

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter March 2009

Dear Brethren:

Here we are only a month away from Passover once again, reminding us how relentlessly time marches forward into each new season. The timepiece of God—including the working parts of earth and moon moving about the sun—continues to tick away the minutes and hours toward the consummation of this age. When will that time of man be completed? When will Jesus Christ become the new King over all? It is simply not God's will for us to know that, even though we are ever curious and hopeful. So we exercise patience, focusing upon the obligations of immediate preparation to keep Passover and Unleavened Bread in just a few weeks, and set our hope and confidence upon the plan God is unfolding step by step before our very eyes.

We pray that every one of you is holding firm in mind and heart, wherever is your abode on this earth by the will of God, and that you are relishing the meaning of this Holy Day season for your future glory. You are all most precious in the eyes of God, and therefore also to us who are your committed and devoted servants of Christ. May the coming Passover be a great blessing in your life this year.

Spiritual Principle—Unleavened Bread for Passover

For the upcoming Passover, those of you who are isolated from most other brethren and unable to assemble with one of our larger groups will be making choices in preparing your Passover service. In areas where there are several members gathered together, a lead man or elder will be making necessary provisions. One decision required is a choice of unleavened bread to be used to represent the body of Jesus Christ for this solemn service.

This may not be a principle which some of you may have ever heard emphasized before, but hopefully it will resonate with you nonetheless. Given the recent sermons you have received confirming the faith once delivered about proper food—including Mr.

Armstrong's admonition to cook from scratch—how might this apply to your choice for unleavened bread for the upcoming Passover service? What would be a more fitting representation of the body of Jesus Christ, a factory-made, store-bought matzah, or homemade unleavened bread?

Some will immediately leap upon this and claim I am now creating a "new doctrine." Not at all. I am not saying that God will not accept the sacrifice of your Passover if you do not make unleavened bread from scratch. There may be a number of legitimate reasons that this is simply impossible, like our members who are in prison and are greatly blessed to get *any* unleavened bread at all—that from a sealed package being the only kind permitted—or perhaps a disabled member who literally is not physically capable of preparing homemade flatbread. In such cases, factory-made bread is certainly acceptable. But what about for the majority of us? Do you really think God would not prefer we take the extra effort to make wholesome unleavened bread for the Passover?

Is this a new concept? Mr. Raymond Cole may not have chosen to publish the principle as I am now doing, but the Eugene, Oregon, congregation has used homemade unleavened bread in the local Passover service for decades, perhaps even back to the very first Passover kept as a remnant body in 1975. Here traditionally, the pastor's wife has prepared that bread. Mrs. Raymond Cole was the one who did so for many years. My own wife assumed that responsibility once Mr. Cole died in 2001. Mr. Cole surely felt this was a minor issue compared to the more serious problems of faith and continuity facing God's people since the apostasy of 1974. But I hope more of you may have matured spiritually enough since then to be able to receive some advanced instruction now, even in some of these finer points.

Have you ever stopped to think about that matzah many of you buy in the stores? Many areas do not carry Jewish matzahs at all, or if you can find them, the selection is quite limited. From what kind of flour are they made? Is it whole grain flour, or is it white flour? If we have always been taught not to eat white flour because it is perverted and denuded of its natural, healthful components as God made it, why would we think white-flour matzahs are any exception? Does being "unleavened" somehow nullify the other principles? Now that you have had it brought to your attention, are you really willing to represent Christ's broken body with a perverted, white-flour matzah? We should really not be eating them during the Feast of Unleavened Bread at all, but we *certainly* should not use them at the Passover service. If you insist upon using a factory-made matzah, at least use a truly whole grain matzah. They do make them, although it may be difficult to confirm the manufacturing process and to be certain the labeling is not misleading. Is it truly 100% whole grain flour, or does it just have a percentage of "good" flour mixed in with white flour? Are there other preservatives included? One brand we can get here in Oregon is named *Streit's*. The ingredients are, "unbleached whole wheat flour, water." For a store-bought matzah, this is a good one. But it is still not as good by comparison to making your own unleavened bread.

But isn't it laborious and difficult to make unleavened bread from scratch? Surely not for an experienced cook, but what if you do not know anything about cooking? To answer this question, I would like to share a personal story which may be of help. Last year, in anticipation of Passover and because this issue was on my mind, I decided to try making unleavened bread myself. I have never had any real cooking experience, and I barely know how to function in a kitchen. But I used the unleavened barley bread recipe from the church cookbook, and without any outside help, I followed the instructions. It was simple. It was quick and easy, and the bread turned out just fine. In fact, we used that bread for the Passover service in the location where I was presiding that year. What is my point? If I can make suitable unleavened bread, *anyone* can do it! Here is the recipe I used—the same one used each year to make the Passover bread for the Eugene assembly:

UNLEAVENED BARLEY BREAD

1-1/4 c. barley flour	2 T. olive oil
1/4 tsp. salt	1/3 c. water

Mix all ingredients together to form a dough ball. Break off pieces the size of a large marble and roll out between waxed paper. Place on greased cookie sheet and bake at 350° F. until lightly browned around the edges.

When you think about it, is it just possible God may be more pleased with a little extra effort to represent His Son's broken body with unleavened bread certified to be good because you made it yourself? Something to consider.

New Moon

The new moon, Nisan (first month), will begin on the evening of March 25. The new moon day is March 26.

Death

It is with sadness that we inform you of the death of Mrs. Consorcia Aquijo of San Nicholas, Luzon, Philippines, February 7. Mrs. Aquijo died of a severe infection in her foot after a long struggle with diabetes. She was 50 years of age at the time of her death and is survived by her seven children: Andres, Claudia, Ruel, Conchita, Benjamin, Rebecca, and Benjie. We offer our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

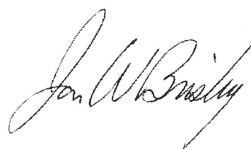
Trip Schedule

April 7, 8, 9	JWB	Maryville, TN
April 11	JWB	Lexington, VA
April 15	JWB	Baltimore, MD
April 18	JWB	Cary, NC

Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
WSE-JB 111-4	02-05-09	02-28-09	Principles of Radiant Health Health Beyond Diet, Part B
CL2 65 (RC)	02-05-09	03-07-09	Principles of Christian Living: Goodness #9
WSP-LW 6	02-26-09	03-14-09	Pre-Passover Exam: Living as God Lives
WSE-JB 111-5	02-26-09	03-21-09	Principles of Radiant Health Mental Orientation
CL2 66 (RC)	02-26-09	03-28-09	Principles of Christian Living: Goodness #10
Holy Day Sermons	03-03-09	—	Passover/NTBO/UB
WSE-JB 111-6	03-19-09	04-04-09	Principles of Radiant Health Moderation
WSE-JB 22-104-24Q	03-19-09	04-11-09	Fund. of Belief: Divine Revelation The House of God

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby