

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD  
WORLD HEADQUARTERS  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG  
President and Pastor

August 19, 1976

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with CHRIST,

Many times I have said, "Keep your eye on JERUSALEM AND THE MIDDLE EAST." From now on that will be the focal point of WORLD HAPPENINGS.

This is the END-TIME! Never in the history of mankind have world conditions been so VIOLENT -- never so much TROUBLE -- never before so many NATIONS and their GOVERNMENTS toppling and being overthrown so often -- now one a month on the average. NEVER such VIOLENCE by man. Never such VIOLENCE in NATURE -- such massive and violent EARTHQUAKES -- tidal waves -- FLOODS.

Following the recent tremendous earthquakes in China, this morning's newspaper headline, front page, "PHILIPPINES QUAKE TOLL CLIMBS TO 5,300: 30,000 HOMELESS."

Yet from now on the very CENTER of world happenings will zero in on JERUSALEM and the Middle East.

I have just spent another four days and five nights in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem! -- the CITY GOD CHOSE over all places on earth. The city from which for a span of time God has HIDDEN HIS FACE (Jer. 33:5) -- yet the city God SHALL YET CHOOSE AS HIS CITY (Zech. 1:17). The city soon to BECOME THE CAPITAL OF THE WHOLE WORLD -- WHEN, finally, we shall have WORLD PEACE!

Jerusalem is a city IMPORTANT TO GOD -- it ought to be important to us! So I want to tell you about my most recent visit there. It is a city I have visited many, many times.

My first visit to Jerusalem was a mere short stop at Jerusalem airport (not now in regular use) in 1956 -- 20 years ago -- en route from Cairo to Baghdad. Just setting foot on the ground of its airport for the first time was a thrill. It gave me sort of a sense of awe. With my wife and elder son, Dick, we stopped again at Jerusalem on the return -- first visiting the "old city" then in Arab hands -- then walking, luggage in hand, through the "Mandelbaum Gate" (no man's land) into the newer Israeli Jerusalem.

Back in 1969 and 1970, when our joint participation with the Hebrew University in the huge archaeological excavation at the east wall of the temple mount was getting well under way, General Yigal Yadin, organizer of the Israeli army and Chief of Staff from 1948, referred to my arrivals there as "monthly visits." In many ways I have had a deep personal interest in Jerusalem since December 1, 1968. On that date, in a formal ceremony at the palace of the late President Shazar, Ambassador College entered into this joint participation formally with Hebrew University and the Israel Archeological Society.

"Do you want a formal, legal contract?" I was asked. "My word is good," I replied. "And I believe yours is, too, without any legal entanglements." That was good enough for them, and our friendship and mutual participation has grown ever since.

Our very important friends in Israel -- from the President and Prime Minister of the country on down in the government -- and from President Harmon and Vice President on down in the University, have been not only most friendly and cordial -- but more -- affectionate!

And so I thought that in this letter, you might like to hear a report on this latest Jerusalem visit.

We arrived Thursday -- late afternoon. Friday morning, Mayor Teddy Kollek met us at the Jerusalem Hilton Hotel at ten. He took us on a 2 1/2 hour tour of portions of the "old city" where the Mayor has been supervising rejuvenation and rebuilding.

After all the years of being "trodden down by the Gentiles" the old walled city has become dirty, decayed -- anything but beautiful. But Mayor Kollek is RESTORING much of its original beauty.

Israel is a very poor country -- economically. The government does not have billions upon billions of dollars for such purposes. Much of this restoration is being done by volunteer labor. It made me think of the early days in building Ambassador College.

In those days, as we purchased gradually more and more property, we used old, dilapidated frame houses for many purposes -- we used volunteer student labor -- we improvised as was necessary to keep building and growing. That is the way the Israelis are doing in building up their country.

First the Mayor took us through the citadel -- or the "Tower of David." This is an agglomeration of old buildings, inside the northwest corner of the walled city. Some of these old brick and stone buildings date back to the second century B.C. The northern tower of the citadel has been known as the Tower of David since Byzantine times -- but neither the citadel nor Tower of David have any connection with the ancient King David.

There are many walls and many rooms, and it is being restored into beautiful and modern condition.

From the citadel we were taken over to the old Jewish quarter of the old walled city. Here are a cluster of low, domed houses. Very old. Very unimpressive from the outside. But entering, we were struck by the BEAUTY, the MAJESTY of the rooms -- the high ceilings which had looked like very low buildings from the dingy old outside. But Mayor Kollek had done a remarkable job of restoring this area. There were about four synagogues -- each in a different room in the same building -- now very modern, very bright and beautiful on the interiors.

I was really impressed with all the plans Mayor Kollek told us he has in mind for renewing and re-beautifying the city of Jerusalem.

I could especially appreciate it, personally, since I have -- the past thirty years -- gone through the job of building AMBASSADOR COLLEGE in Pasadena (not to speak of similar jobs at the other two campuses). It was built out of what -- at the lower down-hill level -- had been the nearest thing to a slum section Pasadena had. We were then buying up the property -- a 40-foot lot at a time -- usually with two old shacks -- one behind the other -- on each narrow 40-foot lot. With the fine help I have had, we have built this area of Pasadena into a campus that twice in the past two years has won the national award of being the most BEAUTIFUL, the best landscaped and BEST MAINTAINED campus in the United States!

God turned THIS EARTH over to old father Adam, in the Garden of Eden, to "dress it and keep it" -- not let it run down to weeds. But MAN has befouled this earth God gave him in every way -- polluted the waters, befouled the air; ruined the soil.

Mayor Kollek then took the group of us to a special restaurant for lunch. There, several other friends joined us. After that, we drove to the site of the new Liberty Bell Park.

I was scheduled to be there on July 2nd for the official ground-breaking ceremony for building the new park in the heart of the new city. I had undertaken to build the children's play-ground area of the new city park. The last day of June, I had boarded the G-II jet aircraft, bound for Jerusalem. We were forced down at Bangor, Maine after crossing the United States from southwest to northeast, as I think I wrote you before. We had a cracked window in the cockpit. We were forced to return to Pasadena -- flying at low altitude. So the Mayor conducted that ceremony alone.

When we reached the park area, I saw a large sign posted, in both Hebrew and English, saying:

"Under Construction Here:

**A CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND  
A GIFT OF  
THE AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FOUNDATION**

**H. W. ARMSTRONG, PRESIDENT"**

Sabbath afternoon we had a bible study in my hotel suite at the Jerusalem Hilton. About thirty came. We now have a very small Sabbath group meeting in Jerusalem, but no local pastor as yet, though one man serves as leader.

I gave them an hour-and-a-half bible study on Jerusalem: Past, Present, and Future. I think you'll find a brief outline of that study helpful, interesting and enlightening -- if you'll take the time to take your own Bible to carefully read all the biblical passages, IN THEIR CONTEXT. I shall give you here the biblical passages.

Jerusalem originally was named Jebus -- see Joshua 18:28 and Judges 19:10. The Jebusites were Canaanites (black -- descended from Ham through Canaan), (Gen. 10:16). God promised to drive out the Jebusites, if the Israelites would be His instruments in doing so (Ex. 33:1-3 and 34:11-15) -- after Joshua led Israel into the promised land -- see Joshua 16:10 and Judges 1:8,21. Notice God's warnings IF the Israelites left them there, so the TWO RACES dwelt in the same land.

David took Jerusalem (II Sam. 5:1-13). Building David's house -- from which he ruled (we are now digging down to find that location in the archaeological project). Solomon's enlarging it into his palace, and the Jerusalem wall (I Kings 3:1, etc.). God CHOSE JERUSALEM as His city (I Kings 11:13).

Building of the second temple, 70 years after Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, destroyed it (Ezra 1,2). Although later God turned His face from Jerusalem, due to Israel's rebellions, He will YET choose it (again) (Zech. 1:17). Now, down to our time: Pope's palace to be built there??? (Dan. 11:40 to end). At Christ's coming (Zech. 14) Christ will RULE WORLD from David's throne (Isa. 9:6-7 and Luke 1:26-33). The NEW JERUSALEM coming down from heaven (Rev. 21).

Saturday night, in the ballroom of the Hilton, we had a dinner with about 45 present. At the center table were Ministers of the Cabinet -- Moshe Kol, and Gideon Hausner and wife. General Yigal Yadin, organizer of the Israeli Army in 1948, former Chief of Staff, noted archaeologist, scholar and author; Professor Mazar, Mr. and Mrs. Rader and myself. Many other top priority people in government and education were present. It was a renewing of friendships that now have lasted and grown deeper for eight years.

Sunday afternoon we went over to Professor Mazar's home, and many other top Israelis dropped in while we were there. Professor Mazar is Director of our big dig and a former President of Hebrew University.

Sunday evening, we had dinner with the Panovs -- ballet artists who appeared last fall in a masterful ballet production at the Ambassador Auditorium. They are among the very top Russian ballet artists. They have defected from Russia and are now building a home in Jerusalem. It was delightful to meet them again, with some of their company. Also with us were our VERY dear friends Ambassador and Mrs. Michael Ravid. He was formerly Consul General at Los Angeles.

But Monday was our BIG DAY -- our meeting with Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin. Usually it is contrary to protocol in many countries to see both the President and the Prime Minister on the same visit. This time I did not see President Katzir, but I had already had two or three fine personal meetings with him, and he sent to me his personal regards and best wishes on this visit.

My appointment with the Prime Minister was at noon Monday. Ambassador Ravid (also formerly Ambassador to Guinea) went along with us. As you know, I am nearly always accompanied on such visits with Mr. Stanley R. Rader, our chief legal counsel, and now also Vice President for Financial Affairs, and Executive Vice President of the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation (AICF). This time Mrs. Rader also accompanied us.

