

“THE NAIL IN A SURE PLACE”

(Br. Wilfred McNee, given at East Los Angeles convention, May 30, 1976)

(Isa. 22:20-25) *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it.”*

“And it shall come to pass in that day...” This expression “in that day” usually refers to a specific day, such as a day of rejoicing, or a day of trouble, or the Millennial Day. The day referred to would be indicated by the context. This day in our story is one in which a person called Eliakim is to do a certain work and it is of special importance because, as it were, everything will depend upon him. Strangely enough, the work comes to an end, but only when it has accomplished its purpose. Two characters are brought to our attention in the narrative, Hilkiah and his son Eliakim. The meaning of Hilkiah is “Jah is protection.” Jehovah is our protection! (Psalm 31:20, 3; 32:7)—“Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence... thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion...” “Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name’s sake lead me, and guide me.” “Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.”

Eliakim means “God is setting up” and would refer primarily to Jesus but would also include the Church, which is his body, because Eliakim and his work are that of the Mediator of God’s Kingdom. The fact that he is referred to as a “servant” bring to our mind that Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant and that he is a “righteous servant.”

Isa. 53:10, 11, 12: “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief, when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin; he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see [the fruit of] the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great [Jehovah] and he shall divide the spoil with the strong [Church] because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.” Just as Moses was a servant of the Lord (Deut. 34:5) and as he was the Mediator of the Law Covenant, so, the

Christ is a servant of the Lord and will be the servant or Mediator of the New Covenant.

As Eliakim was “called,” so Jesus was “called” as in Heb. 5:10: “Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.” And His body has been called also in the “one hope of their calling,” (Eph. 4:4) to be of the Body of Christ: Col. 1:24-27—”Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh for his body’s sake which is the church. Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

(Isa. 22:21) Eliakim was clothed with a robe. Jesus’ garments were divided into four parts, one part to each of the four soldiers who parted his garments after his crucifixion. But his coat was woven and without seam, so they cast lots for it. (John 19:23, 24) Perhaps this coat could represent our Lord’s personal perfection and the perfection of his sacrifice. His death provided the Ransom, a life for a life, but to restore mankind something else was necessary. Heb. 7:22-27: “By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s; for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the Law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated [perfected] for evermore.”

The coat might also picture the robe of Christ’s righteousness which covers his body members. (R2474, par. 1) Isa. 61:10: “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” Psalm 32:1, 2—“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”

Zech. 3:1, 3-10: “And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord... Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, let them set a fair

mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; if thou wilt walk in my ways and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at [margin: sign men] for behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.”

Another interesting little story about a “coat” is that of the coat of many colors that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. (Gen. 37:3) This is supposed to have been a long sleeved coat, or tunic and had special meaning for it denoted that the wearer was the heir of his father’s house and possessor of the birthright which was usually passed on to the eldest son. It also included the thought of priesthood. (Companion Bible) We can readily see how this would explain the reaction of Joseph’s brothers. The story goes on to show how that Joseph actually became the benefactor and blesser of his brethren, which pictured the work of the Kingdom. As Joseph’s coat represented the birthright, we see that Jesus gained the birthright, he became the heir and seed of promise. “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” “To thy seed, which is Christ, and if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:16, 29)

Another picture that is brought to our attention is that of the garments of “glory and beauty” worn by Aaron, the High Priest, after the Day of Atonement sacrifices were completed. This can best be expressed by quoting from Tabernacle Shadows, pages 29, 30 and 33: “‘And these are the garments, a breastplate and an ephod, and an upper robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle.’—(Exodus 28:4) The white linen coat represented the High Priest’s purity, while its embroidery showed the outgrowth of the pure character in works of grace. The mitre, a strip of fine white linen (typical of righteousness) worn around the forehead, to which the golden plate or crown was fastened with a blue lacer, showed that the crown was *righteously* his. Upon the golden plate was inscribed ‘Holiness to the Lord,’ thus proclaiming: This High Priest is entirely devoted to the accomplishment of Jehovah’s purposes. The golden crown also proclaimed his royalty: Christ is to be a ‘priest upon his throne’—‘a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.’ The ‘linen girdle’ indicated a righteous servant, linen—righteousness, girdle—servitude. The ‘Upper Robe,’ of *blue*, represented his faithfulness. The fringe of it was made of golden bells and pomegranates. The pomegranate, being a choice fruit, showed that the faithful performance of the Redeemer’s work of sacrifice had borne rich fruit—the redemption of the forfeited life of the human race. The golden bells signified that when our High Priest appears in glory

and beauty, the fruit of sacrificial work will be manifest to all—*proclaimed* to all the world, as in the type the bells proclaimed it to all Israel. This is indicated by the close proximity: the bells drawing attention to the fruit. The ‘Ephod’ was made of cloth of purple, blue, scarlet, white, and gold threads skillfully and beautifully interwoven. It was of two parts, one hanging in front and the other over the back. These two parts were fastened together by two gold clasps which rested on the shoulders. The Ephod typified the *two great covenants*—the Abrahamic Covenant represented by the front part and the New Covenant represented by the back, both of which are thus shown to be *dependent* on our High Priest. Both of these covenants are laid on him: if he fails to support them, fails to carry out their terms and conditions, they fall to the ground—fail. But, thank God, these covenants are united and firmly clasped on him by the gold clasps (divine power), as well as bound to him by the ‘curious girdle’—a cord made of the same material as the Ephod. This ‘Curious Girdle’ seems to say, This is a *servant* and as this is the girdle of the Ephod it tells us that this one is ‘The Messenger [servant] of the Covenant whom ye delight in.’ (Mal. 3:1) One part of the Ephod which represents the New Covenant was guaranteed at Calvary: for was not our Lord’s death ‘the blood of the New Covenant’ in which his members share? (Matt. 26:28; 1 Cor. 10:16).”

Isa. 22:21: “I will commit thy government into his hand.” A government is composed of the ruling bodies. As now, there is a “heaven and earth” so, during the Kingdom, there will be a “new heavens and a new earth.” (2 Peter 3:13) Of this government we are reminded in the words of the prophet so oft repeated (Isa. 6:7): “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever; the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” This government will be a righteous government and a merciful government, ruling in the earth to bless the inhabitants.

Eliakim was to be a “father.” The word means “ancestor, or source.” In this instance we see that it will be as a “source,” or Life-giver in the sense used here to fit the picture. 1 Cor. 15:45, 47: “And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening [life giving] spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.”

Isa. 22:22: “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder...” The House of David was to be established as the ruling house of Israel. It will not be necessary to explain how this could not apply to the literal house or reign of David, but rather to a symbolic “House of David,” which has already been referred to as the “Throne of David” in Isa. 9:6, 7; 2 Sam. 7:12-16: “And when thy days be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee which shall proceed out of thy

bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.” Luke 1:32, 33: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Rev. 3:7: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, these things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth and shutteth, and no man openeth.” So, then, the “throne” and “house” of David really symbolizes the establishing of the Kingdom and the “key” signifies the power to open up the blessings of this kingdom to all. John 5:21, 22: “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” No thought would be complete without pointing out that this key will be used to open up the great prison house of death, when the work of resurrection commences. Rev. 1:18: “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” Peter used two keys in opening up the Gospel Age call to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. A key is the means of opening up a door of opportunity. So, Eliakim, Jesus, has the responsibility of opening up a way to life for this sin-sick and dying human race. He gained the right to use this key by the giving of his life. By keeping the law he gained the reward of the law—life rights.

(R5073, col. 1, par. 8) “The Lord Jehovah has made a plan by which he can, through his son, deal with mankind. That plan is that the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. (John 5:22)”

(R4905, col. 2, par. 3) “He will give to mankind his human life-rights, the merit that was his as the reward for his obedience as the man Christ Jesus, namely, the privilege or right to live as a human being. That right was secured to him by obedience to the Law. (Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:22).” (Par. 10) “As the great High Priest, our Lord undertakes, at the close of the Gospel Age, to seal with the blood of the atonement, a new covenant, between God and the seed of Abraham, natural Israel, and he, together with the Church which is his body, undertakes to stand as the Mediator of that Covenant.” (R4906, col. 2, top) “During the Millennial Age the New Covenant will represent the life-rights laid down by our Lord.” (See also R5621-22 regarding Jesus’ Life-rights.)

A key implies the ability to open and to lock doors. These doors of opportunity are dispensational and when the Lord shuts the door of the Gospel Age, there will never be any further opportunity to be of the Church Class. Similarly, at this time will be opened the door of opportunity to life on the earthly plane.

Isa. 22:23: “And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house.” We are all familiar with the use of a nail or a pin in the wall where we used to hang up our clothes—a jacket, a sweater, a hat—sometimes quite a weight, so it had to be well anchored. So, Eliakim, our Lord, was to be “fastened as a nail in a sure place.” “Fasten”—to strike, fix. Jesus was reviled, falsely accused, smitten by the soldiers, mocked, crowned with thorns and finally crucified. While not necessary for giving a Ransom, Jesus’ crucifixion was the way that he gave his life—this was the way that he took the stroke of Justice, because this was necessary to redeem Adam, a life for a life, “a ransom for all.” Thus was this nail fixed, or embedded in a sure place, in God’s Justice. Psalm 89:14: “Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne, mercy and truth shall go before thy face.” Isa. 53:3, 4: “He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Matt. 26:28, 29: “For this is my blood which ratifies [Weymouth] the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom.”

“Sure”—to be faithful. Heb. 10:23: “He is faithful that promised.” Lam. 3:23: “Great is thy faithfulness.” Isa. 11:5: “And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” Psa. 89:2: “Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.” “Place”—a place of standing. Matt. 16:16-18: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that you are Peter [*petros*—a piece of rock], and upon this rock [*petra*—mass of rock] I will build my church and the gates of hell [*hades*] shall not prevail against it.”

“A glorious throne.” This has already been referred to in 2 Sam. 7; Gen. 41:40: “Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled, only in the throne will I be greater than thou.” Isa. 66:1: “Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool, where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?” Isa. 60:13: “... and I will make the place of my feet glorious.” Heb. 12:2: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Matt. 19:28: “And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration [renovation, new birth day—Diag.], when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Rev. 20:11: “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.” Heb. 7:1, 17: “For this Melchisedec, king of Salem,

Priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him... For he testifieth Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Isa. 22:24: “And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.” Heb. 9:28: “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Num. 21:8, 9: “And the Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass [copper] and put it upon a pole and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” John 3:14, 15: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Rom. 6:10, 11: “For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Rom. 8:19-21: “For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty [*eleutherea*—moral freedom] of the children of God.” Heb. 8:6: “But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.”

Exodus 18:14-18, 21-23, 25, 26. These verses outline Moses’ burden looking after Israel and how he shared it with able men of Israel. Isa. 53:12: “Therefore will I divide him [Jesus] a portion with the great [Jehovah], and he shall divide the spoil with the strong [the Church], because he hath poured out his soul unto death and he was numbered with the transgressors and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Neh. 8:8: “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading [the law—V. 7].” Isa. 35:8: “And an highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those, the wayfaring men, though fools [unacquainted] shall not err therein.” (Also read Isa. 11:1-9) This story portrays the great Mediator of the Covenant, whose burden, or responsibility will be to restore the entire human race, “whosoever will,” to perfection.

Isa. 22:25: “In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure

place be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off, for the Lord hath spoken it.” 1 Cor. 15:24-28: “Then comes the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For, he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” When the work of the Mediator is thus successfully finished, He will step aside and this phase of God’s Plan will be completed. Then will commence the ages of eternity.