

Church of God, The Eternal

P. O. Box 775
Eugene, Oregon 97440
www.cogeternal.org

The late Raymond C. Cole
Founding Pastor
Jon W. Brisby
Pastor, Director

Offices in: United States
Philippines
Switzerland
Kenya

An Exciting Future Awaits

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Dear Brethren:

A very warm and hearty hello from deep in the heart of Texas. We send our warmest greetings to all of you. We pray you are doing well spiritually and physically.

My, how time gets away. The 2007 Feast of Tabernacles is now history and in just a few days we will partake of the 2008 Passover and observe the Days of Unleavened Bread. We will complete a fifty-day count from the Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread. That count will take us to a Monday Pentecost. Then we must start planning for Trumpets, Atonement and another Feast of Tabernacles. After this, another year has just gone by, bringing us ever closer to that wonderful world we have all been praying for, "when Jesus Christ will return as king of kings and lord of lords" and put down all opposition to His way of life, establishing an everlasting government of peace, joy, prosperity for all peoples, no more war-torn cities, starvation, or disease. If you want to take part in this most unique event, then take very seriously to heart Acts 3:19–24 and Isaiah 2:2–3.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days (Act 3:19–24).

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2–3).

However, before the above prophecy can come to pass this world must undergo the most devastating events since the creation of man. Many of those events are coming into play even as I type out this letter. The manufacturing of goods and our transportation system is belching out so much pollutants into the atmosphere. Clean water is getting harder to find. Along with these trends, more and more people are leaving the rural lifestyle and moving into the polluted cities.

'I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, yet you did not return to me,' declares the LORD. 'I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest; I would send rain on one city, and send no rain on another city; one field would have rain, and the field on which it did not rain would wither; so two or three cities would wander to another city to drink water, and would not be satisfied; yet you did not return to me,' declares the LORD. 'I struck you with blight and mildew; your many gardens and your vineyards, your fig trees and your olive trees the locust devoured; yet you did not return to me,' declares the LORD (Amos 4:6–9, *English Standard Version*).

Severe drought is causing widespread wildfires. In 2007, just in California alone, wildfires fanned by high winds burned over 500,000 acres and more than 1,700 homes were destroyed. Now they must prepare for *severe* mudslides. While we were yet in early winter season, the nation had suffered over 100 tornados from Florida up the East Coast resulting in widespread damage to homes and property.

Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked (Jeremiah 23:19).

There is extreme hemorrhaging of the American dollar as we fight to keep terrorism out of our homeland and other countries where terrorists are trying to take over for the sole purpose of destroying everyone who does not believe in their god.

All these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you till you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you (Deuteronomy 28:45).

President Bush recently returned from Saudi Arabia where he reportedly asked the king if he would please pump more oil into the world market, hoping it would bring the price of oil down or at least stop the skyrocketing price before it destroys our economy.

The nations that control the oil can now enjoy the material greatness that God once gave to the nations of Israel. The oil-producing nations know we cannot withstand the extremely high price of fuel while we fight terrorism around the world. Add to that the many weather-related disasters throughout the nation.

Brethren, I know the future looks very bleak and sounds very negative, but we must not allow ourselves to dwell on all the negative stuff. Dwell on the exciting future, when there will be real lasting peace.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh (Luke 21:28).

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying (Isaiah 65:17-19).

Several have asked about the Feast of Tabernacles on the Island of Tasmania, Australia. What a wonderful experience it was! Mr. and Mrs. Crane had everything very well-organized in a nice home in Port Sorell near the beach. There were nine present. Even though we were small in number, it did not diminish in any way the purpose of the Feast. No matter where in the world one travels, no matter the color of the skin nor the language one speaks, when one receives God's Holy Spirit, he or she becomes a begotten child of God, a member of the body of Jesus Christ manifesting the fruits of the Holy Spirit. This is what I saw in the brethren in Australia, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for staying with the truth and keeping this light shining in a world of darkness. Thank you for a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles. May God bless and keep you till we meet again.

With much love and affection,
Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Byrd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John R. Byrd