

June 2012

Dear Brethren:

Greetings once more from the Luzon area, Philippines.

As I write my letter, my beloved brethren, it is my desire to bring you a message of hope and inspiration for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that when He appears you will, along with me and other believers, be ready to meet Him in one mind and with one purpose—ready to be united to that one body for which He prayed: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20–21).

The Sign of the Messiah's Coming

The true Messiah, the real God of the Bible, is soon coming in our generation. Can He find unity among His people? Can He call us a generation of kings and priests: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9–10); OR will He call us an evil and adulterous generation asking for a sign? That depends on what sign we follow in this life. "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, but do not the things which I say." If we have surrendered our lives to Him, and have been obeying His commandments, and have known His Father, then we belong to this chosen generation.

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here (Matthew 12:38–41).

Today, we too are looking for the *sign* of the Messiah. And we receive the same indisputable retort: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Notice He gave this one proof—and only one—to substantiate His claim of Messiahship. Notice further and carefully: It was not His resurrection that was given as proof, nor of His great miracles, nor His virgin birth, nor any of the Ten Commandments written by His fingers in tablets of stone, nor any of numerous prophecies concerning Him. Why a simple sign? Unnoticed by scholars, disregarded by passersby, considered as nonessential by the contentious, but to we who look upon Him for unrelenting authority, this sign is so important to bring together in one mind those who are divided by controversies.

Three days and three nights give us a clue to the right way of reckoning God's days as they come to pass. Three days and three nights is seventy-two hours exactly, no more, no less. ". . . Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him" (John 11:9–10). Here Christ clearly stated that the daylight part of a day is twelve hours, and the night part is another twelve hours. In Genesis 1:5, a day in God's way of reckoning is from sunset to sunset. This dispels the idea of the two nights and a day count in traditional Christianity. See how far-reaching is the implication of the sign of the Messiah given to us today. It enables us to provide a complete count of three days and three nights. Given this orientation, it leads us always to use a complete count from sunset to the following sunset for one complete day. So the Sabbath dawns at sunset Friday; and we keep the Sabbath from sunset to the next sunset that same Saturday. The following day, past the night is another new day, called the first day of the week, Sunday. In this context, the command is clear: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." There is no confusion of Sunday becoming the Sabbath day. Some reason that Sunday should be the Christian Sabbath to commemorate the resurrection of Christ. But God never commanded us to do so. The confusion vanishes with the *sign* of the true Messiah. The three days and three nights in the tomb can be a simple—but very significant—*sign* to those who recognize Him as Lord. This rules out the traditional Friday crucifixion and Sunday resurrection, and establishes a Wednesday crucifixion and Saturday (at sunset) resurrection.

When was Jesus placed in the tomb? Jesus died the ninth hour of the day (Matthew 27:46–50; Mark 15:34–37; Luke 23:44–46). This corresponds to three o'clock in the afternoon, Roman time. Joseph of Arimathaea came to Pilate to request the body of Jesus at "even," that is, shortly before the going down of the sun (Matthew 27:57–60; Luke 23:50–53), and Jesus was buried a short time later. Christ then had to be buried between three o'clock and sundown of the crucifixion day. If His claim to Messiahship rests on the fact that He would be in the tomb a full seventy-two hours—three days and three nights—then His resurrection had to take place at the precise moment of time just before sunset. Christ's resurrection was in the evening and not in the morning, as the Easter Sunday tradition would have us believe.

On another occasion, some Pharisees and Sadducees came and tempted him, "that he would shew them a sign from heaven. . . . When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matthew 16:1–4)

Likewise, brethren, we discern the face of the sky; even prophetic trends in the world including the troubles in the Middle East. If we do not discern His Messiahship, much less His coming to Earth soon, we are like those Pharisees and Sadducees who did not discern the "signs of the times." So the sign of the coming Messiah—this second time—is very essential for us to comprehend the signs of the times. Only those who understand His true Messiahship have the capability of recognizing His sign.

That is a conclusive argument of the matter. Another count that we can infer from the sign of the Messiah, is a complete count of fifty days toward the day of Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15–16). The complete count of fifty days will arrive at a Monday Pentecost. There has been much controversy since the change took place from Monday to Sunday in 1974, with debate over how to count fifty. The *complete* count of fifty, as cued by the sign of the Messiah, would remove the clouds of confusion among us and make it clear.

(. . . He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ (Ephesians 4:10–15).

To sum up the matter: The sign of the Messiah should solve all schisms and divisions in the body. It will lead us to the right day that was originally revealed through Mr. Herbert Armstrong. We need the power—that same source of power that opened the door to Mr. Armstrong—to start observing a Monday Pentecost.

By the sign He has given, we perceive the coming of the Messiah is actually a marriage feast for the Church, as His Bride. We can then feel the impact of what Paul was saying in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Conversely, there is also another "Jesus" whose false sign is offered to us, and we are warned, "ye might well bear with him." So let us be alert and careful to the wiles and craftiness of the enemy, that we hold on to

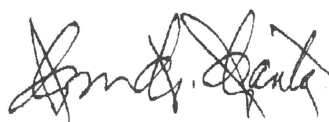
the sign of the true Messiah until He comes! Let the sanctity of marriage be maintained and not destroyed by continual divorces, which destroys the God-instituted family—the actual image of the Family of God.

After writing all these things to you, my brethren, I hope you have a clearer view of the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If it seems we are now on the last lap of the race set before us, let us take heed lest we lose our focus on Him, "who is the author and finisher of our faith." If that happens, we will fail to recognize Him when He appears before us. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Take heed how you handle these Scriptures, brethren. The same apostle concluded his first epistle: "keep yourselves from idols." The world has in mind that the coming Messiah will appear like a feminine figure of a man with long hair! Please read 1 Corinthians 11:14–16 and 1 Timothy 6:14–16 showing that it is not so. Let Philippians 2:5–9 sink into our minds:

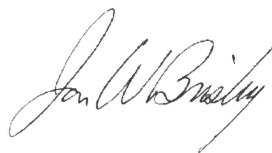
Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Brethren, let us always remember the *sign* of the True Messiah; and let that *sign conquer* our own proclivities—by singing together in marching tempo the attached song I sincerely dedicate to you all. The tune is adopted from "Praise the Eternal with a Psalm," by Dwight Armstrong, from page 62 of the old (purple) Worldwide Church of God, *The Bible Hymnal*.

With love and respect; God bless!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corsino C. Canta'.

Corsino C. Canta

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon W. Brisby'.

Jon W. Brisby

COME, LET US SING GOD'S WILL BE DONE

Lyrics by
Corsino Canta

Music by
Dwight Armstrong

Not all who call up - on the Lord shall en - ter in His King - dom;
When Je - sus was a - bout to die, He called up - on His Fa - ther;
For it is His pur - pose and will to ga - ther us to - ge - ther;
In His name you have proph - e - sied, taught, and done some great won - ders;

5

For on - ly those who ob - ey God's will shall be giv - en their en - trance.
That all those who will be - lieve in Him shall be one and un - i - ted.
In one bo - dy and in one spir - it; one Lord and in one bap - tism.
But if you do not o - bey His will, He will shout, "I don't know you."

9

Come, let us sing God's will be done, on earth and in hea - ven;

13

For in the full - ness of His time, He'll ga - ther His church to - ge - ther.