

Church of God, The Eternal

P. O. Box 775
Eugene, Oregon 97440

Switzerland
Case Postale 2 701
CH 1002 Lausanne

Canada
P. O. Box 76946, Station "S"
Vancouver, B.C. V5R 5T3

April 1985

Most Brotherly Greetings To All:

After a harsh Winter we are very happy to enter Springtime. We can be thankful to God -- who is the Master of seasons -- that after severe weather comes mild weather again. But regardless of the conditions one must bloom and ripen where God sowed him.

What will this new year bring to us? The only thing we can be sure of is that God is so superior to all that He allows to happen on this earth, and even in heaven, that we can trust Him. As we read in Isaiah 40:27-28, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." We never have the right to protest what God does or allows. God is the One who rules and decides. If we can have such confidence and assurance in Him, we shall not fear being overthrown when certain things happen. As years go by, our faith must become stronger and firmer. Faith in God and in His Truth has nothing to do with the human conditions of the social ladder. Whether we are rich or poor, highly educated or not, faith is a firm assurance of what we are looking for; as God's Word says, it is the evidence of things not seen, it is the firm assurance that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.

Every time we put our confidence in our capabilities, talents, health, material goods, all that characterizes the acceptable conditions of human beings, it seems that we naturally come to doubt God. And yet, at the beginning of our calling we were all strong and zealous, our hearts and minds were so full of assurance that we did not know how to express to God the depth of our confidence and gratitude. But as the years go by and tests become harder, weariness, indifference, dissatisfaction, and even doubt become manifest in the lives of many of God's people. They become invalids regarding confidence and faith.

But, brethren, how could we disregard trials which are intended to destroy the evil nature in us which resists God. God warns us, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy

heart all the days of thy life . . ." (Deut. 4:9). To maintain confidence and faith, we must not fail to remember the interventions which God has accomplished in our lives, all the miracles which He has performed in our lives, and all the prayers which He has answered. The Apostle Paul gives us the exhortation, "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used" (Heb. 10:32-33). He adds: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:35-38).

What are the promises which God gave us? David mentions some of them in Psalm 103:3-5, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction [eternal death]; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things . . ." "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities" (Ps. 103:8-10).

The renewal of the seasons in conjunction with the feasts ordained by God is an absolute proof that God continues to be good to His people. Therefore we must present ourselves before our God with a humble and repentant mind and heart -- openly confessing to Him our mistakes, weaknesses, lack of faith -- recognizing what we really are. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

God called us; He made Himself known; He gave His Son to redeem us. We were taught His Way of life; we understood the need to repent of our past life; we asked to be baptized; we said, "Yes, we will obey God's Way of life, and we accept Christ as our Savior and the Master of our life."

Brethren, we made a solemn commitment. Let us be careful today not to underestimate or forget its high significance. When we observe the Passover, we shall prove to our Heavenly Father -- who knows our thoughts and searches our hearts -- that we have faith in His promises and that it is with much gratitude toward Him and His Son that we renew the covenant which we made with them. When we take the emblems, we shall show that we are going to strive to let Christ live His life in us much more freely, thus submitting ourselves to the will of God.

Under the inspiration of God, Micah wrote: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:18-19). What a blessing, brethren, to be able to be freed from the burden of our sins. But we must present ourselves before God with faith and not out of mere habit. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2).

Time goes by extremely fast. Let us be careful not to misuse the time which God gives us. Time is life; we must not kill it but live it to the full with the confidence and assurance which God expects of us.

To you all, my dear brethren and friends, my warmest and most respectful regards.

With all our affection,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Aviolat', written in dark ink. The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Jean Aviolat