

## Announcement Letter August 2019

Dear Brethren:

Special greetings again to all of you who have chosen to be part of this little remnant fellowship. We appreciate you, remember you in our prayers, and thank God for the manifestation of His Holy Spirit in your lives. It is that Spirit in you that makes you part of Christ's fulfilled promise that the gates of hell will never prevail against His Church.

As members of the true Body of Christ—and being led by His Spirit—we are ones who are *convicted in mind* by the need to obey all of God's instructions. But the particular instruction that truly ends up setting apart His chosen people involves Sabbaths and Holy Days. "And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God" (Ezekiel 20:20).

The annual Holy Days especially (not just the weekly Sabbath) are indeed a herald that sets us visibly apart in this world. By simply doing what God requires—assembling in those places that He appoints and there making our spiritual sacrifices before Him—we do indeed make ourselves odd and distinctive. That relatively "simple" command to attend Feasts also sets into motion *a whole set of forces* which becomes part of that *sign*. How so?

We are told that the just shall live by faith (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). That means God's people will make choices of critical importance in their lives based upon things that people around us cannot see and do not recognize as being relevant. We all like the idea of "going on vacation" (some more than others), and Mr. Armstrong always said that attending the Feast of Tabernacles is *God's vacation plan*. But to attend year after year, sacrificing all other priorities, for the sake of an annual "vacation"? That kind of thinking makes God's people very odd in this world. Besides that, there are many factors that seek to deter us from following through, often involving our natural human fears. Examples:

- I am not comfortable traveling away from home to a place that is not familiar.
- If I go to the Feast, I might lose my job.
- If I go to the Feast, one or more family members will be angry.
- I do not feel comfortable in crowds.
- I fear to fly on an airplane.
- I do not know how I will have all of the funds needed to make the trip.
- My health is marginal. What if I get sick while I am away from home?
- Who will take care of my responsibilities back home if I leave?

All of these are examples of *real-world pressures* that work to deter any one of us from attending the Feast of Tabernacles each year. And every single one of these is a manifestation of *fear*! They are all just another way of saying, "If I obey God and put Him first, things in my physical life might go very wrong. I am afraid to put God first."

God has intentionally designed His commands to force us to step out of our comfort zones and to learn to *act in faith*. Faith is the opposite of fear. Fear is a very compelling force in our minds, even if it presents itself differently to each individual. Our natural fears are various. But the fear that seeks to control you is no different (in effect) than the fear that seeks to control one of your brethren. The end result of giving in to fear is the quenching of faith. And those who quench faith wind up disobeying God's instructions in order to "save themselves" by their own human means.

This is how a relatively "simple" command to observe Sabbaths and Holy Days turns out to be so distinctive as *a great sign* in setting God's faithful people apart from the world. That which is required to obey God's command to appear before Him in a designated place each year includes the overcoming of fear that is real in our minds.

So here we are in the month of August once again, looking forward to the approach of those autumn Holy Days. It is the time when we each have to take stock of our spiritual priorities and determine once again whether we love God and His ways enough to make them our priority, or whether this might be the year that we "give in" to the dictates of our human minds. Fear is deadly (Revelation 21:8). Fear is no excuse. Have you made your provisions to be at the Feast this year? If not, what are you waiting for? God will not always make it easy. You may have to fight for it. It is one of the ways that He helps us to see where our true love lies. Those of you who have to fight against especially challenging circumstances to be at the Feast are a particular inspiration to the whole church.

On the other hand, do you think you are exempt? What is your excuse, if so? Why do you think that? You might have a real reason, and one that God will honor in giving you an exemption. But for many of you, your "excuse" is simply an expression of "fear"—*worry* that something *might* go terribly wrong if you obey the command.

May God bless you in your planning and work of preparation in fulfilling His command to appear before Him at the Feast of Tabernacles. May you be among those stirring up the Spirit to manifest *real faith*, and thereby add to a very great witness of Jesus Christ.

## **Death**

Mr. Donald Smythe of Pearce, AZ, died Monday, July 15, after contracting a flu-like illness. Donald had been in a weakened condition the last few years and he was unable to fight off this illness. He was 73 at the time of his death. We offer our most sincere condolences to his wife, Frankie, his children and extended family.

## **New Moon**

The new moon, Ellul (sixth month), begins Saturday evening, August 31. The new moon day is Sunday, September 1.

## **Excess Second Tithe**

This is a reminder of the yearly need for second tithe to cover administrative and facility costs for the Feast. We want to reserve adequate for an enjoyable and meaningful Feast. At the same time, we all must remember, to keep the Feast requires the rental of halls, transportation, aid to those who are deserving, etc. If we all contribute, the burden for each is relatively small. A huge thanks to those whose hearts and minds are willing. May God richly and abundantly bless you in all ways.

## **Second Tithe Requests**

Please be reminded that requests for second-tithe assistance for the Feast of Tabernacles need to be in by September 15. Any who need assistance should notify us in ample time.

## Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
WSE-JWB 225-9	07-11-19	08-03-19	Just What Do You Mean—Faith Once Delivered? #9
WSE-RC 90-15	07-11-19	08-10-19	An Analysis of Jude #15
WSE-JWB 225-10	08-01-19	08-17-19	Just What Do You Mean—Faith Once Delivered? #10
WSE-RC 90-16	08-01-19	08-24-19	An Analysis of Jude #16
WSE-RC 90-17	08-01-19	08-31-19	An Analysis of Jude #17
WSE-JWB 225-11	08-22-19	09-07-19	Just What Do You Mean—Faith Once Delivered? #11
WSE-RC 90-18	08-22-19	09-14-19	An Analysis of Jude #18

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby