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Dear Brethren,

God has certainly blessed us with an inspiring Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. We began with the Passover in Hollister. Then we kept the Night to be Much Observed and the first holy day in Fairfield, California. We had outstanding meals—the best we have ever had for a holy day—truly fit for a feast! I spoke on the meaning of the first holy day and about God’s plan for those He calls in this age, just before the return of Jesus Christ. When we include the meaning of the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures the fact that only God has the power to rescue us from the author of sin—Satan the Devil—and to remove sin from our minds and lives.

The apostle Paul explains the full meaning of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light; **Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness** and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love; **in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, even the remission of sins....** And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven. For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now **He has reconciled you in the body of His flesh through death** [His crucifixion and death, and your symbolic death in baptism], to present you holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him; **if indeed you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast**, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, *and* which was proclaimed in all the creation that *is* under heaven” (Col. 1:12-14, 20-23).

During his trial before King Agrippa, Paul explained how Jesus called him to be an apostle. When he was on his way to Damascus to arrest and persecute Jews who believed in Christ and followed the “New Way” of the Lord, Paul was knocked to ground, surrounded by a great light. When he asked who had caused this, Jesus answered, “I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. Now arise, and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you *as* a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what I shall reveal to you. I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, **to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God, so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me ’**” (Acts 26:15-18).

Brethren, we must *always rejoice* that God the Father and Jesus Christ have likewise delivered *us* from Satan and darkness, and have granted us remission of sins—especially as we see world events unfolding as they are.

**Booklet on How to Count To Pentecost:** This year—with Passover falling on a weekly Sabbath and being observed on Friday night—the first holy day of Unleavened Bread fell on a Sunday and the last holy day fell on a weekly Sabbath. Because of this sequence of days, the question often arises: “How do we count to Pentecost”—especially when the Passover is late in the year. This is why, prior to the feast, we sent out the booklet, *Count To Pentecost—From the Morrow After Which Sabbath?*—so that you might understand the problem and its biblical answer. The booklet thoroughly explains from Scripture that the Passover Day is a *separate* day of Unleavened Bread. In fact, **in the New Testament the Passover Day itself is called “the first of the unleaveneds,”** clearly showing that it is always a separate day of unleavened Bread. Yet, it is the day *before* the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

We need to also realize that when Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath, we cannot do the work of de-leavening our homes on the Sabbath. Thus—at least in those years when the Passover falls on the weekly Sabbath—the Passover Day *must* be an unleavened bread day.

Therefore, the day *after* this weekly Sabbath is the day on which to begin the 50 -day count to Pentecost!

In reality, the Passover seldom falls on the weekly Sabbath—at times with up to 13 years between occurrences. It is interesting to note that Passover does not fall on a weekly Sabbath again until the year 2021—another 13-year span (inclusive counting.) It will do so again in 2025, 2043, 2045 and 2047—if there is that much time before the return of Jesus Christ. Looking back, it is also interesting to note that the Passover did not fall on a weekly Sabbath from 1982 to 1994—13 years (inclusive counting.)

When Passover fell on the weekly Sabbath in 1994, many people began to ask the question, “The day after *which* Sabbath do we begin the 50-day count to Pentecost?” At that time, some churches of God began their 50 -day count on the first day of the week after the last holy day of the Feast Unleavened Bread—which that year fell on the weekly Sabbath. This method of counting placed the Wave Sheaf Offering Day *outside* of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. However, the Wave Sheaf Offering Day must always fall *within* the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Otherwise, the children of Israel would have been unable to offer new grain offerings or parched (green) grain offerings in conjunction with the spring harvest during the feast, as required by Leviticus 23:14.

According to the calculated Hebrew Calendar—the only calendar that God gave to the Levites and the only one we should follow today—the Passover Day can fall on a Friday, on the Sabbath, on Monday or on Wednesday. (Remember, the Passover is always observed the night before.) However, the Passover cannot fall on a Sunday, Tuesday or Thursday. (Please refer to the booklet for more details.)

***My Travels During the Feast:*** Because the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread fell on a Sunday this year, it afforded me the opportunity to travel extensively and visit many of the brethren. So on Monday, April 20, I flew to Boise, Idaho, where I first began to pastor for the WCG back in May of 1965. Dolores and I moved there after I was ordained an elder by Herbert Armstrong on the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, April 23, 1965.

This year, I especially wanted to go to Boise and visit with Ruth Kennedy, since she was one of the first members Dolores and I visited when we moved to Idaho. She has been faithful all these years and is nearing the age of 100. She lives in her own home; her next -door neighbor is Marjorie Sharver, also a member of God’s Church. Marjorie and I had a nice visit with Ruth and I showed them both the new Bible, as I had just received the first copy of the lambskin version the week before. Ruth was thrilled to examine the beautiful new Bible —*The Holy Bible In Its Original Order*—and she exclaimed, “It is perfect!”

Later that evening we had a Bible Study at Marjorie’s house with 18 brethren attending. We had an inspiring study and visit. Everyone examined the new Bible and I spoke about some of its unique features and how, as a translation, it is superior to the *KJV*.

On Tuesday morning I drove a rental car to Twin Falls, Idaho, 130 miles southeast of Boise. That evening, in the town of Kimberly, a suburb of Twin Falls, we had a Bible Study at the home of Jarrod and Christine Bordi, with 13 in attendance. They likewise examined the new Bible; during the study I discussed some of its features and how well it renders certain key verses. Everyone was pleased, excited and anxious to receive their own copies.

On Wednesday, I got up early and drove to Pocatello, Idaho, nearly 100 miles further east, to enjoy a special visit with Russell and Cleone Parr (he is 83 and she is 91). This visit was most enjoyable because the Parr’s are quite alone, having no one with which to fellowship. Cleone prepared a wonderful breakfast of unleavened crepes with fresh fruit and eggs. Afterwards, I showed them the new Bible. They were so enthused and can hardly wait to get their hands on their own copies.

Later that day I drove to Salt Lake City, Utah, where I had pastored the local church for the WCG for seven years, from 1966 to 1972. Dolores, our two sons, Jonathan and David, and I lived in a suburb of Salt Lake City called Granger. In addition to caring for the Salt Lake City Church, I also continued to pastor the Boise Church, 340 miles away. In order to do that on a weekly basis, I flew every Sabbath from Salt Lake City to Boise. Each Sabbath, we had services in SLC at 9:30 AM; I would then catch a plane at 12:30 PM and fly to Boise, where we had services at 2:30 PM. Saturday night we had Spokesman Club. I would visit the

brethren in the Boise area on Sunday. Then I would do office work in the small apartment we rented from Rueben and Irene Henshaw (in fact, our two sons were born in their home).

After arriving in Salt Lake City, I turned in the rental car at the airport. Bob Jacobson picked me up and we went to his home where we had 17 brethren over that evening for a Bible Study and fellowship. Again, I showed everyone the new Bible and gave a special study concerning its features. Everyone was delighted and are anxious to receive their own copies.

On Thursday, we got up early and Bob and his wife, Anita, took me to the airport where I caught a plane to Atlanta, Georgia. The plane was on time and it gave me an opportunity to check on the set up and meal for the coming Sabbath, the last day of Unleavened Bread, at the Renaissance Hotel. While there I also received two additional leather versions of the new Bible.

We had 48 brethren from all over the South come to Atlanta. We had a great room to meet in. Since I had the two additional copies of the new Bible, everyone was able to take a close look at it—to handle it and do some short reads of certain scriptures. We had a special song service in which we sang five hymns from the CBCG hymnal that most had not previously learned. Then I preached on the meaning of the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—that God will always fight for us and that we need to constantly rely on him in every circumstance. We had a wonderful meal between morning and afternoon services. In the afternoon, I again gave a special study concerning the features of the new Bible.

Later that night I caught a plane for Manchester, New Hampshire. I arrived about 11 PM and Wayne Stenhouse picked me up at the airport. The next day we had two Bible studies, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. As I did in all the other visits and Bible studies, the brethren were able to examine the new Bible. Finally, I gave a special study covering many of its unique features and various critical passages that are now clearly translated and easy to understand. This special study is the one that we are sending to you.

***When Will You Receive Your Bibles?*** The week this letter is mailed to you, we will be having our annual Elders' Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. The printer in China is shipping four cases of leather Bibles and one case of paperback Bibles to me at the Greater Cincinnati Hilton Hotel where we are holding the Conference. The elders will be the first ones to receive their Bibles. All the brethren who come to Sabbath services in Cincinnati on May 17 will be able to see and examine the new Bibles.

Meanwhile, back in China they will finish binding the remainder of the 7,000 leather Bibles by the end of May and will then ship them to us, as well as to Australia and South Africa. However, it will take 4 to 5 weeks for them to arrive. When they do, we will immediately have them mailed to you. We have hired a company, *AdMail*, that specializes in mass mailings. It will only take them a little more than a day to ship all the Bibles to everyone. So it looks like you will receive your copies toward the end of June or the first part of July. Originally, we had expected that they would be finished a couple of months sooner and shipped to you by now—but the printing and binding took considerably more time than we had anticipated. Thank you for your patience—we are almost there and you will get your Bible(s)!

***The World Rejects God:*** As we watch events transpire in our nation and around the world—be it political, economic, or weather related—we are witnessing the prophecies of God's Word coming to pass. The world is increasingly *rejecting* God. In so doing, mankind is turning more and more to the occult—which Satan is pouring out like a flood, spewing out great hatred toward the true God, Jesus Christ and His Word, the Holy Bible!

Why is the Devil able to do this? Because the majority of people do not believe in the Bible, do not believe in Jesus Christ and do not believe in God. While they profess a *form* of godliness, they, in fact, shut God *out* of government, out of schools, out of public life and out of their personal lives. Therefore, God turns them over to their own devices and to Satan the devil. As a consequence, the whole world is raging against God the Father and Jesus Christ, just as Psalm two foretold: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? **The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ**, saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.’ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them” (verses 1-5).

God then declares that regardless of all their efforts to get rid of Him, to establish their own world government, Jesus Christ *will be* King over all the earth when He returns to set up the Kingdom of God. We can be absolutely *sure* of this one thing: Jesus is returning and nothing that man can do is going to stop it! The prophesy continues: “Yea, I have set My king upon My holy mountain of Zion. I will declare the decree of the LORD. ‘He has said to Me, “You are My Son; this day I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”’ And now be wise, O kings; be admonished, O judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for His wrath can flame up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him” (verses 6-12).

Though the world rejects God, He *does* exist. God is the Sovereign Ruler of the heavens and the earth. Those who think that God does not rule in their lives are greatly mistaken. The truth is, although God has given mankind free moral agency, He still rules and has set before them life and death. This applies to every human being of every nation. While carnal, rebellious, lawless mankind does not recognize this, it is a literal fact of human existence. It is as sure as the law of gravity—for good or for evil.

The choices God set before the children of Israel are the same choices that He set before Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden: “**Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil, in that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it.**

**“But if your heart turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live, that you may love the LORD your God, and may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them”** (Deut. 30:15-20).

God rules, whether for life or death—for blessing or cursing. Those whom God has called to eternal life—blessing. For those who shut out God or reject Him—cursing! As recorded in the Old Testament, throughout Israel’s and Judah’s entire history, God pleaded with them, time and time again, to love Him, to obey His voice and to keep His commandments. But they refused. In the book of Hosea, God clearly shows what happens to any society that rejects God and His Word. This is a prophecy for the people of Israel today—not just the Jews, but the descendants of the northern ten tribes: “**Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, ‘There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood’**” (Hosea 4:1-2). This prophecy clearly describes the modern nations of Israel—and most of the world. Indeed, God has a controversy with *all* the nations of the world (Jer. 25:31).

Sin affects everything. The land, the water, the oceans, the animals, the birds and fish—*everything* is affected by man’s sins. Notice: “Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away.... **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children**” (Hosea 4:3, 6). The children of this generation have been *forgotten*, shoved aside by parents preoccupied with the cares of this world. They have been “dumbed down” by educational institutions and by the mainstream media—including entertainment, music and the written word.

People see all these troubles and ask, “Why is this happening?” Yet, the majority will not seek God. They will continue to attempt to solve their own problems—collectively and

individually—while turning their backs on God. But their political, economic and religious solutions will not work, because the cause is not simple human error. The cause is that they have *rejected* God and that they are *living in sin*. Until there is repentance, there will be no change. The truth is: **NO ONE CAN SOLVE HIS OR HER PROBLEMS WITHOUT GOD! FURTHERMORE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SOLVE SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS WITH POLITICAL SOLUTIONS!** Hosea continues his prophesy: “As they were increased, so they sinned against Me. I will change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of My people, and they set their heart on their iniquity. And it has become like people, like priest; and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings, for they shall eat and not have enough. They shall commit whoredom and not increase because they have stopped taking heed to the LORD. Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart. My people seek advice from their wooden *idols*, and their [divining] rod declares to them, for the spirit of whoredoms has caused them to go astray, and they have gone a whoring away from under their God” (verses 7-12).

In spite of the fact that God *must* judge sin, He is merciful and kind and has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Remember, whenever there is true repentance, God will forgive—He will intervene to save and protect: “And you, son of man, speak to the house of Israel. Thus *shall* you speak, saying, ‘When our transgressions and our sins *are* on us, and we are wasting away in them, how then shall we live?’ **Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no delight in the death of the wicked, except that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?’**” (Ezek. 33:10-11)

As we see the prophecies of the end times being fulfilled before our very eyes, we do not need to be afraid. If we are seeking God daily, and loving God the Father and Jesus Christ with all our hearts, He will watch over us and protect us. In fact, God will separate the righteous from the wicked and give them special protection, even during the times of God’s most horrible judgments. Ezekiel prophesied of this: “Therefore I will also deal with fury; My eye shall not spare, nor will I have pity. And though they cry in My ears *with* a loud voice, I will not hear them. And He cried in my ears *with* a loud voice, saying, ‘Let the executioners of the city draw near, even each *with* his destroying weapon in his hand.’ And behold, six men came from the way of the Upper Gate which faces north, and each had his slaughter weapon in his hand. And one man among them *was* clothed with linen, and a writer’s inkhorn by his side. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar. And the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed in linen, *with* the writer’s inkhorn by his side. And the LORD said to him, ‘Go through in the midst of the city, in the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark on the foreheads of the men who are groaning and are mourning because of all the abominations that are done in her midst.’ And He said to those in my hearing, ‘Go through the city after him, and slaughter. Let not your eye spare, nor have pity. Fully destroy old *men*, young men and virgins, and little children and women. But do not come near any man on whom *is* the mark. And begin at My sanctuary. And they began with the old men who *were* before the temple” (Ezek. 8:18-9:6).

Because of God’s promises, we need not fear at all. Instead, in confidence and hope, we need to use these opportunities to draw closer to God. We need to yield our hearts and minds to God the Father and Jesus Christ, in love, faith and hope. Jesus Christ will help us, comfort us and be with us: “For He said, ‘In no way will I ever leave you; no, nor will I *ever* forsake you in any way.’ So then, let us boldly say, ‘*The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*’... Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (Heb. 13:5-8).

Regardless of your circumstances—whether you are young or old, whether you are strong or weak, whether you are newly converted or a longtime saint, whether you are rich or poor—if you love God and keep His commandments, Jesus Christ promises that He will watch over you. Notice: “I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it; because **you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name** [in this wicked and evil generation]. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie;

behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that **I have loved you.**

**“Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation, which is about to come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.** Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have, so that no one *may* take away your crown. The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which *will* come down out of heaven from My God, and *I will write upon him* My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 3:8 -13).

If we live in God’s love and walk in faith every day, we can be sure that God will keep His promises to us. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, and through the power of the Holy Spirit He is in you. He will never fail you! Trust in Him at all times, regardless of the circumstances around you—whether in good times, bad times or disaster! As Jesus told the apostles on the night of His last Passover: “Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also” (John 14:1 -3).

Remember, God the Father and Jesus Christ love you. You have been called to eternal glory. They will give you eternal life. When we keep these things in the forefront of our minds, we will have peace of mind, spiritual strength and courage regardless of the conditions around us and in the world.

Finally, we need to look beyond all the troubles of this world and keep focused on the Kingdom of God, because God has chosen the saints to rule with Jesus Christ . We are part of God’s solution for saving the world! That is why you have been called!

Again, brethren, we regret that it has taken longer than anticipated to finish the new Bibles. But please bear with us—you will have your Bible(s) soon! Thank you for your ongoing love, prayers and support through your tithes and offerings. Let us continue to serve one another—and the *new* brethren God is calling.

May God the Father and Jesus Christ bless you with love and grace in all things.

With love in Christ Jesus,

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