

Announcement Letter February 2018

Dear Brethren:

It is a pleasure to have the chance to greet each one of you again in this new calendar month, and to renew our appreciation for your stalwart defense of God's Truth in your lives. May we never begin to take any of you for granted or to forget the value that God has placed upon you as His called children. You continue to be worth every sacrifice required to provide instruction, inspiration, and spiritual assistance.

Even though it is not often practical for us to reach out to each one of you—personally, on our own initiative—these letters are the official means by which this ministry does make contact to address you on a regular basis and to offer sincere expressions of love and support. Because of heavy workloads, our personal contacts are usually initiated by you, not by us, but those contacts are always very much appreciated and valued. Please, never hesitate to make contact. We are not "too busy." You are not a burden, and never an annoyance. It is an honor to be able to devote our attentions to serving the people of God, and we thank Him continually for that special assignment. The work to keep up with correspondence, requests for material, counseling, or other needs is truly challenging, but it is a very positive challenge, and one that we sincerely relish. Please never doubt that.

As mentioned to you briefly last month, this particular month of February marks forty-three years since the legal founding of Church of God, The Eternal. It was after Mr. Raymond Cole was finally put out of the Worldwide Church of God—when they officially revoked his ministerial credentials in that parent organization late in 1974—that circumstances began to move toward the formation of this remnant body. Some have tried to rewrite that history to claim Raymond Cole "left" the WCG to start his own group. That is patently false, and there is ample evidence of that fact. Mr. Cole had honestly conveyed to Mr. Armstrong eighteen months previously his strong conviction in conscience that he could not go along with any changes in doctrine which were being proposed by the liberal leaders in the church. Raymond Cole believed that God had revealed the true doctrines through Mr. Armstrong personally, and he told Mr. Armstrong that. Given that he could not in good conscience embrace, let alone teach, a "new" Pentecost date, etc., what did Mr. Armstrong want him to do? Resign? He made that offer to Mr. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong was the one who requested that Mr. Cole not resign, but instead take a sabbatic leave. That was in mid-1973. Mr. Cole followed that instruction, moved to Oregon, and continued to attend weekly Sabbath and Holy Day services with the congregations. He never precipitated a move to resign, or to stir up any

trouble within the church. His true hope was that Mr. Armstrong would finally recognize this liberal attack for what it was, and begin to push back and defend the original doctrines. Mr. Cole never contemplated leaving the WCG, and never desired or postured to "have his own group." That was the furthest thing from his mind.

Sadly, the end result was not a reconfirmation of revealed doctrines in that church, but instead, a hardening to defend the new changes, and the vilification of anyone who did not go along. When it became clear that Raymond Cole was serious about his conviction that God's doctrines do not change, even when "signed off on" by the Pastor General, they gave up on him, and sent him a letter of expulsion near the end of 1974.

Now what? Raymond Cole never expected nor wanted that. And now, he had no idea what God wanted him to do. He was deathly afraid to take any action that would be an effrontery to God. He was well aware that no man can commission himself to do a work in God's name. That is the height of arrogance and folly. He also knew that he had been ordained as a minister to take care of God's sheep. Would God "let him off the hook"? Could he walk away from that duty now with a clear conscience? He tried, but that same conscience that had refused to let him embrace new—foreign—doctrine, was the same conscience that would never let him walk away from that ministerial appointment either. That is why Mr. Cole asked God fervently to show him what He wanted him to do, so that he could become confident in a direction.

Take the time to read how Mr. Cole describes that decision, and the way God led him to become confident in a plan. You can find that in our article entitled, *Church of God, The Eternal: Who We Are*. In short, he was led by God to become confident in organizing a haven for God's outcasts. This group was never established to compete with the Worldwide Church of God. Unlike so many other ministers who worked aggressively to "poach" members from that parent church for their new groups, Raymond Cole never did that! By and large, our "members" were distraught, already outside or nearly outside the parent affiliation, and contacted Mr. Cole seeking aggressively to find someone who was holding firm to the original teachings.

Raymond Cole would thunder that this group was not a separate church! We are only estranged brethren. So filing for legal recognition by adopting the name, Church of God, The Eternal, was never done with the idea of being "a new church." It was merely a practical consideration to aid those choosing to contribute tithes and offerings. The original charter prepared by Mr. Cole emphasized that we do not consider ourselves a separate church, merely estranged brethren. And whether many of you realize it or not today, that is still absolutely our premise, forty-three years hence. After all of this time, we still see ourselves in exactly the same way, our mission is still precisely the one with

which we began, and our devotion to the very same doctrines is just as firm as ever before.

Detractors may criticize us for a lot of things—and we certainly have many of those critics—but they can never claim *honestly* that we have changed from our original purpose or our standards of belief. If nothing else, the example of this little remnant group, lo these many years later, is one of absolute continuity. Hopefully, you are all among those who appreciate that example.

New Moon

The new moon, Adar (twelfth month), begins Thursday evening, February 15. The new moon day is Friday, February 16.

Trip Schedule

Mr. Jon Brisby

February 10..... Suna-Migori, Kenya
February 17..... Maryville, Tennessee

Holy Days

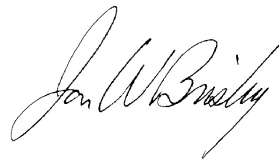
Appropriate preparations for these days should begin:

Passover	Thursday (evening), March 29
Night to Be Much Observed	Friday, March 30
1st Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread	Sabbath, March 31
2nd Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread	Friday, April 6

Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
HFT-RC 1981-1	01-11-18	02-03-18	What Can We Know About Babylon? #1
HFT-RC 1981-2	01-11-18	02-10-18	What Can We Know About Babylon? #2
WSE-JWB 209	02-01-18	02-17-18	Wait Upon the Lord
HFT-RC 1981-3	02-01-18	02-24-18	What Can We Know About Babylon? #3
WSE-RC C-1	02-01-18	03-03-18	Change #1
WSE-JWB 211	02-22-18	03-10-18	What's in a Name? #1
WSE-RGB 1	02-22-18	03-17-18	Pre-Passover Exam: Areas for Review

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby