

# Church of God, The Eternal

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Greetings To All The Faithful Brothers And Sisters In Christ:

We trust that God's people were encouraged and strengthened, that all of you fully enjoyed the Feast of Tabernacles which has just ended.

As we continue to think upon God's purpose and sanctify His Sabbaths and Holy Days, we have a more wonderful and thrilling vision of His Plan. God's final promise to us is a Millennium of peace and joy on this earth, and the excitement of seeing again all those whom we loved, but who are temporarily at rest -- a time when all families will be brought together and united. Here are awesome promises and a vision which God gives to us before we enter another six-month period when we look forward to the Spring Holy Days again.

Socially and economically speaking, conditions are only getting worse here as everywhere else in this world. We all know that we are living in the most critical times which have ever existed in the history of humankind, and that they will get worse till Jesus Christ returns.

Such circumstances can make us fearful sometimes, and yet fear is a feeling which we, as the children of God, should have for God alone. Brethren, the statements which God made to Joshua are applicable to us also, for God does not change. He said, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life . . ." (Josh. 1:5). Spiritually, no man and no circumstance on this earth can destroy our conviction -- the faith which was given to us; nobody will be able to take away the crown of immortality which is reserved for those who master their emotions and show respectful fear to God alone. For God adds, ". . . as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Both Joshua and Moses were servants of God. We, too, as the called of God, are not our own anymore. As the Apostle Paul was divinely inspired to say, "Ye are bought with a [great] price." We are therefore slaves or servants of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. Thus this statement of God Almighty, ". . . as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee . . ." is applicable to us also. Then let us consider God's instruction to those who live in this world where most terrifying events are happening all around us. Remember, God does not intend us to live outside of this world at all. Jesus Christ said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep

them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:15-17). Then, what does God Almighty require of us? "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest" (Josh. 1:7).

One of the most colossal undertakings of life is to learn how to master our emotions and thoughts, and how to resist the natural feeling of fear which we still experience under certain circumstances. Speaking of the last days, God tells us in His Word that the day will come when the inhabitants of the earth will be seized with fear and terror. But, how are we, who live in this world but are not of the world, going to come to have no fear of the world -- but rather a respectful fear for God? God gives us further necessary instructions, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (vs. 8). If one wants to be honest with oneself and judiciously examine one's own life in the light of God's Truth, one would have reasons -- and I speak for myself -- to be discouraged. I know that there are significant undertakings which must be accomplished in my own life, and it is not by the sweat of my brow that I shall succeed. But God, who is the wise Master Builder of our spiritual lives, makes the plan known to us: If you observe to do according to all that is written therein, then you will have good success. These are reassuring words, although they are not necessarily acceptable to our natural mind. Far too often we trust our own mental capabilities instead of putting our confidence in the instructions which God gives us. Such a mistake is enough to fill our hearts with a fear which God does not honor, only because we have not yet learned to have implicit faith and trust in God and in His Son Jesus Christ. In these end times God says to us, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (vs. 9).

Thus the anxieties, fears, doubts, and worries which we may experience result from a wrong orientation of mind. For God's statements are absolute; it is even a command which God gives us, "Be strong and of a good courage." And we shall be able to respond favorably to this command by observing to do according to all the Law, without turning from it to the right hand or to the left, regardless of the circumstances in which we may find ourselves. Then God promises that we shall succeed, because He is with us in everything we do. Brethren, let us not allow ourselves to be destroyed by certain physical disadvantages which we may experience temporarily. The purpose of our endeavors is to develop the

kind of maturity which will allow us to work in God's Kingdom under the auspices of Jesus Christ.

God will eradicate the feelings of worry and fear which we still have when certain circumstances face us. Certainly we need to be willing to let God act in our lives. We must see His purpose; we must recognize our own defects, weaknesses, and imperfections; personally admit them; and then act faithfully according to the faith which was given to us. To sacrifice God's Truth because of our physical worries or problems is not the solution. If -- because we fear for the future -- we neglect the Book of the Law on which we are commanded by God to meditate constantly and if we fail to do the things which God requires of us, then, brethren, our future will be threatened and we will yet "tremble." Let us be aware of the fact that we must recognize what we are. "Be of a good courage," God tells us. Then let us have the courage to examine deeply the way we live! Are our thoughts, words, reactions, and decisions in harmony with the Book of the Law on which we must meditate day and night? Or do we still presume to wrest some of God's statements in order to justify our behavior, actions, and decisions?

Brethren, it is high time we were honest with ourselves and began to put our confidence in God. Then He will fulfill His promises, for the God whom we serve is a God of Truth, a God who means what He says -- an affectionate, compassionate, and merciful Father. The problem is that we must manifest faith; when we do not have enough faith, we think that God did not really mean what He said, or that God acts differently today. Brethren, we cannot alter God's Truth to suit the things which plague, distress, and trouble us. God gave us very specific promises, and we know that He keeps them. But our attitude must be one of faith, confidence, trust in God's Word; manifesting much humility, fear, love, and respect for God -- all predicated on obedience. Let us always remember: The just will live by faith, not by sight. The day will come when only God's Truth will be feared and respected on this earth. Then all men will know the significance of the statement, ". . . for your promises are backed by all the honor of your name. When I pray, you answer me, and encourage me by giving me the strength I need" (Ps. 138:2-3, Living Bible).

I wish all of you brethren a good Winter. Along with all the brethren here, I greet you. Distances are nothing compared with the Truth which unites us. Our prayers, love, and affection for you do not abate.

With sincerity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jean Aviolat', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

Jean Aviolat