

# Church of God, The Eternal

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## Announcement Letter September 1993

Dear Brethren,

For those who love the truth, anticipation of the Feast of Tabernacles runs high. Genuine love has a deep and abiding emotional dimension. It is full and joyous even though controlled. Genuine love is not merely demonstration. It is rich and meaningful. Our prayer is that the observance of this great Feast will manifest all that God purposes and wills that we exhibit. Let us be that light for which we are called.

### **Spiritual Principle: When Have We Fulfilled the Command to Convoke before God?**

The mark of the faithful is their fear, honor, and respect for God. They do not seek rationalizations as justifications to do what seems right to themselves. They simply and fully obey God.

Regarding Sabbaths and holydays, what specific command did God give? In both cases the people of God are commanded to convoke before Him. The convocation requirement for the Sabbath is found in Leviticus 23:3. We are emphatically told: ". . . the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation . . ." The command is specific and to the point. Likewise, regarding the holydays of God, we are told: ". . . the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts" (Lev. 23:2). Again, verse 4: "These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons." And finally, "These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations . . ." (v. 37)

A convocation is a commanded assembly occurring on days made holy, and set apart from all others, by God Himself. That which is holy to God is the entirety of the day—all 24 hours. We have not been faithful until we have observed the total period of time. One example should suffice to illustrate the above point. Regarding the Day of Atonement we have not fully obeyed God until we have done all that is required. Simple cessation from work is not sufficient. Besides desisting from work, the called and faithful servant of God must also afflict his soul—fast. Until all is done according to the will of God, obedience is not completed and acceptable to God. Failure to perform any part of the command of God

results in the death penalty (Lev. 23:27–32). It is most interesting that God specifically delineates the time for the keeping of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:32). If the sun sets at 7:30 P.M. at that time of the year, would we have obeyed if we commenced to observe Atonement by desisting from work and beginning to fast at 10:00 P.M.; or for personal reasons terminated the fast the following evening at 4:00 P.M. and began working in our personal areas of responsibility? Of course not! Obedience as required by God must be total and complete.

The pronouncement of a death penalty indicates the gravity of the sin involved. Under many circumstances God emphasized the severity of the sin committed by the threat of death. Because we do not see the actual manifestation of that curse today, far too many people evidence little fear of God. But the reality of that pronouncement yet awaits them unless they truly repent and turn to God with the whole mind and heart. Sabbath breaking—the misuse of any part of the night and day which is designated the Sabbath—24 hours of time, will result in death (Ex. 31:14–16). In like manner, failure to eat unleavened bread for the entire period of seven days designated as the Feast of Unleavened Bread will result in the death sentence (Ex. 12:15, 19). Commencing to eat unleavened bread prior to the completion of the entire seven-day period does not constitute faithful obedience. It takes obedience for the entire period of seven days to secure the approval and blessing of God. Commencing late and/or terminating the eating of unleavened bread early does not constitute faithful obedience.

What about the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles? Clearly we are told that convoking before the Eternal God for the entire period of seven days is mandatory (Lev. 23:40–43). And convoking before God is not the presuming, individually, to do what one deems right in his own eyes. Faithful obedience requires coming before God in the place appointed in the manner approved of God. If God is where He placed His name, it is obvious that to come before Him requires that we be where He is.

The eighth day is a separate holyday. It is a Sabbath on which we are required to come before God, also. To keep that Sabbath requires obedience the full twenty-four hours. In the case of the Feast of Tabernacles, that last eighth day is added to it. The whole period of time is to be spent before God, in the appointed place.

The more we think about this required obedience, we are made to wonder, have we really been faithful to God? Have we been too anxious to go back into the world? Have we short-changed God to give more specific attention to our human wants? In this context, there is a most significant principle involved. It is found in Luke 6:38. Here we are instructed, when giving service, give abundantly, to the full and beyond. Are we not just as responsible to give more abundantly to God, making sure that we do not appropriate any of that time He has reserved for Himself? The thought is worthy of much consideration.

Considering all the principles involved it seems to us that the sign of faithful obedience is the complete and total observance of that which God requires regarding time. That such obedience is a proof of learning that patience deemed requisite for faithful endurance in the last days. And that we are losing the last hours of mutually heightened fellowship when we

fail to completely honor God for the entire period of time designated as time to be spent before Him.

Really, have we been faithful to God, if we have kept only seven and one-half days of that great Fall Feast occasion; or if we fail to appear before God at the beginning of time which He designated as holy to Him? Please think soberly and seriously about these facts. God reads both our minds and hearts.

### **Current Events: Last Day Structuring of Society**

From the beginning of recorded time, man has structured and restructured his surroundings and his personal relationships with other human beings. That structure has existed all the way from the most simplistic to the pinnacle of sophistication.

Who was responsible? If you read only the history books written by men you would be led to believe man chose his own destiny—that he determined his present and future relevant to all things. Despite this presumption, all men must at some time learn that an unseen Higher Power had much to do with his life and circumstance (Acts 17:26, Deut. 32:8, Dan. 4:35; 5:20–21). Further, as allowed by God, another unseen power had much to do with the fabric of human society (II Cor. 4:4, Luke 4:3–7, Rev. 20:2–3). Satan has been contending with man for thousands of years. God, Himself, is in contention with no one. He is the King of all the earth, and what He has determined will come to pass.

In the above context a certain prophecy for these last days prompts much curious speculation based on man's insatiable hunger to know and understand the future—events and circumstances which will affect him. The Word of God indicates the reality of this event—the appearance of a structured society based on ten geographic and cultural divisions. This fabric is recorded in Revelation 17:11–17. Specific details are: (1) this fabric has well-defined historical ties; (2) the structure has never existed prior to these final days; (3) they give themselves into the hand of a greater and more forceful agency; (4) this global composite will last but a very brief period of time; and (5) this combine will be the power which resists Christ at His return.

### **An Exceptional Article**

In the Summer 1993 issue of *Foreign Affairs* an exceptional article appeared which may have great relevancy to the prophecy mentioned above. The article, "The Clash of Civilizations?," (pp. 22–49), written by Samuel P. Huntington, is the basis of all concepts mentioned below and the source of all quotes.

"World politics is entering a new phase . . . ." What is the previous history of politics and what is this new phase?

Previous to the present, mankind has passed through the following: (1) the nation state—emperors, absolute monarchs, and constitutional monarchs, who advanced personal interests; (2) beginning with the French Revolution the conflicts were generated around the interest of the nations themselves, not princes—"The wars of kings were over; the wars of peoples had begun"; (3) resulting from the Russian Revolution and opposition to it "the conflict of nations yielded to the conflict of ideologies"—communism, fascism, Nazism, democracy, and others; (4) then with the end of the Cold War international politics moved from a principally Western orientation to a confrontation between Western and non-Western civilizations and within non-Western civilizations themselves. Mr. Huntington's assertion is this: ". . . the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics."

What is a civilization? "A civilization is a cultural entity. Villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups . . ." It is the ultimate grouping of peoples predicated on the following specifics—"language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people." And now for a block-buster quote: "Civilization identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilization." Could this become ten?

The article then proceeds to explain beautifully why such conflicts will prevail and what efforts must be made to ameliorate the borders of such conflict. Then, in a significant manner made this final and concluding observation: "For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilization, but instead a world of different civilizations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others."

Sounds to me like the fabric out of which many of the above prophecies could easily be realized. There certainly has to be some foundational premise for the global enterprise thought out for these last days. The above conditions are worthy of careful watching.

## **Blessings of Brethren**

[Omitted for confidentiality]

## **Office**

Due to the many duties incumbent upon us and the office staff in preparation for and attendance at the Feast of Tabernacles there will be no October issue of either the *Monthly Letter* or the *Announcement Letter*.

Please do not bring any return tapes to the Townsend feast site as there will be no way to bring them back to Oregon. Those attending the Newport feast site are asked to return any tapes that are not being used for study or are being purchased except black or grey tapes. You may feel free to keep black or grey tapes as they are being phased out of our operation.

### Trips

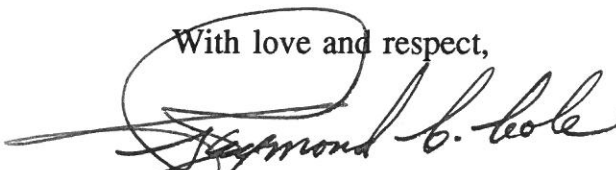
September 11	B.G. Clark	Rochester
September 16, 18	B.G. Clark	Knoxville
September 30–October 7	R.C. Cole	Townsend
October 18–27	R.C. Cole	Philippines

### Tape Schedule

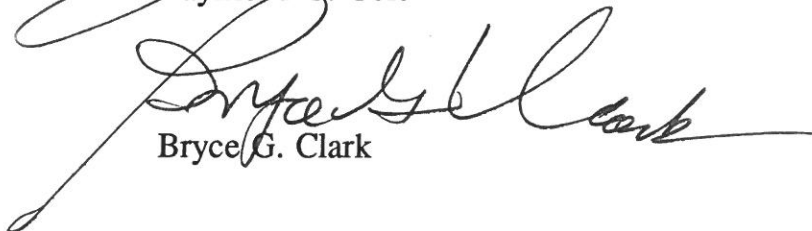
Tape Series	Mailed	For	Title/tape #
WSE-BC 141	07/14	09/04	What Truly Is a Cult?
*CL 2-166	07/14	09/11	Humility #29
Trumpets	08/27	09/16	A.M. & P.M.
WSE-BC 138-41	07/28	09/18	Paul's Epistles #41
Atonement	09/07	09/25	one service
*CL 2-167	07/28	10/02	Humility #30
WSE-BC 138-42	08/11	10/09	Paul's Epistles #42
*CL 2-168	08/11	10/16	Humility #31
WSE-BC 138-43	08/25	10/23	Paul's Epistles #43
*CL 2-169	08/25	10/30	Humility #32

\*Principles of Christian Living series presently being given at Eugene Sabbath Services.

With love and respect,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark