

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

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President and Pastor

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Dear Brethren of GOD's Church:

Begin now to focus your mind on the most joyous eight days of this year -- to be anticipated and enjoyed by the LARGEST number of people to be gathered at any convention, assembly or festival on earth. More than 120,000 happy brethren will share this time of rejoicing.

The time has come that I must remind you to send in the tithes of your second tithe for the wonderful Feast of Tabernacles for the year 1984.

Brethren, WHY should we look forward so eagerly to this coming Feast of Tabernacles? And, even more eagerly to the coming of Jesus Christ and Kingdom of God? WHY has he called us OUT of this world, to be separate in the way we live?

The answer lies in the answer to another question: DO WE REALLY UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT GOD'S WORLD? It is SATAN's world. But have we not, most of us, let so much Protestantism rub off on us that we just sort of take for granted that this is GOD's world -- GOD's civilization? But it is SATAN's civilization, and always has been. I think we are the only church that knows that TRUTH. God is NOT trying to save the world -- NOT trying to make it a better world.

Rather, Jesus came to start a NEW, a DIFFERENT world -- an entirely NEW civilization that will be GOD's world.

Stop and THINK of the real PURPOSE and MEANING of the Church in which you are a member! We live in a world of discontent, gloom, sorrow, frustration, despair. In boundless LOVE and mercy the Supreme GOD has chosen and called you and me and all our brethren in Christ OUT of this unhappy and futile world. WHY? Not only to give into our lives HIS happiness and joy and blessed hope, but to PREPARE us through HIS Spirit and HIS spiritual knowledge to rule over and TEACH all humanity during the coming thousand years and the following Great Judgment to have their lives transformed into vigorous happiness, joy and accomplishment with the GIFT of eternal life -- when we ALL shall live happily, gloriously, vigorously, productively FOR EVER AND EVER!

We NOW look forward to the coming FEAST OF TABERNACLES. At the Feast we shall rejoice eight days looking forward to the time when we may be used in bringing other millions and billions of precious human lives into immortal glorious GOD-LIVES! Yes, then born into the GOD FAMILY -- being VERY God ourselves!

All whose hearts and minds are right with God will be spiritually refreshed, uplifted, inspired, filled with joyous anticipation, enjoying a real FEAST on the SPIRITUAL WORD OF GOD!

Think how important this Festival is! After the return of King of kings Jesus Christ, "It shall come to pass, that every one ... shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zech. 14: 16).

And there shall be plagues and severe punishment on nations that neglect or refuse to attend! People will be compelled to be happy! Of course, that is speaking of mortal people then left alive -- not of Christ's saints who then will be immortal and in the very Family of God.

But you and I are, now, still mortal -- and the above scripture shows us how very serious in God's eyes it is that we attend this wonderful Feast this year. For we may be attending it as immortal-born children of God before this present decade is out! That certainly is a likely possibility.

We have undoubtedly entered the most explosive decade in the history of man. But it is possible that God will cut short the days of great tribulation ahead and bring us into the wonderful and glorious Kingdom of God before this decade is out.

Again, remember, Jesus said no man will know the day or the hour. But he did say we may know by world events when it is near -- even at the door!

This will be my 58th year of keeping the annual Fall Holy Days. We did not come to realize the meaning and need to keep the entire Feast of Tabernacles until 1945, though my wife and I began keeping the annual Sabbaths in 1927.

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures to us year after year the glorious thousand years, just shortly ahead now, of world peace, happiness and opportunity for eternal salvation for all not previously called! It will be a world without Satan! It will be a world with Jesus Christ ruling with love!

It is a time for us to get away from the dreary routine of daily life in Satan's world and enjoy eight wonderful days with brethren in Christ and their families! It is the only time in the year that God provides a time when we may get away and rest from our daily regular duties -- to be with brethren in Christ to worship him and look forward to his utopia!

This year we shall have 25 Festival sites in the United States and Canada. Worldwide there is a total of 80 Feast sites in 47 countries.

Brethren, as God shows us the importance of attending this Feast, it is equally important that all shall have been saving the second tithe to pay your own expenses and enjoyment at the Festival. Of course, part of that expense is rental of auditoriums or halls or convention centers and other expenses the Church must pay. So, as always, be sure to send in a tithe of your entire year's second tithe by return mail. Mark or list it separately from your regular first tithe or offering.

What a blessing from God that we have not had to borrow regularly for the operations of the Work at the banks during all the last five years and so far this year. Formerly we had to borrow a million dollars in January and pay back out of Passover special offerings. Then we had to borrow another million in July to be paid back from the Fall Festival offerings. Loan rates to largest bank customers had gone over 20 percent! What a blessing not to have to pay these excessive interest rates!

Instructions for making your housing arrangements will be included in your Feast information material. U.S. and Canadian brethren will receive this information in a special Festival Planner in April.

I wish you all the best wishes for a solemn Passover and a joyous Festival of Unleavened Bread.

With much love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong