

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

January 8, 2008

Dear Brethren, Co-Workers and Friends,

The year of 2007 has now passed, complete with the usual end-of-year spending and excess, which was just a continuation of what has become the norm in many nations around the world. However, financial clouds on the horizon, emanating primarily from the subprime mortgage crisis in the USA, cast a cloud over the normal festivities. Subprime lending is, put simply, the act of approving mortgages to those with a poor credit history at higher than normal interest rates, and many have found it impossible to meet their commitments, with the result of foreclosures and associated problems. In addition, the housing market has cooled significantly, which also brings along another set of problems. Add into that mix the ever-spiraling personal debt situation, and the prospects are less than encouraging. Because of their position on the world stage, whenever there are problems in the USA, these are reflected in the world economy, and the UK and continental Europe, and even countries in Asia, are feeling the same set of pressures. Recent figures in the UK have shown that personal debt has doubled since the year 2000.

In spite of all this gloomy economic news, the end-of-year's festivities continued unabated. Little, if anything, stops the world from going about its pursuit of the material. The world's holidays that it has just "enjoyed" have only served to fuel the economic problems as personal spending, much of it on credit cards at high interest rates, has become par for the course and is expected at this time of year. Traders have become reliant on significant turnover and if this trend was reversed, then another set of problems would arise, with many firms going out of business. What a mess! Wherever way you look, you cannot escape the inevitable conclusion that the world economy is in a dreadful state.

Nevertheless, so many seemed to put these considerations to the back of their minds in their relentless pursuit of the "now," which is indicative of man's way. Prophecy clearly shows that before Christ's return, the problems that we now see in every corner of society will increase to such an extent that if those days were not shortened, no flesh would be saved alive (compare Matthew 24:22). Worse, much worse, is to come, and we have been warned over a number of years.

How blessed are members of the Church of God to have been given the knowledge of the Creator's true Holy Days—not those that the world keeps and which have no meaning for our eternal destiny. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, said in late December that in the Christmas story there was certainly nothing to prove there were three wise men or that they were kings. He said that the only reference to the wise men from the East was in Matthew's gospel and the details were very vague. He argued that Christmas cards which showed the "Virgin Mary" cradling the "baby Jesus," flanked by shepherds and wise men, were misleading. As for the scenes that depicted snow falling in Bethlehem, the Archbishop said the chance of this was "very unlikely." In a final blow to the traditional nativity story, Dr. Williams concluded that Jesus was probably not born in December at all. He said: "Christmas was when it was because it fitted well with the winter festival." But having acknowledged all of that, did he state, as the leading minister in the Anglican world, that Christmas should not be kept? No, he still gave his annual Christmas message and does not understand, let alone preach, the plan that God has for all of mankind.

A high-ranking official of the Roman Catholic Church, "Monsignor" Marini, even stated that the cross is a symbol of "Christ's death," and is given high prominence during the midnight Christmas

Mass, as Christ is “the east, the sun that rises.” Pope Benedict wrote that the cross can serve as an interior “east” of the faith, when a direct turning toward the east is not possible. However, the Bible condemns the worship of the sun—or of Christ as the sun—rising from the east (compare Ezekiel 8:15-17).

Bad news and religious confusion are a theme in this world wherever you look, but God’s Word, when properly understood, clearly reveals a time when all of the bad news that floods the airwaves on radio and television and which is a staple diet of newspapers, will be a thing of the past. After Christ’s return, pictured by the Feast of Trumpets, the Millennium of His rule will not have continuous bad news. The pagan festivals of so-called modern Christianity will be no more. And all of these present woes will be replaced by a time when there will be no subprime mortgages, no reliance on continual house price rises, no spiraling personal debt and no false religion.

The only way out of this is reliance on God and the establishment of His Kingdom here on earth. That is why we ought to pray, “Your kingdom come” (compare Matthew 6:10). Man does not have the answers, irrespective of the brilliance and intellectual ability of so many in high office. And behind the scenes, our arch enemy, Satan the devil, is whipping up problems at what seems to be an ever-increasing rate. But again, one of God’s Holy Days, the Day of Atonement, reveals the time when his malevolent influence will be no more! These wonderful Holy Days are central to our understanding of the plan God has for mankind. In just over four months, we will be keeping the Passover, and we need to diligently prepare for that profoundly meaningful occasion. Then, over the following six months, God’s wonderful plan, revealed in His Holy Days, will unfold with the removing of sin from our personal lives right up to the time of the Great White Throne Judgment, which answers questions that the world’s religions, including mainstream Christianity, simply cannot answer.

At this time, the world goes about its business without any of this wonderful knowledge. By keeping a series of uncoordinated days that do not reveal any meaning for the future of mankind, they are blinded to the reality of the potential total extinction of mankind that is, surely now, not that far away—if it weren’t for Christ’s intervention and the “shortening” of these terrible days soon to come! But we have been blessed with true understanding, and we must make sure that, unlike so many who once understood, we don’t let this knowledge slip or fade away. It is a matter of our death or our life—of death and final destruction for the unrepentant wicked, or of the glorious fulfillment of life for eternity in God’s Kingdom for those who obey God.

We have the best of both worlds. We do not get entangled in the ways of this world—which have recently been exemplified by the Christmas and New Year activities that only generally lead to unhappiness—and we have had revealed to us a future that will be greater than anything our minds can conceive. The book of Revelation reveals in chapter 21 that God will dwell with His people (verse 3); that He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying and no more pain (verse 4); and that those who overcome shall inherit all things (verse 7). A future of joy and untold happiness awaits us—not the transient pleasures that the world enjoys but which often have hidden and tragic consequences. What a future we have in store if we remain steadfast and loyal to God and His Way to the very end!

With Christian love,



Brian Gale