

Announcement Letter May 2016

Dear Brethren:

It is always a pleasure to address you in this monthly installment, and to encourage you in your struggles to build spiritual character in the midst of the challenging environment of this world. Many of God's children are facing severe trials of one kind or another, whether health, family, economic, or personal. But regardless, you are all among those who are most blessed because of your spiritual calling, and therefore you all have a very bright future ahead of you if you can hold firm till the very end of your courses. The church is a spiritual family, and we are pleased to travel hand in hand with you, to take hold of those crowns that await in God's glorious plan.

Last month, we completed observance of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. Next month, in the early part of June (late spring), we will be celebrating the Feast of Pentecost. But during this particular month, there are no holy observances commanded of God. The primary significance of this month is that it is a key part of the *weeks* being counted toward Pentecost, the *Feast of Weeks* (Exodus 34:22). So, beginning with Wave Sheaf Sunday—the first day of the count (Leviticus 23:15) on April 24—fifty days are being counted (encompassing seven full weeks), pointing to the next Holy Day in God's plan, which this year will be on Monday, June 13, after a *full and complete count* of fifty days.

The world celebrates a number of special occasions during the month of May. Some past and present observances include May Day (with strong pagan roots of goddess worship), Ascension Day (forty days following Easter, when Jesus supposedly rose to heaven), and in the USA specifically, Mother's Day (ostensibly an innocent secular day, but likewise with troubling religious roots), Memorial Day (honoring those who died in military service), and even more recent observances like Cinco de Mayo (celebrating Mexican heritage in this country).

What do these observances all have in common? They are *profane*! What does that mean? While the word can certainly imply something that is very evil (like *profanity*), in its basic root meaning, it denotes simply *the opposite* of anything that is holy. The Creator God defines what is holy and what is not. That which God sets aside and makes special is holy. Everything else by comparison is *profane*. So if God hallows it, it is holy. If man is the author of it, it is by nature *profane*. Even the observance of a wedding anniversary—although very acceptable in God's eyes for His people—is still profane, because God has never used His power to confirm such observances as holy. And if they are

not holy, they are automatically *profane*. Does that seem provocative to you? The point is to impress upon us all the difference in that which God creates vs. what man creates. The world certainly does not understand this principle, but even within God's church, there is a tendency for us to muddle this concept and begin to ascribe some "significance" to the things that man has "hallowed" outside of God's direction. It is helpful therefore to crystalize this whole topic into the choice between that which is holy vs. that which God considers to be profane. It is one or the other.

In its deeper application, God uses the concept to describe apostasy, the departure from divinely revealed Truth:

Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them (Ezekiel 22:26).

Do we put a difference between the things God has made holy by a decree vs. all other things that are classified by default as *profane*? The peoples of the world will be hostile to those who fail to honor *their* holidays. As you deal with these pressures in your own individual lives, just be sure never to confuse in your mind the holy and the profane. The next and only *holy observance* on the immediate horizon is Pentecost. May we all be focused, during this month of May, on preparing to celebrate that particular day. Pentecost is the one that matters.

Feast of Tabernacles Scheduling

We are beginning preparation for the Feast of Tabernacles, so we need to know as soon as possible if any will be attending at a different Feast site than usual. We soon must begin work on the scheduling of emcees, those who give opening and closing prayers, and the music programs at both sites. Knowing in advance how many will attend each site enables us to print enough schedules, secure a music program, etc. We thank you in advance for your help.

Holy Day

Pentecost..... Monday, June 13

New Moon

The new moon, Iyar (second month), begins Sunday evening, May 8. The new moon day is Monday, May 9.

Trip Schedule

Mr. Jon Brisby

May 21. Jacksonville, Florida

June 4. Cary, North Carolina

June 11, 13 (Pentecost)..... Lausanne, Switzerland

Mr. Richard Litz

May 7. Eugene, Oregon

May 14. Phoenix, Arizona

May 21. Stephenville, Texas

Recorded Sermon Schedule

| Sermon # | Mailed | Played | Title |
|--------------|----------|----------|--|
| WSE-JB 179 | 03-24-16 | 04-30-16 | Voting—What Is the Faith Once Delivered? |
| WSE-RC 39-13 | 04-14-16 | 05-07-16 | Confrontations and Responses of Jesus Christ #13 |
| WSE-JB 180 | 04-14-16 | 05-14-16 | Protocol for Holy Convocations |
| WSE-RC 39-14 | 04-14-16 | 05-21-16 | Confrontations and Responses of Jesus Christ #14 |
| WSE-JB 182 | 05-12-16 | 05-28-16 | By What Authority? |
| WSE-RC 39-15 | 05-12-16 | 06-04-16 | Confrontations and Responses of Jesus Christ #15 |
| WSE-JB 183 | 05-12-16 | 06-11-16 | How Do We Differ? |
| WSE-RWL 19 | 06-02-16 | 06-18-16 | The New Drink Offering |

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby