

Church of God, The Eternal

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The late Raymond C. Cole
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Announcement Letter April 2006

Dear Brethren:

The beginning of God's new year, the Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are all here again at last. It is a time that God's faithful children look forward to with great anticipation. What a privilege it is to share this love of God's truth with every one of you, no matter where you may be keeping these solemn occasions around the world.

There is always so much work to do to prepare for God's Feasts. It can cause us anxiety in planning for everything that must be accomplished. In the spring, there is not only the mandatory spiritual preparation that must be done before Passover, but the physical preparation as well, including de-leavening our homes. With all that is required to fulfill God's commands, it is certainly possible to be robbed of the intended joy, if we are not careful to put all things in proper perspective. God wants this to be an exceedingly joyful time for His children. And there is no reason that it absolutely should not be so.

There are many former members of our parent church who may still be keeping Passover and Unleavened Bread, but have allowed it to become a drudgery of obligation. Since they have unknowingly rejected the Holy Spirit, they have likewise lost the opportunity for real spiritual fulfillment in Sabbath keeping. Once that happens, it is only a matter of time before their leaders start coming up with justifications to water down God's expectations. We have seen that very thing occurring more and more. An example is the rationalization to de-emphasize physical de-leavening. After all, we are told, God really wants us to focus on the spiritual, not the physical, so it is not so important to scour our homes for crumbs. In fact, those who still do so are accused by these individuals of being Pharisaical. But such arguments always follow the same pattern of liberalization. Chopping away at God's commands is always billed as a more "mature" and "spiritual" observance of God's "real intent" for Holy Days. They claim to be growing in grace and knowledge and achieving a higher spiritual plane. But in reality they are simply justifying making their preparation for the spring Holy Days easier by jettisoning time-consuming protocols of the past.

And why should that be a surprise? The majority of them have lost any sense of priority for the meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread anyway. Unleavened Bread defines the primary work of a true Christian—to crucify the self by putting out sin. But that is a painful, lifelong responsibility which requires blood, sweat, and tears. Most of our former brethren and their leaders now do everything they can to de-emphasize personal overcoming. God's prophecies have been coming to pass before our very eyes:

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Timothy 4:3–4).

That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits (Isaiah 30:9–10).

These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when *they speak great swelling words of vanity*, they *allure through the lusts of the flesh*, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While *they promise them liberty*, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage (2 Peter 2:17–19) [emphasis mine].

God's people have been deceived into believing that overcoming is not really the most important thing after all. No, they are told that obedience to church government (meaning personal loyalty to a particular man) is the key. Or else they are saturated with prophetic speculations about the future, encouraged to become technical scholars, told to let their lights shine in the world by "good works," or anything else that de-emphasizes the need to battle the real enemy—our own carnality.

So is it any wonder that most are glad to see the Feast of Unleavened Bread come and go? For many, it has ceased to have any real value, because the very meaning has been corrupted and watered down. But to the faithful of God, it should be as much a joy to us this

year as it ever has been in times past. If we have done that necessary preparation willingly and thoughtfully, we are likewise prepared to reap the rich rewards God intended during this marvelous season of worship.

May all of you have a truly glorious Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Second Passover

Anyone needing to partake of the second month Passover, please be advised that it is May 12, to be observed the previous evening, May 11, after sunset. If instructions are needed, please contact the church office as soon as possible.

Office

We have just completed masters of four compact disks containing special music performed here in Eugene for regular Sabbath services. They include music from the past two years, in addition to some of the best recordings we have of music performed in the 1970s. If you wish to receive copies of these four CDs, please contact Miss Rebecca Engel at the church office. Her office e-mail address is: rmengel@cogeternal.org.

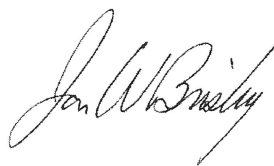
Trip Schedule

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|-------------------|--------------------|
| April 11, 12, 13, | Goldthwaite, Texas |
| April 15 | Houston, Texas |
| April 19 | Dade City, Florida |

Tape Schedule

| Tape # | Mailed | Played | Title |
|----------------|----------|----------|---|
| WSE-JB 80-6 | 03-16-06 | 04-08-06 | A Survey of the Book of Job #6 Job's Initial Response to Trial |
| Holy Day Tape | 03-09-06 | 04-11-06 | Passover |
| Holy Day Tape | 03-09-06 | 04-12-06 | Night to Be Much Observed |
| Holy Day Tapes | 03-09-06 | 04-13-06 | 1 st High Day–Unleavened Bread |
| WSE-JB 80-7 | 03-16-06 | 04-15-06 | A Survey of the Book of Job #7 Job's Trial Amplified |
| Holy Day Tapes | 03-09-06 | 04-19-06 | 2 nd High Day–Unleavened Bread |
| WSE-RC F-1 | 03-30-06 | 04-22-06 | What Is the Work? #1 |
| WSE-RC F-2 | 03-30-06 | 04-29-06 | What Is the Work? #2 |
| WSE-JB 80-8 | 04-12-06 | 05-06-06 | A Survey of the Book of Job #8 Job's Friends Arrive |
| HFT-TT RC 89-5 | 04-12-06 | 05-13-06 | Grace #1 |

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby