

Church of God, The Eternal

P. O. Box 775
Eugene, Oregon 97440
www.cogeternal.org

The late Raymond C. Cole
Founding Pastor
Jon W. Brisby
Pastor, Director

Offices in: United States
Philippines
Switzerland
Kenya

Announcement Letter April 2009

Dear Brethren:

Most of you will receive this letter just before Passover or during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is a privilege, therefore, to greet you during this very joyous season and to wish you all a very marvelous and rewarding Holy Day observance. We are so blessed to know the real Truth about all God is accomplishing on this earth, and to be part of the very few He has called out in this age is the greatest privilege any human being could receive. We relish that calling and the meaning of this Feast.

Thank all of you for your important part in this little remnant which is holding fast to that priceless way of life. Your role is key, and your personal example in the geographical area in which you have been placed is an important part of the work God is doing at this time. Yes, we are all very insignificant, and it is easy to think, who really cares about us or takes notice? But just remember what God emphasized, that we should never despise the day of small things (Zechariah 4:10). Even the very few today who are keeping the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread with proper hearts and minds are confirming God's promise that the gates of hell would never prevail against His last-day Church (Matthew 16:18). At many times in human history the manifestation of God's work has been small and seemingly insignificant. But to God, it is not insignificant at all. When even one called child of His endeavors to put on the mind of Jesus Christ, and to work diligently to overcome the carnal self, God is very pleased indeed.

The majority of our former brethren have been distracted from the true meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Their leaders have convinced them in very subtle ways that overcoming our natural natures is not all that important to God. Spiritual Israel today has been seduced by sermons highlighting prophetic schemes overlaid upon current events, and their leaders tell them that salvation is found in obeying whatever the ministry says, with the promise of protection in the place of safety if they comply. Either that, or they have cast off all constraint of church government whatsoever and now revel in being laws unto themselves. In either case, very few are focused upon scouring their own hearts and minds

for idols which God hates. The work of identifying and putting away leavening is too taxing and painful. It is so much easier to focus upon "spiritual works" which seem to please God, while setting aside the requirement to resist our carnal natures. For this reason the majority of God's beloved children today are not prepared to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread properly. Many have inadvertently slipped into a subtle—Protestant—orientation, praising Jesus Christ in His role as our Savior (Passover), but diminishing the meaning of the Feast by concluding Christ did it for us, so we really do not have to.

The Worldwide Church of God change in the marriage doctrine in 1974 was a classic example of this false orientation at work. When it became clear that the prognostications about Christ's return in the 1970s were not going to materialize, many members who were living alone (because they had a living mate unwilling to dwell with them anymore) became restless at the prospect of living the rest of their lives without a physical companion. More and more prospective members were in D&R situations, and the "hard-line" teaching on the sanctity of past vows was seen as an obstacle to new members. Not only that, but the ministry was concerned that they might begin to lose many current members. What would happen to the tithe income if these disaffected members began to leave in droves? How would they continue to do "the work" to the world if they did not have the monetary base needed to sustain the enterprise? It only made sense to look for a way to "relieve the burden" of these endangered tithe-payers. What better way to accomplish that than to reinterpret God's law to say it is OK for certain ones previously divorced to remarry. Problem solved.

But this act not only offended God in and of itself as an abomination, it also set the precedent for more liberalizations to come. If this particular law could be modified to make it easier for carnal people to exist within God's church, why could not other laws be relaxed as well to eliminate the necessity of overcoming our comfortable, natural states? After all, it is also very hard to trust God for healing, when our modern medical system offers so many attractive therapies. Do we really have to resist those attractive drugs and surgeries? Why no, let us change our interpretation of that law too! Begin claiming that God performs His healing *through* modern medicine. Now we need not overcome the carnal urge to go to the doctor. We can do what comes naturally, all the while believing it is what God wants us to do. No fighting the self required. No purging out leavening needed!

Following that (the mid-1970s), the Worldwide ministry reinterpreted the very teaching about man's natural nature. Whereas beforehand we had been taught that our natural minds are inherently evil—even from the womb—we were now told that we were not really bad at all. No, it is only Satan who is really bad, and we only become bad by "tuning in to his wavelength." This change, which entered in very subtly, probably created more damage than most realize. What was not explained was the inevitable repercussions of now believing that we are not inherently evil. If my own mind is really not that bad, why should

I crucify it? If Satan is the only bad guy in the equation, then without him, I would be all right. With that perverted thinking, how important is the meaning of Unleavened Bread? My approach to identifying and putting out sin is very different, depending upon whether I believe my inherent nature is evil, or whether I think Satan is the only culprit. Is it any wonder that the entire emphasis upon examining the self and identifying leavening became relegated to the sidelines? The people became used to the idea that they were not so bad. Being a good Christian meant *pray* for the work, *pay* one's tithes dutifully, and *stay* faithful to support the ministry, no matter what. No more focus on changing bad carnal habits. And any minister who chose to remind the church of that requirement quickly became unpopular. The people began to eat a spiritual diet of leavening—fed to them by their ministers—and told they need not make themselves uncomfortable by giving up what they craved carnally in exchange for the unleavened bread of Christ's way. You can have your leavened cake and eat it too!

How different is it for you, dear brethren, who have been blessed to recognize this history for what it is? How blessed are you to see the difference in real truth vs. those nefarious apostate teachings? How much, then, do you have to celebrate because you are not engulfed in deception like so many of our beloved brethren? So take heart, and no matter what your struggles in this present life may be, take time to relish the gift of this Truth and to thank God for the awesome privilege of your calling. We all have so much for which to be thankful. We have the opportunity to keep this glorious Feast with open eyes, and to truly appreciate God's wisdom as manifested by His awesome master plan which we are portraying once again by keeping the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

New Moon

The new moon, Iyar (second month), will begin on the evening of April 24. The new moon day is April 25.

Trip Schedule

May 23	JWB	Carlisle, England
May 30	JWB	Lausanne, Switzerland
June 1	JWB	Grenoble, France

Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
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
WSE-CL2 67	03-19-09	04-18-09	Christian Living Series #2 Goodness #1 1
WSE-CL2 68	04-08-09	04-25-09	Christian Living Series #2 Kindness #1
WSE-JB 22-105-24R	04-08-09	05-02-09	Fund. of Belief: Divine Revelation Unchanging Truth
WSE-CL2 69	04-08-09	05-09-09	Christian Living Series #2 Kindness #2
WSE-JB 22-106-24S	04-30-09	05-16-09	Fund. of Belief: Divine Revelation Does God Repent?

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby