

CHURCH OF THE
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

September 5, 2007

Dear Brethren and Friends:

It is hard to pick up a newspaper or listen to or read the news, and not hear about more killings in Iraq; more unrest in Afghanistan and India; more fighting and violent murders in various nations of Africa; and, of course, terrible crimes in the USA, the UK, Canada, and all over the world.

Even nature—the weather—has been acting very strangely—with floods in parts of India, China, Europe, the UK and the USA. We hear comments like, "This is the worst rain since 50 years." In the town of Summerland where I live, 63 millimeters of rain fell in two hours, setting an all-time record since rainfall has been recorded here. These unusual worldwide rainfalls have produced floods which have adversely affected literally hundreds of millions of victims—not just a few thousand. People wonder and shake their heads, but the truth is, we, the whole earth, are under a curse for turning our backs on God and for rejecting His clear commands of how and when to worship Him on a daily, weekly and annual basis.

Yet the Bible, God's inspired Word, is very clear on how and when to worship the Creator God—so, in a sense, man is without excuse for disobeying Him. But we do understand that Satan, the god of this world, has blinded the eyes of most of mankind so that they simply cannot understand the truth, including how and when to worship God. For instance, God's weekly and annual Holy Days are outlined in numerous passages, including the 23rd chapter of the book of Leviticus.

This month designates the beginning of God's Fall Holy Day season (compare Leviticus 23:23-44). We are instructed to keep four annual Holy Days in the Fall. All of these have great meaning for us and are a vital part of God's plan for mankind. Let us briefly review them (For an in-depth study, please make sure to review our newest booklet, *"The Meaning of God's Fall Holy Days."*).

This year, the Feast of Trumpets—the first of God's annual Fall Holy Days—will be celebrated on September 13 (beginning with sunset or evening on September 12). This Day pictures the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in power and glory, to rule this earth for a thousand years. Christ will return at the last trumpet, as mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. The Feast of Trumpets also pictures the resurrection to immortal life of the faithful saints of God—including righteous individuals of the Old Testament, some of whom are mentioned in Hebrews 11, as well as true, converted Christians who lived since the time when God poured out His Holy Spirit on the New Testament Church on the Day of Pentecost. It is a time when God's saints shall put on immortality, as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54. This body must put on incorruption. As part of the true saints of God, we shall be changed to immortal God beings, ruling with and under Christ for a thousand years on this earth, and then on to eternity. What a glorious occasion that will be. When Christ returns, we shall see Him as He is today, in His glorified state.

On September 22 is the Day of Atonement. It is a time to afflict our souls with fasting, giving us an opportunity to draw closer to God and reflect on the meaning of this day. It pictures the putting away of Satan the devil—freeing man from the negative influences he has on this earth—and chaining him, that is, restricting his access to God's creation for a thousand years. (However, at the end of the Millennium, he will be let loose for a season, as outlined in Revelation 20:2-3, 7-8). Without his negative influence on mankind during the Millennium, man will be freed from his spiritual blindness, caused to a large extent by Satan's deceptions, and truly be able to live in peace and harmony with one another. The Day of Atonement symbolizes the event when mankind can receive atonement with God—when the sins of mankind for which Satan bears responsibility, will be placed back on his head.

On September 27 is the third of the four Fall Festivals—with the first day being a holy convocation or an annual Sabbath. This period is called the Feast of Tabernacles, and it lasts for seven days. These seven days picture the thousand-year rule of Christ on the earth, with the help and assistance of the saints, as kings and priests (Revelation 5:10). At that time, we will have an opportunity—on a grand and unrestricted scale—to restore the government of God on the earth, and to teach all mankind God's laws, including the weekly and annual Sabbaths. The earth will have to be renewed and prepared for the resurrection of the vast majority of mankind. It will be a resurrection to physical life, which the last Festival pictures.

On October 4 is the last of the Fall Festivals, called the Last Great Day. It is so called because it pictures the opportunity for all mankind who lived and died prior to the Millennium, and who will be resurrected after the Millennium, to accept God's laws and ways. Isaiah 65:20 indicates that man, who was not called to really understand the truth in this day and age, will be given a period of one hundred years, to become converted and qualify for God's gift of eternal life. Mankind will be taught by God, during that Great White Throne Judgment period, and man will have to make the decision to either follow God's ways or the ways of Satan's rebellion and disobedience. Those who become converted and qualify, will be changed to immortality; and those who reject God and His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ, will be burnt up in the lake of fire. It will be their second death from which there will be no resurrection (Revelation 20:12-14). They will simply cease to exist, with no more consciousness, life or individuality. Thankfully, we are persuaded that most will choose life and salvation, and an opportunity to enter the God Family as immortal God beings, as opposed to choosing eternal death.

These Fall Holy Days encompass the final stages of God's master plan for mankind. We should be grateful for the knowledge of these days and also for the opportunity to keep them at their appointed times.

God has a perfect plan for mankind, and we are privileged at this time to both understand and to be a part of that plan. So, let us look forward to these days with zeal, enthusiasm and anticipation—yearning for the time when we will have a part in fulfilling their ultimate meaning in the Kingdom of God.

With Christian love,



Rene Messier