

# Church of God, The Eternal

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## Announcement Letter March 2002

Dear Brethren:

Greetings to all of our faithful brethren of this small remnant body, in all of the places where God has preserved you about the globe. We send you our heartfelt expressions of love and appreciation in this first month of God's new year. May we never take you for granted, or fail to ask God to bless and keep you in these volatile last days.

Who knows what the coming year will bring? How suddenly can world events turn our normal routines upside down? Who would have imagined or predicted the monumental events of last fall which forever changed the thinking of our elected leaders, and the political thrust of our nations? Yet, in spite of the fact the world views recent historical events as extraordinary, the people of God know that the events still to come will dwarf anything that has ever been experienced by mankind on the face of this earth. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:21–22). If the peoples of our nations believe these recent terrorist attacks are so unusual, what will they think when God begins to pour out His wrath in the form of cataclysmic natural disasters, wars, famines, pestilence, and all of the things prophesied for that time preceding the return of Jesus Christ?

The perceptions of human beings are shaped most by those events we have experienced in our own lives. A man or woman who has experienced the horrors of war firsthand has a totally different perspective than someone who has lived his or her entire lifetime in relative peace and safety. Experiencing persecution and real hardship makes people more appreciative of the simple things we otherwise take for granted. That is why human beings have never been successful at learning from the lessons of their forefathers. Throughout time humanity has repeated the same cycles of history over and over again. The generation that learns the lessons of hard experience is sore pressed to pass along that same appreciation to its children. Why else have many of our nations—still blessed with the

residual benefits of the Birthright promises to Abraham—become so weak and hedonistic? Most of us have never endured real trial, where we live in fear for our lives day-by-day and expend our energies just trying to secure the next meal for ourselves and our families. Some few of the members of our fellowship have experienced such things, but very few indeed. Most of us have a totally different sense of deprivation and hardship. The veteran of a wartime concentration camp is thankful to awake in a warm dry place, with enough food to eat, and the freedom to live without daily threat of extermination. By contrast, the individual raised in time of peace and prosperity in a Birthright nation feels deprived when his retirement investments lose value, the automobile breaks down, or the cable television is not working.

One day, dear brethren, all of us are going to have our perceptions of hardship altered significantly. The things that cause us to fret and worry today will likely become foolishness to us in the near future. How much better it would be if we could truly learn thankfulness now, even while we continue to receive such rich blessings. "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Psalms 103:2–5). If we can maintain that kind of perspective—with genuine appreciation—we need not be traumatized nearly as much when final events of the last days begin to manifest. Our faith in God—real faith—is that which can provide true peace of mind, no matter what will be required of us before the arrival of Christ's Kingdom.

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof (Matthew 6:31–34).

May you each have a truly inspiring and enriching Passover season, and may we all use our remaining time very wisely in preparation for the fulfilment of God's perfect plan, as pictured by His glorious annual festivals.

## **Prayer Requests**

[Omitted for confidentiality]

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## Death

Mrs. Hilda Lewis: Mrs. Lewis died Saturday, February 16, 2002, at the age of 92. She was a faithful long-time member of the church. Our condolences are extended to her family and friends.

## Holy Days

Passover for our scattered brethren: If any of you need instruction on how to keep Passover in your own home, please inform us as soon as possible and we will send the information to you.

Passover . . . . . Tuesday, March 26

Night to Be Much Observed . . . . . Wednesday, March 27

1<sup>st</sup> Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread . . . . . Thursday, March 28

2<sup>nd</sup> Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread. . . . . Wednesday, April 3

Lead men should be making appropriate preparations for these days.

## Trip Schedule

March 26, 27, 28, 30      Baltimore, Maryland

May 18                      Lausanne, Switzerland

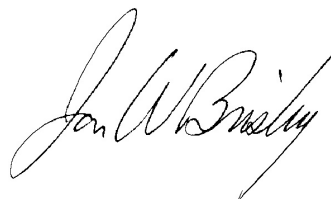
May 20                      Grenoble, France

May 25                      Albertinia, South Africa

## Tape Schedule

Tape Schedule	Mailed	Played	Title/Tape #
WSE-RC 32-1	02-07-02	03-02-02	Create Peace or Strife?
WSE-JB 22-37-16C	02-07-02	03-09-02	Fund. of Belief: The Davidic Covenant and the Two Nations
WSE-RC 32-2	02-21-02	03-16-02	Create Peace or Strife?
WSE-RC 32-3	02-21-02	03-23-02	Create Peace or Strife?
WSE-JB 22-38-16D	03-07-02	03-30-02	Fund. of Belief: Jeremiah's Commission
WSE-JB 22-39-16E	03-07-02	04-06-02	Fund. of Belief: The Mysterious Breach

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby