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

May 3, 2009

Dear Members, Co-Workers and Friends:

With spring here and most of the snow gone in those areas where we do get snow, we look forward to warmer weather and longer days as we approach summer. Passover with its significant meaning of continuing dedication of our lives to God, coupled with self-examination before partaking of the service, was followed by seven Days of Unleavened Bread, picturing removing sin from our lives. This was not meant to apply for just one week, but symbolized an ongoing process of replacing sin with righteousness.

Now, we look forward to the next Holy Day, which is Pentecost.

Pentecost is a festival of great significance for us in the Church because two historical events were attached to it. According to tradition, it was on the Day of Pentecost when God spoke the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. These laws show us how to love God and man. Our love to God is proven when we keep the first four commandments, and the keeping of the last six commandments manifests our love to our fellow man.

The Ten Commandments, which were in effect since the creation of man, leave no doubt as to what God expects from us. God requires of us that we maintain a proper relationship with Him and also with our fellow man. If all these great laws were kept by everyone now, we would have the Millennium in our midst. Unfortunately, Satan is the present god, evil ruler and deceiver of the whole world (Revelation 12:9). He has persuaded the world to accept a false gospel, a false concept of "love," and a religious system which originated in paganism and which denies the one true God, while it—perhaps inadvertently for many—glorifies the devil.

The other great event which occurred on the Day of Pentecost is recorded in the book of Acts, chapter two. It was on that day when the New Testament Church of God was founded in 31 AD—when Christ's disciples received God's Holy Spirit. Those who would be called in this day and age have an opportunity of receiving the Holy Spirit as well; thereby becoming part of the firstfruits or of the first spiritual or spring harvest.

Let us look at the startling events of that day. The disciples knew when that day had arrived, since the instructions were given in the Old Testament to count fifty days ("Pentecost" means "counting fifty") from the first Sunday which falls within the Days of Unleavened Bread. Notice also that they were all in one place. They were not all scattered, but were in one location, waiting for Christ's promise to receive the "Helper" or "Comforter"—God's Holy Spirit (John 16:13).

Then suddenly, that is without warning or prior notice, the whole house was filled with the noise or the sound of a mighty wind. Tongues of fire rested on each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit enabled them to speak in different languages and also to be understood in those languages. The miracle pertained both to the speaking and to the hearing. These were unusual events, signifying the beginning of the New Testament Church. Peter gave an inspiring review and sermon in regard to Christ and the history of Old Testament events,

leading up to this day, and as a consequence, God added three thousand souls to the Church on that very same day (Acts 2:41).

Today, we keep this day, as instructed, on an annual basis, reminding ourselves how God, in His great mercy, called us out of the world and gave us His Holy Spirit, so that we could ultimately be in His future Kingdom, working under Christ and ruling with Him as kings and priests (Revelation 5:10). As future rulers, we must have God's laws written in our hearts and minds now, just as they were written on tablets of stone in the past. But unlike the Old Testament Church in the wilderness—the physical nation of Israel—we today can keep the law in the spirit, as God's Spirit dwells in us. God's Spirit is not and must not be stagnant. Rather, it must grow and increase within us. And as it does, so we grow in God's grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ—teaching us HOW to live by God's law of love (2 Peter 3:18).

How, exactly, are we to accomplish this? We can overcome our own selves, the society in which we live, and Satan, the devil and prince of this world's darkness, when we utilize the tools God has given us. We are not only to begin building a proper relationship with Him, but His tools will enable us to grow in that relationship. Those tools include prayer, Bible study, meditation and occasional fasting.

If you were given a file, a screwdriver and a pile of lumber and told to build a house, you would exclaim that this was impossible to do. Those tools would not be sufficient to accomplish the task. The same is true in regard to the building of a spiritual house. God gives us proper tools to build that house—and the most important “tool” is the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. We can reach our goal because we internalize within us God's Holy Spirit—the mind of God which allows us to think and live more and more in the way God wants us to.

On a physical level, we look forward to this spring and summer, by planting gardens, watering, watching the grass turn green and our gardens grow. We might also anticipate a plentiful harvest in the autumn. We should bear in mind that God is focusing on a fall harvest as well, but He will first bring about a spring harvest of firstfruits. We are called to be part of that spiritual spring harvest—the beginning of which is pictured by the receipt of the Holy Spirit. When we grow in God's grace and knowledge, and when we utilize the spiritual tools available to us, we can look forward to ruling and working with and under Christ in His future Kingdom when the plentiful autumn harvest for all of mankind will become reality.

Let us never lose sight of that great goal ahead of us. As we concentrate on the tremendous meaning of the Day of Pentecost, let us also visualize the final fulfillment of God's Master Plan when our loving Savior Jesus Christ will return to give His reward to His faithful servants and to restore all things on this earth.

With Christian love,



Rene Messier