

Announcement Letter March 2018

Dear Brethren:

God's Holy Day season begins early this year on the Roman calendar, and that means that the arrival of March marks our home stretch in counting down toward the Passover. It is an honor to address the Church of God and each one of you who has the unique opportunity to observe these solemn occasions before God and to be accepted of the Most High in presenting your offerings before Him.

Why a unique opportunity? Because no human being can even think of coming into His presence in a relationship of *true communion* except that he/she is first called (John 6:44). There are many in this world who claim to be Christians—many who are sincere in their intent to worship God acceptably, and yet cannot do so because they have not yet received an invitation from their Maker. One day they will receive that calling, but for now, they are cut off nonetheless. Only those called to be part of a firstfruits Work can even begin to enter into that relationship with the Father and Jesus Christ. You are among those very few in this age who have received that divine calling, so you are in a very small subset of human beings today who have the chance to appear in God's presence.

Furthermore, within the small subset of those who received that calling, how many will be partaking acceptably of the Passover at the end of this month and legitimately communing with God during the Feast of Unleavened Bread? It is not just a matter of being called, but acting upon that call and doing what Christ commanded us to do (John 14:15). Only those who show *legitimate respect* for that calling by following God's *specific instructions* for proper worship will be accepted. "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14). God says that true worship involves the Holy Spirit as an integral ingredient: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Just going through the physical ritual of baptism does not mean that we "have the Spirit" which is required. "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19). This command is meaningless unless it is possible for God's called to smother/snuff out the Spirit after once having been baptized! By our refusal to *listen to God's revealed instructions* and to *heed them as little children*, we can indeed quench that Spirit in our lives.

How many of God's called children in this world today have done exactly that? Just a few? Or is it the majority? "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Corinthians 11:30). This is not to say that many of these have totally extinguished the Spirit so that they cannot be redeemed, but we are asking how many—at this present moment—are in a spiritual position to be able to appear in God's midst and to offer acceptable sacrifices which He will honor. Many who once believed have since become offended and are not now part of any organized group trying to keep Holy Days at all. Among those relative few who are part of organized groups who came out of that body we believe to have been the True Church of God in this age, how many of them will actually offer acceptable offerings? God also speaks of this dark time in history, and the vanity of the worship of His true people in apostasy:

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full [fed up] of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood (Isaiah 1:11–15).

These are God's called people. And these are ones who are actually going through the motions of "keeping" the Sabbath and Holy Days, and yet are not being accepted by God, even as Cain likewise brought an offering but was rejected. How many of God's legitimate children today fall into that category? Sadly, the majority, because the majority have done exactly what God told them not to do!

Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men . . . And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition (Mark 7:7–9).

And there is nothing new under the sun, because God's last-day church has done precisely the same thing. God's response to such perversion is likewise the same—a repudiation of every sacrifice that involves false doctrine in absence of respect for *the faith once delivered*. Our God is adamant that He will accept no polluted sacrifices, and it is always the acts of human beings *to change and to pervert doctrine* that God calls pollution.

Therefore, how many on the earth today are not only called legitimately, but are holding firm to that original Faith, preparing sincerely to appear and to worship God in Spirit and in legitimate Truth? The fact that those of you receiving this letter are among some of the very few who have that opportunity makes your participation in this upcoming Holy Day season special indeed.

In spite of your weaknesses of the flesh and of the mind, if you are sincere in believing in those precepts that God revealed through a chosen servant in this age, and if you are determined to crucify the carnal mind—rather than to cater to it—then God will indeed accept your offerings. He will acknowledge your partaking of the Passover, and He will gladly accept your participation in the Feast of Unleavened Bread as an honor to Him. You need not yet be perfect, but you do need to be absolutely sincere in accepting the True Doctrine as revealed by Jesus Christ, be zealous in admitting your sins, and be determined to put on the thinking and behavior of that Savior more and more. He is a merciful and forgiving God. But He requires that we acknowledge Truth as He gave it. If we do, and if we are sincere, He will indeed accept us, commune with us, inspire us, defend us, guide us, and bless us.

May you each enjoy that very special acceptance, and the blessing of having that close, personal relationship with the Father and His beloved Son.

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. It is important that we get a reasonable head count to make sure all facets of the Feast run smoothly. We thank you in advance for your help.

New Moon

The new moon, Nisan (first month), begins Friday evening, March 16. The new moon day is Sabbath, March 17.

Trip Schedule

Mr. Jon Brisby

March 29, 30, 31..... Cape Town, South Africa

April 6, 7..... Thornton-Clevelys, Lancashire, United Kingdom

Holy Days

Appropriate preparations for these days should begin:

Passover Thursday (evening), March 29

Night to Be Much Observed Friday, March 30

1st Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread Sabbath, March 31

2nd Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread Friday, April 6

Recorded Sermon Schedule

| Sermon # | Mailed | Played | Title |
|------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| HFT-RC 1981-3 | 02-01-18 | 02-24-18 | What Can We Know About Babylon? #3 |
| WSE-RC C-1 | 02-01-18 | 03-03-18 | Change #1 |
| WSE-JWB 211-1 | 02-22-18 | 03-10-18 | What's in a Name? #1 |
| WSE-RGB 1 | 02-22-18 | 03-17-18 | Pre-Passover Exam: Areas for Review |
| WSE-RWL 19 | 02-22-18 | 03-24-18 | The New Drink Offering |
| Holy Day Sermons | 02-15-18 | — | Passover/NTBO/1st HD |
| WSE-RC C-2 | 03-15-18 | 04-07-18 | Change #2 |
| WSE-JWB 211-2 | 02-22-18 | 04-14-18 | What's in a Name? #2 |

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby