

# Church of God, The Eternal

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## Announcement Letter May 2007

Dear Brethren:

We send you very warm greetings again in this the beginning of another new month in this early part of God's new year. We pray that you had a very inspiring Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, and that you are now looking forward to Pentecost with great anticipation and planning. Those of you keeping these days as God commanded—without deviation according to faulty human wisdom—are rare indeed at this particular time. That makes your sacrifices and offerings before God all the more important in these dark and trying days. Please never underestimate the importance of what you are doing. It can easily seem like the personal efforts we make are inconsequential, but that is not the case at all. Even if you are one of many who are alone and without regular fellowship opportunities, your devotion to put God first—even if not seen by the world—is very significant to God. Noah and his family were alone in faithfulness in his day. So, too, was Lot in the area in which he lived. And even though they were vexed by the world in which they were forced to exist, their personal sacrifices of obedience were highly honored in history. The day is coming when the perseverance of the faithful from these last days will likewise be remembered as a witness for future generations. Never discount the value of your efforts to please God, no matter how difficult or how insignificant it may seem at the time. By your simple, humble, diligent efforts to put on the real Jesus Christ in your lives, you are making history.

### Spiritual Principle—Holy Day Offerings

Given the challenges we face today with many scattered groups and individuals around the world, it is not as easy to conduct particular administrative functions as it used to be when most had regional congregations and local pastors. The collection of commanded offerings is one of those areas that requires special instructions today. Although this information has been published in times past, it is always good to provide a reminder from time to time.

In areas where there are ordained men (deacons or elders), commanded offerings for Holy Days (Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; Deuteronomy 16:16) are easier to handle. There is a clearly authorized man with authority to represent the church and collect those offerings during the holy convocation. Those men then have instructions on what to do with the offerings from there. But what about in areas where small groups have been approved to meet, but without an ordained leader? In many of those areas, there is a baptized man who has been authorized as a "lead man." The purpose is to designate one individual to organize functions for the group, and to be accountable to help all go smoothly and in order. But in many other areas, there may not be a baptized male, or one who is comfortable in assuming those duties. How then should offerings be handled in these small, approved, group meetings?

A common assumption is that each member in this situation should just mail in his offering to the church office, either beforehand, or after the Holy Day is past. If you are absolutely alone, this is virtually your only option. But if you are meeting with others—even in a very small group—a different procedure should be used.

In a group setting, Mr. Raymond Cole always emphasized the requirement God gave to bring those offerings to the designated place of meeting on the Holy Day. To keep that Holy Day properly (if it is one appointed for an offering), we are not to appear before Him empty. Although it might seem easier for each individual just to mail in his own offering separately, Mr. Cole was never comfortable with that at all. Therefore, those offerings should indeed be brought to the place of meeting, collected during the service as would be done in a larger group meeting, and then one individual should mail the collected offerings to the appropriate church office on the first business day which follows.

With this in mind, questions and complications can certainly arise. If there is not an ordained man in the area, some in times past have not felt comfortable in turning over a confidential offering to another laymember. Will that person see how much I gave? How can I keep my offering private? These concerns have resulted in some members choosing not to follow Mr. Cole's instructions, but to send in their offerings separately. But this is not correct, and should be avoided. Even if it seems only a cumbersome ritual, we were taught that the very act of coming before God—and not coming empty—is important, and this ministry continues to support and uphold that administrative judgment made by Mr. Cole. With that said, to violate this judgment is an act of rebellion, and we want none of you to be implicated before God intentionally or unintentionally.

Therefore, to streamline this procedure and reduce potential problems or worries within small groups, here is what should be done: A designated individual (whether a lead man or someone else appointed in the assembly) should bring to the Holy Day service a large mailing envelope, sufficient in size to hold the individual offering envelopes of those who

will be assembled. That larger envelope should already be pre-addressed and ready to mail to the church office (unless postage must be determined just before mailing). Individual members should prepare their offerings in advance and bring them to services in sealed envelopes. During the offering collection portion of the service, individuals should place their offerings in the large mailing envelope. That envelope should then be sealed immediately after the service. The only thing left to do then is to mail the envelope on the next business day. Since all is sealed immediately, the issue of confidentiality should be greatly reduced.

Following this simple procedure provides the means for us to fulfill God's command to appear at the designated place and time with our offering, makes that procedure organized and reflective of God's character, but circumvents the problems extant for very small groups lacking a local elder. It requires preparation on the part of all to make it work smoothly, but then, God has given us many instructions that test our willingness to think and plan in advance. If any of you have any questions about procedures in your local areas, please feel free to contact the church office for help in establishing a solution.

## **Holy Day**

Pentecost: Monday, May 28, 2007

## **Trip Schedule**

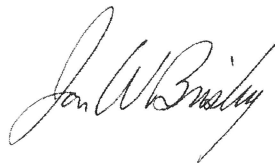
Note that our other Elders are being listed on this trip schedule now to advise you when they will be meeting with brethren outside their normal areas. These men are sacrificing to serve you all, and your support and cooperation in facilitating arrangements for those occasions are greatly appreciated.

May 19	JWB	George, South Africa
May 26, 28	JWB	Lausanne, Switzerland; Grenoble, France
May 28	RJL	Danville, Illinois
June 23	JWB	Knoxville, Tennessee
June 30	JWB	Elkhart, Indiana

## Tape Schedule

Tape #	Mailed	Played	Title
HFT-RC 90-4-2	04-05-07	04-28-07	A Contrast Between God's Law and Mercy #2
WSE-JB 80-28	04-05-07	05-05-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #28 Job's Final Speech #3
HPT-RC 78-1	04-19-07	05-12-07	Spiritual Growth #1
HPT-RC 78-2	04-19-07	05-19-07	Spiritual Growth #2
WSE-RC 7-1	05-03-07	05-26-07	Christian Principles of Child Rearing #1
WSE-JB 80-29	05-03-07	06-02-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #29 Job's Final Speech #4
WSE-RC 7-2	05-17-07	06-09-07	Christian Principles of Child Rearing #2
WSE-JB 80-30	05-17-07	06-16-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #30 Job's Final Speech #5

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby