



"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." – Mathew 24:14

May 1, 2002

Dear Brethren:

It is hard to believe, but Pentecost is only a few weeks away. We are already preparing sermons for the Pentecost weekend of May 19, 2002, that will explain in more depth the importance of that annual festival – and what it means for you, personally. *Why* did God set aside the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days, to be kept by His people in worship of Him? Without the Sabbath and the Holy Days, one simply cannot fully understand and comprehend God's awesome *plan* for mankind. Further, one would not know that today, only a very few are called to God's Truth – the overwhelming majority of mankind does not and *cannot* understand what God is doing here on earth.

The Feast of Pentecost teaches us that we *can* understand – because God gave, on that very day, His Spirit to His little flock, His called-out-ones. He did not give His Spirit to the world at large, and no matter how much one might want to try – without God's Spirit one *cannot* understand God's plan for man. And those who once kept the Holy Days, but in due time ceased to do so, have *lost* that vitally important knowledge that the world is *not* called today.

How thankful we must be that God has called *us* out of this world and that He has given us the understanding and the knowledge of His Son, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 2:18; Ephesians 4:13). But we must never take this special privilege for granted – lest we lose it and drift away, as so many before us have done (cp. Hebrews 2:1-3).

With knowledge comes responsibility! *Why* did God call us today? Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong told us repeatedly that we have been called to fulfill the commission of preaching the gospel to the world as a witness and prepare individually for the return of Christ. But, one cannot prepare individually while neglecting involvement in the work of preaching the gospel. The more our heart is in the work, the more we will overcome individually.

God has called us at *this* time so that we can do a job. If it were otherwise, God would be a respecter of persons, which He is not (cp. Acts 10:34, Authorized Version). And if we are only concerned with how *we* can make it into the kingdom, we are like the unprofitable servant who buried his talents in the ground and refused to use what God had given him (cp. Matthew 25:24-27). And, we are acting selfishly, only thinking about ourselves, rather than showing deep concern for the suffering world around us. Let us keep Pentecost, then, with the overall picture of God's plan in mind – and what God wants you to do with the knowledge that He has granted to you today.

The Canadian brethren are looking forward to a visit for the Pentecost weekend to the Edmonton area by Edwin Pope. Rene and Delia Messier will also be traveling to Edmonton for that weekend. The Canadian church will be having a Directors meeting at that time to discuss

how to do the work most effectively. Mr. Pope will also be in attendance. Please pray about this important meeting, which we will have on Friday May 17th. In addition, our schedule for Net services that is posted on our Web page (www.eternalgod.org) lists the sermons to be given by Dave Harris and Norbert Link which will be broadcast over Internet during the Pentecost weekend.

Although we may be a little group, the work is moving forward. We should not be discouraged by the very small beginning of this work (cp. Zechariah 4:10), nor by apparent temporary setbacks. Rather, we must understand that it is the living Jesus Christ who guides and directs His church, and it is He who sifts and separates the chaff from the wheat. We are producing more booklets and we will walk through doors that God opens to us, as He provides us with the finances (cp. 2 Corinthians 2:12-17; 1 Corinthians 16:9; Colossians 4: 2-3; Acts 14:27). All of you should have received, by now, our newest booklet, “*Do You Have an Immortal Soul?*” This booklet was printed in England and we are very happy for the continuing cooperation of the brethren in England and in Canada in our efforts to preach and publish the gospel to the world as a witness (cp. Matthew 24:14). “As a witness” means just that -- we do not brow beat or coerce people into reading our literature since we know it is God who does the calling. Our responsibility is putting the truth out there.

Our next booklet, “*The Keys to Happy Marriages and Families!*,” is now in its final stages. This booklet is to be printed in Canada and distributed to the US and Britain from there. Each region will then mail copies out to you. We hope that you will have your copy by the end of May.

Although Pentecost is just around the corner, it is not too early to make plans for the *Feast of Tabernacles*. The list of motels and rates for rooms for the feast site in Penticton, Canada, has been posted on our Web sites. We would encourage as many as possible, who will be attending the feast in Canada, to make reservations at the Sandman Inn, which is hosting us this year. They have recently redone many of their rooms with new beds and furniture. They have kitchenettes, an indoor pool and Jacuzzi, a restaurant on site and other amenities. They are close to shopping and Okanagan Lake. The more people book there the better deal we get for the hall rental, so it is favorable to the Church for brethren to book there. Now would also be a good time to send in your *tithe of the tithe*, which is needed by the Church for the payments of Feast-related costs and expenses.

We are now experiencing the *beginnings* of the fulfillment of end-time prophecies. To properly *watch* world events (cp. Matthew 24:42; 25:13; Mark 13:35-37), one must understand, however, what is actually prophesied in the Bible. One must know who the key players will be. Only God’s Spirit – which is a Spirit of understanding (cp. Ephesians 1:13-21) and of prophecy (cp. Revelation 19:10; 2 Peter 1:20-21) – can reveal to us what the Scriptures predict is going to happen.

Although the Church of God has understood the end-time biblical prophecies correctly for a long time, some people have rejected this understanding in recent years and have proposed alternative prophetic scenarios. Some seem to be trying to figure out when exactly Christ will return, although God tells us clearly that only He knows the exact time (cp. Matthew 24:36, 42, 44; Mark 13:32, 35; Acts 1:7). We want to briefly comment on a recent paper that has come out relative to a “new” look at end-time prophecy. Some of you have asked us about this paper. We have studied the paper and have found it to be seriously flawed. We would encourage you to

review our booklet, *Europe in Prophecy*, which gives an accurate appraisal and overview of end time events, as they had been consistently explained a long time ago by the Church. A new scenario might seem appealing at first sight, but the truth is always compelling.

We don't want to comment here on the paper with its new prophetic scenario in detail. Quite "coincidentally," perhaps, Norbert Link had already planned to give a third part to his recent series on prophecy, covering the correct biblical scenario pertaining to the relationship between the United States of America, Canada, and Great Britain on the one hand, and a United States of Europe under the leadership of Germany on the other hand. This sermon is scheduled to be given over the Internet on May 10.

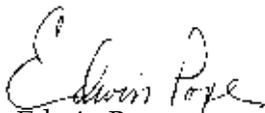
We feel, however, that we must make one comment, so as not to be found negligent in such an important matter. Close to the end of the paper on the "new" prophetic perspective, the author writes that "in this final climatic battle" *just prior to Christ's return*, "none of God's people will be 'conscientious objectors.'... [H]is servants (spiritual saints or physical Israelites) will fight!... God prophesies that He will empower His people (spiritual or physical) to be tremendous warriors in the fight at the end of this age. If you are a servant of Jesus Christ, then *mentally prepare yourself to 'go to war'* for your Lord at the end of this age."

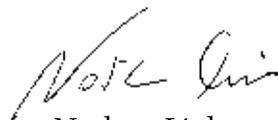
Brethren, we hope that all of you can see how wrong this teaching is. (This alone should tell you something about this, or any, "new" prophetic perspective, when it reaches such unbiblical conclusions.) If you have any doubts regarding your responsibility, before God, when it comes to fighting in war, please listen again to our three-part sermon series on *Military Service and War*. If you need a copy of those three tapes, please let us know.

Satan continues to be very active, especially in these prophetically-important times, so let's be praying for one another, asking God for His guidance and love toward us as His children and for us to love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love [Greek, *agape*, that is, Godly love] for one another." (John 13:35). Pentecost also pictures the fact that we *can* love one another, if the Spirit of God lives in us (cp. Romans 5:5).

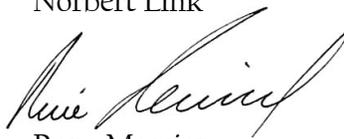
Brethren, once again, we would like to personally and specifically *thank all of you* for your faithfulness, for your prayers and for the encouraging example you represent. The work of the *Church of the Eternal God* involves all of us doing whatever we can and whatever God opens to us. Please continue in your valiant service to God the Father and Jesus Christ and to each other. We know that in this, God is very pleased.

Your brothers in Christ,


Edwin Pope


Norbert Link


Dave Harris


Rene Messier