lay hold on it. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And **IF** you are willing to receive it, **he is Elijah who was to come.**’ **The one who has ears to hear, let him hear**” (vs 12-15).

Here it acknowledges John simply as a messenger that did prepare the way for Jesus Christ at the first coming, when Jesus Christ came as a human being, ***God in the flesh***, to this earth.

It acknowledges John, but takes us into a forward-looking situation, and not simply confining it to the historical fact. We know there is a messenger. We know the messenger is going to prepare the way before the Lord. Let’s go back to Mal. 3 and read that again.

Malachi 3:1: “Behold, I will send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you delight. **Behold, He comes,**’ says the LORD of hosts.”

Brethren, this verse in Mal. 3 is not referenced to Christ’s *first* coming. ***This is a reference to Jesus Christ’s second coming!*** We have a messenger preparing the way before Jesus Christ’s *second coming!* I do want to magnify this aspect of His return. The question is: Who is the messenger?

Malachi 4:1: “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a consuming oven; and all the proud, and every doer of wickedness, shall be stubble. And the day that comes shall burn them up,” says the LORD of hosts, ‘and will leave them

neither root nor branch.’”

The day is coming of Jesus Christ’s return. A reference here to some of the events of the ***Day of the Lord!*** This is about Jesus Christ’s return to this earth in glory, *not His first coming!* I want to magnify this again, this aspect of His return.

Verse 4: “Remember the Law of Moses My servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel, *with* the statutes and judgments.”

What is going to follow is tied into God’s giving of the Law to Israel.

Verse 5: “Behold, I *will* send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the LORD.”

This is an Elijah type! We have already seen John the Baptist, who was identified also as *Elijah type!* But now we have something more. This is not John the Baptist being spoken of here, ***because it is before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord!***

Verse 6: “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.”

This Elijah has a work to do in fulfilling a messenger role, in preparing the way before us. We noted—as we read in Mal. 3—that Jesus Christ returns to His Temple. In Luke 1, we get a remarkably close sense of this Elijah:

Luke 1:17: “And he shall go before Him in *the* spirit and power of Elijah, to turn *the* hearts of the fathers to *the* children, and *the* disobedient to *the* wisdom of *the* righteous, **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**”

[Do you] see the connection in this verse to what we just read as a prophecy in Mal. 4?

This work, this Elijah is going to come in “...*the* spirit and power of Elijah, to turn *the* hearts of the fathers to *the* children, and *the* disobedient to *the* wisdom of *the* righteous, **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**”

This messenger has a job to do to prepare the people for the return of Jesus Christ. It is for a purpose much greater than their own personal salvation. God has a purpose for all humanity. These people have an enormously powerful part to fulfill and be part of God’s purpose.

What are the ramifications of these people that are being prepared for the Lord? *The prophetic book of Haggai has another very important*

dimension that we can add from God's inspired words!

Haggai 1:2: "'Thus the LORD of hosts speaks, saying, 'The people says, 'The time has not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.''"

This is a reference to the Jews returning after 70 years to rebuild Jerusalem. It is referring to the destruction of Solomon's temple that is going to be rebuilt. **The Lord's house is to be built!** It should be a rebuilding program after a period of captivity. But Haggai's message is not confined to a historical event as the context Hag. 2 makes clear.

Haggai 2:6: "For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Once *again*—it is yet a little while—I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And **I will shake all the nations**; and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts" (vs 6-7).

He didn't shake all the nations when He came the first time. This is **His second coming!**

Verse 8: "'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than that of the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts" (vs 8-9).

This refers to the temple to which Christ will return. Solomon's temple was indeed a glorious and great temple. We have enough information in the Bible to understand that, brethren. The temple at the time of Christ's first coming was a physical restoration of that temple. It did not quite match the glory of Solomon's temple. This temple, this latter temple of which **the glory is going to be greater than the former**, is a spiritual temple. **A temple to which Jesus Christ returns and is going to be filled with the glory of God!** That is a term that I am using quite deliberately here.

Psalms 24:7: "Lift up your heads, O you gates; and be lifted up, O you everlasting doors; that the King of Glory may come in. **Who is this King of Glory?** The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle" (vs 7-8).

Verse 9: "Lift up your heads, O you gates, lift them up, O you everlasting doors, **that the King of Glory may come in.**"

That is the context that we are reading about here regarding the temple. *The glory shall come in.*

Verse 10: "Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of hosts. He is the King of Glory, Selah."

This latter temple is going to be filled with more glory than the original temple that Solomon had constructed.

Verse 9: "Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you everlasting doors..."—has implications in terms of an attitude or an outlook towards the King of Glory? Something has to be opened up. Doors have got to be opened so that this King of Glory, as it says, can come in.

In 2-Cor. 3, we can see how we might be able to begin to relate to this King of Glory.

Some of these terminologies might not immediately stir up our ability to relate to it very clearly. But we see a way that we begin to match **this spiritual temple** with what we are doing today.

2-Cor. 3:7—talks about the Law as given on *tablets of stone* **vs** the Law following the giving of the Holy Spirit.

2-Corinthians 3:7: "Now if the ministry of death, which was engraved in stones, came into being with glory, so that the children of Israel were not able to gaze upon Moses' face because of the glory of his face, which *glory* is being set aside."

Engraved on stones is referring to the Ten Commandments, written on stones that Moses had received. The Law, the Old Covenant, the Law given at Mount Sinai through Moses written on the stone **was glorious because the Law identified God and allowed people to understand the very nature of God!** It was limited because the Holy Spirit, of course, was not available.

Verse 8: "Shall not the ministry of the Spirit be far more glorious?"

Now we are getting back into the verses that we read in Mal. 4. Remember the Law of Moses. It is not just a matter of remembering the Law written on the tablets of stone, **but the inner-working of that Law within our human mind!**

Verse 9: "For if *there* was glory in the ministry of condemnation, to a much greater degree the ministry of righteousness overflows with glory."

[Do you see] this concept of glory coming through? *This is being written to the Church!* It is being written to the people that have God's Holy Spirit and who are able to *take God's Law and make it spiritual in intent!*

Verse 10: "And even *the ministry of*

condemnation, which had glory, was not glorious in this respect, because of the surpassing glory *of the ministry of life*. For if that which is being set aside *came into being* through glory, to a much greater degree that which remains *is glorious*" (vs 10-11).

Verse 6: Who also made us competent as ministers of *the* New Covenant; not of *the* letter, **but of the Spirit**; for the letter kills, **but the Spirit gives Life.**"

The letter kills and the Spirit gives Life. It is about:

- the letter of the Law
- the spirit of the Law
- a group of people who have the ability to take God's Law, which was glorious, and turn it into even more glory

The same concept that we read about in Haggai about the temple. One is physical, and it was glorious. But there is one even more glorious to come, ***and that's the spiritual temple!***

It is ***a spiritual temple*** to which Christ will return. The temple to which Christ returns ***magnifies the spiritual intent of the Law!*** ***IF*** you get to the spiritual intent of the Law, and that is shaping our minds and our thoughts, and the way we are as a person, ***THEN*** we are becoming more like God. God will receive the glory for your development.

Verse 18: "But we all, with uncovered faces beholding the glory of *the* Lord as in a mirror, are being transformed *into* the same image from glory to glory, even as by *the* Spirit of *the* Lord."

Because we have had our minds opened, and the veil has been removed, we can see God. We can see Jesus Christ. We understand exactly why Christ came the first time, and what the implications are for us who are called into the Church.

The latter house is going to be far more glorious than the first. We are being told where that glory is going to come from. Yes, there will be Christ's presence, but the building of this temple is ***the building of glory in the sense of each building block exhibits the glory of God, because we are transformed into the same image!*** The image of Jesus Christ from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. The Church is what is being referenced here clearly by the Apostle Paul.

Ephesians 2:19: "So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God."

Hopefully, this is driven home to us during this period of time. These eight days, we have left our homes. We have come away from the routine of the daily life that we are involved in throughout the year.

It makes us realize that ***we are different in a right spiritual way, not better than, but different!*** We are no longer strangers and foreigners wandering around in this world without direction, but we are citizens with the saints, ***and members of the household of God!*** God has called us deliberately and put us into the household of God ***for a purpose that He is working out!***

Verse 21: "In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit" (vs 21-22).

That temple will be much more glorious than the glory of Solomon's temple. The Church is to operate ***in the spirit and power of Elijah***, which means ***it is to remember the Law of Moses*** and to magnify it into the fullest spiritual intent by the Spirit of God. The Church is a dwelling place for God in the Spirit. God dwells in each one of us through His Spirit, and we are being brought together into a building, ***and it is all in preparation for the return of Jesus Christ!***

All this information comes together to build up a very solid picture of Christ's return and what He comes to.

Ephesians 4:16: "From Whom all the Body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that* which every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, ***is making the increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in love.***"

I'm underlining when every joint supplies. We just spoke of, and we read here, that we are

- to grow
- to be transformed from glory to glory

using the Spirit of God! This is ***a personal responsibility!***

That is a personal situation. It is not a collective one where we can stand back and say, 'I don't have any responsibility.' ***Oh, yes, we do! We have the responsibility to supply something to the Body.***

We have the responsibility to supply something, and we are focusing on that today, ***on God's glory that He is building through the***

Church, the spiritual temple! He is preparing for Jesus Christ to return to at the end time! **Fulfilling the entire Plan of God, and the firstfruits being part of that event!**

All of these things are especially important things for us to consider in the light of the Church as it stands today, 2026. Clearly, we are not at that point that the Church should be to reference it as we are reading in these Scriptures. Something is going to have to change. Something is going to have to develop. All I'm underlining today **is yours and my personal responsibility in that regard!**

Colossians 1:18: "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; **Who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence.**"

The word 'preeminence' simply means *first!* Christ has the *absolute preeminence!* He is the Firstborn, and we are going to be firstborn along with Him in terms of the rest of mankind. Firstfruits maybe is a better way to state it for us. But what is hinging on this building program that we are looking at **is the fact that Christ is the Head of the Church.** He must be our Head:

- no man standing in between
- no man getting in the way

Any man that has responsibility *must be focusing because **Jesus Christ has the preeminence,** and He must have that preeminence in our lives personally.*

Psalms 89:27: "And I will make him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth."

Jesus Christ returns as King of kings, and He will rule over all the kings of the earth! There is an interesting connection between the first and the second messenger types in terms of establishing Jesus Christ as being **first!**

John 3:23—If we follow down through here, we are going to see clearly it is talking about John the Baptist, the first messenger that we have already read about. John had not yet been thrown into the prison. But we want to come to:

John 3:30: "It is ordained that He [Jesus] increase, and that I [John the Baptist] decrease." *John is referring to himself and his position with Jesus Christ!*

The focus goes directly onto Jesus Christ, Who has the *preeminence* and Who is the First.

Verse 31: He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all; and what He has seen and heard, this is

what He testifies; but no one receives His testimony" (vs 31-32).

*It is still that way! It's only **those who are being called by God who are receiving it!***

Verse 33: "The one who has received His testimony has set his seal **that God is true.**"

- we certainly know that God is true
- we certainly know the Truth of Scriptures

Verse 34: "For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him.*"

He's the Head of the Church, **and that is why:**

- we must listen
- we must be connected

Christ's role as Head of the Church is vital. We are going to express the glory of God in our lives, as we have already read we should.

Verse 35: "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand."

If we look at the role of the second messenger, would not the same statements be true? *He must increase, and we must decrease, **so that the spotlight goes fully on God through Christ and the Father!*** Not on us that make up the Body.

Colossians 3:1: "Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.

- **IE** then you were raised with Christ
- **IE** you have been called
 - ✓ to the state of repentance
 - ✓ to the point of baptism
 - ✓ you had laid hands upon you
 - ✓ you had received God's Holy Spirit

THEN *you have risen with Christ!* You have come out of the baptismal pool, **risen to be with Jesus Christ!**

The day and age in which we live makes this difficult, because there are so many distractions out there in this world today. There are so many distractions within the Church today, away from the fact that Jesus Christ is the **powerful, living Head of the Church,** and must have the **preeminence, He must be the First!**

Verse 2: "Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.

Yet, there are so many things on this earth that occupy our time, just in daily living. What a blessing it is to be able to come away from that for eight days. Focus our minds clearly and deliberately on the calling that God has given us, and the purpose of the Church, now and on into the future.

Verse 3: “For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God.”

This is the decrease that you and I must appreciate, brethren, and experience. In our decrease, **if you die**, “...your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

Verse 4: “When Christ, *Who* is our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory.”

We decrease, **but ultimately we are raised in great glory for the glory of God and the purpose!** It is not just about us. It is not just about the Church. **Our story covers all of mankind!** That is the awesome Plan of God.

Look at this! Your life is hidden with Christ in God. Decrease, not increase. Not filled with self and self-motivation and the things relating to self, **but making sure that Christ has a preeminence, being first in all things!** Those in the spirit and power of Elijah **will increase Christ by decreasing the self!**

Colossians 1:19: “For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell.”

The Body is the fullness of Him who fills over all. Remember, the temple is to be filled with glory. The glory is going to be greater than Solomon’s temple.

- Is Christ doing that in His Church today?
- Are we allowing that to happen?
- Is that what we are contributing to the Body, as a whole, our responsibility?

That’s the fullness that we are talking about, that Christ is going to allow the Church to experience. It is a part of the Godhead that we are allowed to share in.

Colossians 2:9: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Christ is the Head of the Church and we are the Body, *so we share in the fullness of the Godhead!*

Verse 10: “And you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power.”

This is our calling, brethren! This is why God has called us:

- not for our personal salvation
- not so that we can feel good about ourselves
- not so we can feel we’re better than anybody else

But to magnify the King of Glory to the rest of mankind!

It’s a totally distinct perspective that we have from the world in which we live around every day. All the stuff that’s going on around us that occupies our time and mind sometimes. Sometimes it makes us feel terribly negative, very down as we see this stuff happening around us, and seemingly no way to stop it.

For eight days now, we have the ability to get our minds up onto a different level, a different appreciation. Can we begin to understand the personal implications of what we are reading here in terms of our lives?

What it means to us, I don’t have the ability to express it well, but this is so far above the level of normal, natural human life. ***It is being offered to us!*** We are going to rehearse some of these things during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Are we getting the sense of the great glory of the temple to which Christ will return, the glory that fills the temple is the glory of the Godhead. We are offered to be partakers of that fullness now through the Spirit of God, ***and magnification of the Law of God into the deepest spiritual fulfillment!***

Verse 12^[transcriber’s correction]: “Having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees *of our sins*, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross. After stripping the principalities and the powers, He made a public spectacle of them, *and* has triumphed over them in it” (vs 12-15).

Verse 16: “Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a Festival, or new moon, or *the Sabbaths*, which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming, but the Body of Christ. Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize *by doing his will* in self-abasement and the worship of *demonic* angels, intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind” (vs 16-18).

That is the massive work that God is doing. There is a massive work against it as well, on behalf of Satan, to discredit the glory of God in the eyes of mankind.

Verse 19: “And not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God.”

We can be absolutely certain that Satan will do everything he can to stop this taking place.

- How are we to become full?
- How are we to decrease?

Colossians 3:12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering.”

We have the Holy Spirit working within us. This is the glory that we have been transformed to; from glory to glory. This is the transformation that must take place within our minds to develop the mind of Jesus Christ. The part of us that is not bringing this forward, that carnal part of us, is to decrease.

These attributes of God and Jesus Christ are to increase in our lives. ***There is to be love! There is to be love!*** We see anything but love in so many relationships between people, between groups ***within the Church! It is not right; it should not be!***

We are called upon to do something about it, so let us think about that in the next seven to eight days. Is there anybody in your group, or wherever you are, that has a situation of not liking someone? You can't get along with them, or you don't want to have anything to do with them. Let us think about that, brethren! That this time represents what is yet to come, ***and that kind of attitude and actions cannot be in the picture!***

Verse 3:14: “And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one Body, and be thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (vs 14-16).

This is how we become full and exhibit God's Plan, *the fullness of God!* What I would like to suggest as a hallmark for this Feast, is that you seriously consider this, and you think about the fact that this Feast site of the Church of God, the Body of Christ.

Yes, corporately, we are part of CBCG, but in the broader picture, ***we are part of the Church of God*** that God is waiting for; ***for the Body of Christ!*** Let us take some time this Feast in:

- assessing our relationships with one another
- why we are here
- what our personal plan is
- what is our purpose

We have been called unto one Body with Jesus Christ as the Head! The living powerful King of this Body of this Church. This may be a specific Feast site of CBCG, but let us rather consider it as being part of the overall Church of God ***with one spirit, all baptized into one Body*** as found in the Scriptures. As one Body, obeying God to come together where He placed His name to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, *wherever we are meeting!*

Jesus Christ returns to a single temple. There is no inference in any statements that you see regarding the temple that is multiple temples. It is a single temple.

Ephesians 5:24^[transcriber's correction]: “For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything.”

This is a powerful understanding, brethren, when you look at it, to what the Church is and how we are to be governed. One of the reasons why we have been trying to teach firmly that ***the government within the Church of God is to emulate the family style of governance!***

It starts with the husbands loving their wives, a relationship where there is love, a relationship where the man is in authority over his wife, ***but is to express that authority in a particular way and that being in love.*** Simple! He is to bring his wife and his family into a closer, stronger relationship ***with Christ and through Christ to the Father!*** That is the love that is to be within the Body of the Church, the Church of God.

Are we there yet, brethren? *I would say not!*

“...Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of the water by *the* Word; that He might present it to Himself as the glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame” (vs 25-27).

We are clearly being built up to a spiritual temple. We have individual components, or we all

add to that entire building. That is how we do it, through love, through genuine outgoing concern. A glorious Church, *Holy means*:

- in glory
- splendid
- noble

and equates exactly what Haggai said about the latter temple! It's going to be more glorious than the former. We need to clearly note that:

- it is not about us.
- it is not about our personal salvation
- it is not really just about the Church as it stands today

It goes much beyond that! It has nothing to do, really, with our personal salvation. Obviously, that is wrapped up to be part of God's Eternal Family, but that is not the real purpose that God has called us for now. Christ returns in power and glory to the full visitation of mankind. ***The entire world will be aware of Jesus Christ at His return,*** and they are going to be aware of something else.

He returns to His temple! He is going to stand on Mount Zion. Every eye shall behold Him, ***and it is like lightning coming across the sky!***

- He does not come quietly
- He doesn't come secretly in the dark of night

He comes to a world, and He is establishing that He is

- the King of Glory
- His way of life that He has already shown by a working model through the Church

Is there any significance for us in the fact that He returns to Mount Zion? *Of course, you already know there is!* Let us rehearse it out of Heb. 12, where it begins like Paul talked about the *letter of the Law* and the *spirit of the Law*. The letter was glorious, ***but the spiritual intent of the law is more glorious!***

Then we come to this mountain that God brought Israel to, Mount Sinai, and He gave them the Law, which was glorious, and His presence in Mount Sinai made that mountain glorious, too! Such that they could not even touch the mountain, or they would die. They or the beast could not touch it. That is the Israelite side of it, physical Mount Sinai. We come to the spiritual side of it within the Church.