Mr. Rabin is not noted for a big wide vote-getting political smile like Jimmy Carter (usually he is a very solemn man) and being the chief executive handling all the troubles of a modern Israel -- he has reason to be serious. But he met me and our party with a warm and cordial smile.

"Mr. Prime Minister," I said, "I'm sorry it's been such a long time before I've had an opportunity to meet you, but it is indeed a pleasure and an honor."

"Well, Mr. Armstrong," he smiled in return, "it's just happened that I've been in your country or Europe or some other place every time you've been here since I became Prime Minister. But of course I know a great deal about you, and we all do deeply appreciate your interest in Israel."

The entire meeting, lasting perhaps 45 minutes, was warm and friendly. We spoke about the two jet planes that have more or

less "commuted" between Jerusalem and Cairo, and he was candid in telling us of Secretary Kissinger's peace accomplishments. He was very appreciative of my efforts toward WORLD PEACE, and especially in bringing nations like Japan and Israel closer together -- also Kenya and Israel; and my friendships with Arab chiefs-of-state; and efforts toward a better approach to harmony and understanding between them and Israel. Actually there has been a slight lessening of tensions between some of my Arab friends -- heads of governments -- and Israel. And through the AICF we are supporting the ICCY (International Cultural Center for Youth) directed by Minister of Tourism Moshe Kol -- bringing about a new and friendly relationship between Israeli and Arab youth, especially in Jerusalem.

Somehow, returning to Jerusalem seems like returning home -- and it may be my home for a thousand years, beginning VERY SOON, NOW!

Brethren and co-workers, in every way God's WORK is taking on more stature -- growing in POWER and SCOPE -- WORLDWIDE. TIME IS SHORT -- and growing constantly shorter. Have not some of you thought, since January, 1972 what Christ WARNED US AGAINST, when He said, "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; ... The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder ..." (Matt. 24:48,50-51). And this FOLLOWS and concludes Jesus' speech about our present END-TIME, when He said, "This Gospel of the KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations. and then shall the END come"

Forty-two years ago God laid on me the GREAT COMMISSION to get His warning Message of the imminency of the KINGDOM OF GOD to all the world. Now doors are opening into many nations where this Message was barred UNTIL the year 1972.

Read and study Revelation 10. The TIMING of this prophecy is NOW. Notice, after the messenger and others thought they had finished delivering the Message, comes this stern COMMAND: "THOU MUST PROPHECY AGAIN BEFORE MANY PEOPLES, AND NATIONS, AND TONGUES, AND KINGS." Those doors were CLOSED to this Message until 1970-1972. THEY ARE NOW OPENING WIDE.

Brethren, Satan KNOWS now that he has but a SHORT TIME. But do YOU know it? Satan KNOWS, BECAUSE these doors are opening to me -- BECAUSE the warning Message of the KINGDOM OF GOD is now going to the many nations and kings! -- where it was BARRED from going prior to 1970-1972. Satan will try to cast a spell over you so you will disbelieve -- fail to heed.

Before 1972 many of you made great sacrifices for the precious WORK OF THE LIVING GOD. I TOLD YOU, time and again, I was NOT setting dates -- there was no ASSURANCE our Work would be over by January, 1972. Yet some DID set the date, and when the Work was NOT finished in January, 1972, some said, "Well, MY LORD HAS DELAYED HIS COMING. I've been sacrificing to support the Work. NOW I'm going to SPEND THAT MONEY ON MY OWN SELF ENJOYMENT. Christ may not come for another thousand years!"

Brethren, this is a call from the LIVING CHRIST to WAKE UP. God has held back the four winds of the Trumpet plagues that were to usher in HIS COMING AT THE 7th TRUMPET (see Rev. 7). HE HELD THEM BACK, so that He might OPEN THE DOORS TO KINGS, PRESIDENTS, PRIME MINISTERS, even EMPERORS -- so that HIS MESSAGE could go into their nations to THEIR PEOPLES.

THAT IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN DOING EVER SINCE! I have had, beginning at age 80 -- just as God used Moses to lead the Israelite slaves out of Egypt when he was 80 -- to PROPHECY AGAIN BEFORE MANY PEOPLES, NATIONS, TONGUES AND KINGS. It is the most STRENUOUS JOB OF MY ENTIRE LIFE.

Yet SOME of the brethren and co-workers have let Christ down! They have QUIT really SACRIFICING to support this greatest Work in 1900 years on earth!

Brethren, the Work is forging ahead in spite of that. There is now reason to believe that the college may double in size in the next year or two. GREAT THINGS are soon to be announced. That is because GOD HAS NOT LET ME DOWN!!! Dear children in the Lord, I need you to PRAY TWICE AS HARD! I need you to PUT YOUR WHOLE HEART in your prayers. I don't DARE let down -- DO YOU? I NEED your encouragement. Garner Ted needs your heart-felt PRAYERS and encouragement. THE WORK is going ahead -- but NOT FAST ENOUGH! It needs your financial SACRIFICE -- it MUST go ahead faster, so that Christ may soon say to us -- YOU and me -- "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the GLORY of My KINGDOM!"

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong