

CHURCH OF THE
G O D
E T E R N A L

"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." —Matthew 24:14

January 3, 2007

Dear Brethren, Co-Workers and Friends:

During this past Christmas season and the New Year's celebrations, I was again struck by the fact of how much this world is in utter confusion and bewilderment. Christmas "messages" on Christ's birth on December 25 were circulated, even though He was not, and could not possibly have been born in the middle of winter. It was also claimed by many that with His birth, peace had entered the world. However, we have not seen peace for the last 2,000 years, and Christ Himself said that He did not come to bring peace, but the sword (Matthew 10:34). He did not mean, of course, that His servants should take up literal swords to fight others (compare Matthew 26:52)—but that His true gospel message would divide those who are of God and those who are of this world (Matthew 10:35-36; John 15:18-19).

Christ came to bring peace "for all those pleasing Him" (Luke 2:14, Living Bible)—not for this present evil world which is living in darkness and which is ruled by Satan and his demons (1 Thessalonians 5:4-5; Ephesians 6:12).

"Christmas messages" might have also mentioned, in passing, the return of Christ at the last day to resurrect those who died in Him—without giving any clear explanation as to what is meant by those phrases. Obvious inconsistencies within orthodox Christianity remained unrealized or were simply ignored; such as, why would "saints" who are allegedly in heaven (as is wrongly believed) need to be resurrected; and why would Christ come back to this earth to bring peace and—in the minds of some preachers—some kind of a nebulous godly Kingdom, if Christ already brought peace to this world 2,000 years ago, and if—as is also wrongly taught—the Kingdom of God has already been established in our hearts?

As I said, all these false teachings cloud the true meaning and purpose of WHO God is, what He is DOING today, and WHY man was created in the first place. God has called us to an understanding which escapes this world's comprehension. We are privileged to know what has been given to only a very few in this day and age—but with revealed knowledge comes responsibility!

When Christ returns, this world will be at WAR—not at peace. If Christ was not to return, no human being would be saved alive. Some falsely teach that at the time of Christ's return, no human being will have survived—but this concept is clearly without Biblical basis (compare Isaiah 1:9; 11:11; 24:6). Many WILL die in the terrible worldwide battles to ensue—but not all. Some will be spared. In fact, some in the Church will be protected during this terrible time which is called the "Great Tribulation" in Scripture (Isaiah 33:14-16).

God called us today to prepare spiritually for these traumatic events—and for Christ's return, to rule with Him ON this earth, and OVER this earth, for a thousand years (Revelation 5:10; 20:4-6). In addition, we are to warn this world of impending disaster so that perhaps some might listen, wake up and change their ways (Isaiah 21:6-9; Ezekiel 33:1-11). We are also to show how we can have peace, comfort and hope in the face of suffering, pain, bloodshed and death. First, we need to acquire these godly qualities ourselves (compare John 16:33; 14:27), and then, we are to teach others about them.

To help you with this two-fold *individual* charge, we are enclosing in the USA our new booklet which addresses the undeniable facts and the reasons for all the many sufferings in this world, as well as the trials which we experience in our own Christian lives (This booklet has already been distributed in the UK where it was printed). It is titled, "*Human Suffering, Why... And How Much Longer?*" When we go through trials, we need to know why they come, and how to cope with them. Rather than falling into utter despair and depression, God offers us peace and HOPE, even in our trials. God tells us what we need to do to enjoy HIS comfort, and to be able to comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). Our new booklet gives you answers which you should not be without.

Before we may fully realize it, the Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread will be upon us. In furtherance of our two-fold *collective* commission to preach the gospel and to feed the flock, we are working on a new booklet, explaining the meaning of Passover, Unleavened Bread and Pentecost. We hope to be able to distribute this new booklet to all of you well ahead of Passover, to help you *prepare* for these all-important Festivals. In addition to our weekly *Standing Watch* programs, we have also begun to place selected *video-taped sermons* on Google Video. So far, sermons on the books of Jonah, Ezra and Nehemiah have been made public through Google, as well as sermons on idolatry and Christian suffering. We intend to continue making this service available for all those who may be or become interested in the correct understanding of God's Word.

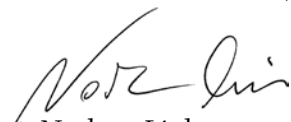
We are also planning a memorial service in the San Diego area for Edwin Pope, our beloved Senior Pastor, who died on December 7. We have decided to conduct our annual Conference at a time coinciding with the memorial service, to enable our international ministers and their wives to attend. The tentative dates for the Conference are February 9-14, with the memorial service to be held on Sunday, February 11. If you would like to attend this special memorial service, please contact us for further details.

More and more devastating developments are occurring in this world, showing us that the night is far spent, and the day of Christ's return is at hand (Romans 13:12). We are confronted, almost on a daily or weekly basis, with religious confusion, wars, rumors of wars, and natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes and tornadoes, mudslides, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, horrible weather conditions, as well as famine and disease epidemics (compare Matthew 24:5-8). The NEXT prophesied event in the Bible is, clearly, the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:9-22; Luke 21:20-24)! The time for the Church of God to finish its commission of preaching the gospel to this world is getting shorter (Mark 13:10; John 9:4).

Let us stay united in this most important, colossal task in which God's people must be engaged. God WANTS the gospel to be preached, and He will give His Church all the means and the much needed help to fulfill His Will. And every member is to supply his part to the body (compare 1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

Thank, you, brethren, on behalf of Jesus Christ, the LIVING Head of His Church, for your continued loyalty and dedication to God's great Master Plan.

With Christian love,



Norbert Link