Hebrews 12:22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable

company of angels."

This is where you stand now. This is the company that you have brought into, Mount Zion and that is where God's Temple is going to be located.

Verse 23: "*To the joyous festival gathering; and to the Church of the Firstborn, registered in the Book of Life in heaven; and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just who have been perfected.*"

This is where we stand. General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn. Jesus Christ was the Firstborn, ***and He has a preeminence.*** But there are others being added to this process, and that is the Church of the Firstborn. *Firstfruits being created!*

Verse 24: "And to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant; and to sprinkling of the blood of ratification, proclaiming superior things than that of Abel."

That mountain that could be touched was glorious by God's presence, but it equates with the letter of the Law. It was glorious, but there is something bigger, something better. ***Mount Zion is spiritual!*** It wraps up the Law, the temple, and the church, ***all pointing to Christ and the Father,*** all of it!

Verse 24: "And to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant; and to sprinkling of the blood..." *access to God's Spirit, which in turn allows a glorious temple to be built!*

It will become a spiritual reference point for the entire world, and it becomes a working model. ***As Israel of old was working model, so the Church is a working model!***

It is modeled on Israel, but it takes it forward into the future, and the world is going to see what the Plan of Salvation devised by God is all about. Because here is a group of people that God has put through the workshop, who has built into a glorious temple, and look, here is the example. ***This is what the power of God's Holy Spirit can produce in a human life!*** Having established the spiritual aspect of Zion, God says:

Isaiah 62:1: "For Zion's sake I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem's sake ***I will not rest, until its righteousness goes out as brightness,*** and her salvation as ***a burning torch.***"

Do not rest, applying to the spiritual aspects of Heb. 12. *Torch* is brightness. It takes Christ, ***the Mediator of the New Covenant,*** to produce that righteousness. The King of Glory is

building a glorious temple, and when He returns to that temple it will out-glory anything that has gone on before it.

Verse 2: “And the Gentiles will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.”

This is why the Church exists! Not for us to ‘pat ourselves on the back,’ to work out our salvation and have focus on that. The Gentiles will see this working model. A crown of glory. That is what God is making now. That is why the Church exists. This is the Church of God, that all mankind can come into this relationship with God. Having seen this model, having seen it being worked out, and the end result, **they will desire it!**

Then once we get through, we are talking about Christ’s return. The world being made at one with God, and then the Kingdom of God begins to roll over the earth, and they see they will have a desire to want to do what they have done in establishing a relationship with the Father.

Verse 11: “Behold, the LORD has sent a message to the end of the earth, ‘Tell the daughter of Zion, “Behold, your salvation comes. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.”’ And they will call them, The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought Out, a city not forsaken” (vs 11-12).

An identifying mark of these people that come into a relationship with God. We see from Rev. 14 is that **they keep the Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ!** They take the Commandments and they turn the Commandments into something **deeply spiritual from which the temple can be built!**

Psa. 9 declares that God dwells in Zion.

Psalm 2:6: “Yea, I have set My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain....”

Clearly, the temple and Zion become synonymous with God’s dwelling after Christ’s return. It becomes of worldwide significance. This is not a temple that is going to be hidden, or just a few elite people see and understand. The entire world is going to see this temple **and relate it to Christ and to the Father!**

Zechariah 1:16: “Therefore, thus says the LORD, ‘I have returned to Jerusalem with mercies. **My house shall be built** in it,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘And a line shall be stretched over Jerusalem.’”

The spiritual temple will be built. We cannot prevent it. Satan will not be able to prevent it, although he will try desperately to prevent any of us as individuals being part of that program. He will go after us, there’s no question about that.

But we have got to have this vision in our mind of what God is doing, so we rise above the garbage that Satan is creating around us, here to distract and waylay the people of God. The material for that house is being prepared right now.

Zechariah 2:7: “Ho! O Zion, escape, you who live with the daughter of Babylon.”

That is where we are now in 2026, heading into 2027. We live in Babylon, and most of the influences around us every day are Babylonish in origin, **anti-God!**

- this is the time we must wake up
- this is the time to be alert

I would strongly recommend and suggest that we must carefully assess ourselves, not someone else, but ourselves, to see if we are awake and not asleep. Prophecies about the Church being asleep, not being awake, *the five unwise virgins*, and so on, is fully enforced with us today. There are individuals who are sound asleep, who are not relating to this kind of fantastic information that we are being given through the Word.

- it is time to get serious
- it is time to wake up
- it is a time to rally

Verse 8: “For thus says the LORD of hosts; ‘After His glory, He sent me unto the nations who plundered you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye, for behold, I will shake My hand over them, and they shall be a prize for their servants. And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo, I come, **and I will dwell in your midst,’ says the LORD**” (vs 8-10).

A temple is being constructed. A temple building program is taking place now **for those to submit their minds and their hearts to God!**

“...**I will dwell in your midst,**’ says the LORD” (v 10). *This is why the temple exists. Christ is going to come and fill it with His glory!*

Verse 11: “And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be My people; and I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. And the LORD shall possess Judah, His portion in the Holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be

silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He has risen out of His Holy dwelling place” (vs 11-13).

It is going to happen! It is going to happen! Christ is going to return to a temple. He is going to dwell in that temple, ***and it will become a focal point for all the world to begin to come into a relationship with God!***

This Feast we are looking ahead as a motivation:

- to do what we need to do
- to be prepared

for the return of Jesus Christ and the rule of Jesus Christ over this earth with all of us at His side!

Isaiah 33:20: “Look upon Zion, the city of our Holy gatherings; your eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet home, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of its stakes shall ever be removed, nor shall any of its cords be broken.”

Brethren, in closing, let us take this Feast and deeply meditate upon it:

- why we are here
- what is expected of us

to become part of this temple that God is creating!

- let us look at the focal point of Christ’s Kingdom of God:

God’s rule over the earth, with us being a part of that great blessing!

- let us prepare the way before Christ
- let us go before Him in the spirit and the power of Elijah:

turning the hearts of our physical and spiritual families to God!

- let us use this Feast to make ready a people prepared for the Lord

- Are you ready?
- Am I ready?
- Are we ready and prepared for the return of Jesus Christ and His magnificent plan for us and for all mankind?

Enjoy the next seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles ***and let us give all praise and glory at all times to our Almighty God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 16:16-17

- 2) Proverbs 3:9-10
- 3) Malachi 3:1
- 4) Matthew 11:10-15
- 5) Malachi 3:1, 4-6
- 6) Malachi 4:1, 4-6
- 7) Luke 1:17
- 8) Haggai 1:2
- 9) Haggai 2:6-9
- 10) Psalm 24:7-10, 9
- 11) 2-Corinthians 3:7-11, 6, 18
- 12) Ephesians 2:19, 21-22
- 13) Ephesians 4:16
- 14) Colossians 1:18
- 15) Psalms 89:27
- 16) John 3:30-35
- 17) Colossians 3:1-4
- 18) Colossians 1:19
- 19) Colossians 2:9-10, 12-19
- 20) Colossians 3:12, 14-16
- 21) Ephesians 5:24-27
- 22) Hebrews 12:22-24
- 23) Isaiah 62:1-2, 11-12
- 24) Psalms 2:6
- 25) Zechariah 1:16
- 26) Zechariah 2:7-13
- 27) Isaiah 33:20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 14
- Psalm 9

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