

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

July 1, 2008

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Recently we kept the Feast of Pentecost, which is the Holy Day that celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the birth of the New Testament Church in 31 AD (compare Acts 2). The next Feast day in God's calendar is the Feast of Trumpets, which pictures the return of Jesus Christ. As will be more fully explained in this letter, there is a distinct connection for God's people between the two. With the spirit of discernment that God's Spirit gives to baptized members of His true Church, we can see the sign of the times (compare Matthew 24:32-33). We can surely see that the reality of Christ's return is becoming more necessary by the day.

How we need that reality! Even the truly wealthy nations in the world are starting to feel the pinch with big increases in oil prices affecting motoring costs and food prices through increased transportation costs. In the UK recently, it was announced that gas and electricity bills will probably increase by about 40% this winter, and the price of petrol continues to soar. The banking industry is in turmoil with shares in some of the leading banks and financial institutions in the UK falling heavily and the housing market suffering its greatest crisis since the 1970's. I mention the UK because I can see, close at hand, how the fragmentation of society continues through these and other problems and concerns that the ordinary man in the street continues to wrestle with. But this same pattern is replicated and perhaps even magnified in the USA and in so many other nations around the world.

The constant threat of terrorism is costing nations enormous amounts of money to counteract the activities of those committed to kill and destroy. Crime continues to exact misery on millions of people who are the victims of such activity, and the complexity and number of problems are a constant source of worry for those sincere and dedicated leaders who consider the interests and welfare of their subjects of paramount importance. Unfortunately, there are many other leaders who seem to care little for their subjects, for whom they have grave responsibility. Listing all of the problems that cause worry and concern for the ordinary man and woman—so many seemingly intractable—could take many pages, and it surely becomes ever more apparent as each day passes that only the "strong hand from somewhere" will be good enough to bring about a worldwide society that at last will experience true peace, abundance, safety and good health for all concerned. It is so urgently needed.

While there have always been problems since God created man approximately 6,000 years ago, surely we are now facing an unprecedented set of problems as the end of this age approaches. Albert Einstein wisely said that "The problems that exist in the world today cannot be solved by the level of thinking that created them." These problems in the world will only be solved by the return of Jesus Christ, which the next Holy Day in God's marvelous calendar—the Feast of Trumpet—pictures. But we need the Holy Spirit that God gives only to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32), to be able to understand this plan for all of mankind. And God's Spirit will even work more powerfully within us to the extent that we are diligent in faithfully keeping His Commandments (1 John 2:3-4; 3:22-24). The Feast of Trumpets portrays the end of the time of such great trouble "such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). Jesus Christ did not mince His words about the scale of the problems that will engulf the world before He sets up the Kingdom of God here on earth at His return.

In the meantime, before that wonderful event, the world will continue to lurch from crisis to crisis. We are in the death throes of the last 6,000 years of civilization, and now is the time for us to ensure that we are preparing for the wonderful future that God has in store for His faithful people. With all the tests and trials that come our way and which we are promised (compare 1 Peter 1:6-7; 1 Peter 4:12), each one of us must show ourselves to be "approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). We must be approved workers in the all-important Work of God that our calling demands. We were never promised an easy life as Jesus revealed in Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

And so, while the world continues to ignore the one source, the Holy Bible, from which it could find answers, we must continue to use that source to help us to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). And it clearly teaches us the importance of the Holy Days which members of the Church of God can comprehend with the help of the Holy Spirit which they received at baptism. And that same Spirit can also help us to understand that the actual fulfillment of the next Holy Day, the Feast of Trumpets, cannot be too far away, with prophecy being fulfilled before our eyes. But prophecy must not become an end in itself. It is merely a tool to see where we are in the plan of God, in order to encourage and motivate us to increase in our efforts to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God in all the world as a witness, and to become more and more dedicated in overcoming our personal shortcomings on our way towards perfection.

Making ourselves ready by the correct application of Scripture which teaches us how to live our Christian life pleasing to our Creator, is what is most important. Prophecy will become history (1 Corinthians 13:8), but love will never fail (same verse). When Jesus returns, if we endure to the end in our individual and collective commission to do the Work and to live a Christian life style as we must (Matthew 24:13), the Son of Man will say at His return: “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34). Those will surely be the most wonderful words that we will ever hear, but it is up to us to make sure that we don’t disqualify ourselves between now and that wonderful event that is ahead of us.

The connection between the last Holy Day (Pentecost) and the next one (the Feast of Trumpets) will mean nothing to those in the world who have no knowledge, at this time, of what God has in store for mankind. But for those of us who have been given this wonderful calling, the Holy Spirit of God gives us a clear vision of what it will be like when the Feast of Trumpets becomes reality and we meet Christ in the air at His return (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). With knowledge comes responsibility, and God has commissioned His Church in these end times to share the knowledge of Christ’s return and His rule over this earth with all of mankind (Matthew 24:14; Mark 16:15). Those who will accept the message and are willing to change their lives to become worthy to share in Christ’s rulership are to be baptized (Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19-20), while others will be “condemned” (compare again Mark 16:16) to continue living in anguish, misery and pain, until they, too, may come to the understanding of the truth and begin to believe and obey the gospel.

The meaning of the Holy Days, derided by so many, are integral to our understanding of the plan of God. We are truly blessed to have been called and chosen at this time and to have the most wonderful future to look forward to. It is up to us to stay faithful, watching and praying and becoming ready for the return of Christ: “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

With Christian Love,



Brian Gale