

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

June 1990

Dear brothers and sisters:

Here we are in the third month of the year already, according to God's calendar. Winter has left us and the earth abundantly gives sap to the branches, causing flowers—many flowers—to burst forth. Each season is faithful to the call of the Creator God, generously giving the hope that fruits will come to maturity in the full radiance of their beauty. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:3–4). God reminds us of this every Spring by the renewal of nature and His holy days. As nature puts on a new, noble, and pure garment, so we have had the marvelous opportunity to cleanse ourselves of our mistakes, failures, and sins. We were abundantly fed spiritually, and by His Spirit we were given everything to fight and overcome our foolish passions and to rule our deceptive hearts and minds successfully. God generously blessed us through His holy days so that we, too, can present ourselves with fruits in the full radiance of their beauty when we appear before Him this Fall at the feast of ingathering.

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1:5). There are many human beings who profess to be Christians today. We live in a world filled with religions, but whether people read the Talmud, the Bible, or the Koran, many remain ungrateful, hardened, without remorse. Most of them can be equated to the spirit which influences this world, merely because man, by nature, does not like the light, and Satan takes advantage of this situation to be very active on this earth. And yet out of all of that a people was chosen—the people of God. But who are the people of God?

Many churches, many human beings, think that they are the people of God. But believing it is far from being sufficient; what counts is *knowing* whether or not we are really the people of God. Deuteronomy 7:6 enlightens us on that: ". . . the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." And why did God choose such a people? To be "an holy people unto the Lord thy God." So one belongs to the people of God not because he decided, but because he was chosen by God. That fact was confirmed by Jesus Christ, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him . . ." (John 6:44). And the Apostle Paul adds, "And having chosen us, he called us to come to him; and when we came, he declared us 'not guilty,' filled us with Christ's goodness, gave us right standing with himself, and promised us his glory" (Rom. 8:30, Living Bible). It is then through that process that we become the people of God. We must be chosen, then called, then we must respond to the call by repenting and being baptized in order to receive the earnest of the Spirit of God. It is then that we become members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church of God.

the harmful influences which lurk around them. Vigilance is imperative, for He tells them, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11). *Hold fast!* Until when? Until the harvest, until the day of the gathering when on the one hand there will be the righteous shining like the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and on the other hand there will be gnashing of teeth on the part of those who did not take advantage of the patience which Christ showed in order for them to repent, but who took pleasure in committing offenses and iniquity among God's people.

Jesus Christ repeatedly says in His letters addressed to the seven churches, "he that overcometh"! This shows us, my dear brethren, that the struggle between the power of the ways of death and the power of life is most arduous until the very day of the harvest.

Thank you, brethren, for your example and your encouragement. We will soon be observing the Fall feasts; may they be a source of encouragement, inspiration, and joy to you all, accompanied by the marvelous blessings of Christ's strength and power in your lives. That is my deepest desire for each of God's called.

Affectionate greetings to you all,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Aviolat', written in dark ink.

Jean Aviolat