

Box 111, Pasadena, California

September 10, 1948

GREETINGS! Brethren and Co-Workers:

Here we are only about a month from the Feast of Tabernacles. It comes LATE this year -- October 17th (evening) thru, and including October 25th. Many have been planning for this for a year. Many of the brethren have followed God's instruction to lay aside a second tithing to provide for expenses of the trip. Some have arranged to provide food and meat. We will arrive at Belknap Springs, 65 miles east of Eugene, on October 17th, afternoon before sundown, in time to get settled in our rooms and ready for the first evening service. This evening, and thru the next day, October 18th, is a holyday, one of God's annual Sabbaths which He set apart and commanded us to keep.

Unfortunately a few of you have not been going the past two or three years. Do you plan to go to the Feast of Tabernacles, after Jesus returns? Of course we know that then there will be both ordinary mortal humans, just as we all are today, and also the saints then changed to immortality, in bodies of spiritual flesh. Of those mortals not yet saved, including all heathen and gentiles it is written that every one of them "shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

But of course some of them will say "I can't come." Some will say, "I can't afford it this year." Others will say, "I don't believe in leaving home for the Feast of Tabernacles -- I'd rather stay right here at home and have it in our local church." Others will make various other excuses. But God answers, "And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, even upon them shall be no rain."

But even this famine will only sour and embitter some. They will say "God isn't fair," or, "now that we have famine I can't afford it as well as I could before." God replies, "And if the family of Egypt (sinners -- those disobedient to God) go not up, and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the PLAGUE, where- with the Eternal will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the PUNISHMENT of Egypt, and the punishment of ALL NATIONS that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles." (Zech. 14:16-19).

As for the converted immortal saints, -- well, if they KNOW this will and warning of God -- if they KNOW God has commanded us to go to the Feast of Tabernacles -- if they KNOW its holydays especially are HOLY CONVOCATIONS where their presence is commanded as a command of God, will they even BE saved immortals at the time if they have made excuse or refused during these sober, serious last days before the coming of Christ?

Brethren, we will do well to ponder this question -- and remember, we ourselves will not make the answer -- GOD is the judge. We will do well to consider how GOD looks at it, and to what degree HE will hold us accountable.

But, as Jesus said about another occasion, "If ye know these things, HAPPY are ye, if ye do them." The Feast of Tabernacles is a glorious feast of REJOICING. It is a time of HAPPINESS. We who have been going to Belknap Springs these past few years all testify it is the happiest, most joyous eight days of the year. Yes, the way God lays down for us is the BEST way -- always! Happy is the man who says humbly, "Not my will, but THINE be done." We always have a WONDERFUL time.

Plan this year to come for the entire eight days. Every year there have been a few who only plan to stay the first two or three days, a few who come in the middle, and a few who come for the last few days. THAT IS NOT THE WAY GOD PLANNED IT OR WANTS US TO KEEP IT. Those who are there only part of the time do not get the real benefit or value out of it. God knew what He was about when He set apart this Festival for EIGHT DAYS. We who have been there each year for the whole period know by experience that this is exactly the proper duration for such a spiritual festival. It is a REAL NEED.

This is God's appointed time of SPIRITUAL REVIVAL. Thru the year some thru the cares of this world grow lukewarm spiritually. We drift away a little from God. We grow spiritually careless. We do not pray as often or as much, or as earnestly as we should. We are not as close to God as we ought to be. But, after eight days at The Feast of Tabernacles, out there AWAY FROM THE WORLD, -- eight enjoyable, glorious days spent just with other brethren, many of whom we do not get to see and fellowship thru the rest of the year -- eight days of profitable services, Bible studies, singing of hymns, praying, visiting -- yes, and even fishing and swimming and mountain-climbing for those who wish it out there in God's great glorious out of doors -- eight days away from the worries and cares and routines of life at home -- eight days shut off from

the WORLD, and in this beautiful, happy, inspiring atmosphere with brethren who are close to God, -- well, it is the great and necessary -- and HAPPY -- spiritual revival of the year.

Since we have been going to Belknap Springs, we all feel it is the God-chosen place for us, for this time. It is a mile off the highway, away from the outside world. It is one of the nicest and best of the minor resort hotels of the Pacific Coast. We take over the entire hotel, beside the scenic MeKenzie River, as well as its dozen or more cottages. Each year we have been filled to capacity, so GET IN YOUR RESERVATION, IF POSSIBLE, BY RETURN MAIL. We have always been able to take care of those coming at the last minute without reservation, but it will help us, and assure you of perhaps better accommodations, if you will write ahead in advance for reservations. We will try to hold the same reservations as last year for those who comes every year, but please write me about your reservations if you can. AND DO IT NOW! This will help.

This year we will follow again the program that has proved so successful the last two years -- two regular scheduled services week-days, one morning, and one evening, leaving the afternoons free for visiting, hiking, swimming, fishing. Then on the weekly Sabbath and the two annual Sabbaths, there will be services morning, afternoon, and evening, and Sabbath-school during the morning of the weekly Sabbath. Our first year at Belknap we held three services daily, but this proved to be too much. Just as one can over-eat at the table, so we can wear ourselves out sitting thru three services a day, trying to absorb, digest, and remember more heavy spiritual strong meat than we can handle. We feel we have found a well-balanced program, which gives time to think over, and digest these spiritual meals at the morning and evening services.

Again this year we will try to bring the moving picture equipment, and show a number of interesting, educational pictures. I know all the kiddies and young people will enjoy this. Also, this year, we will learn and sing a number of our own new hymns being composed for our own hymn book -- the hymn-book of God's own inspired words from the Psalms and poetic Books of the Bible, set to music. We are making real progress with these beautiful hymns, perhaps rather slow, but then one just doesn't compose such hymns at the rate of several a day -- it takes time. About 20 are now ready for publication, and we hope to publish the first edition of our new hymn book during the coming fall and winter, God willing. You remember how well every one liked the two or three that were sung for us last year. Well, I think you'll like many of the new ones just as well or even better. If I am a judge of music, I think they are very beautiful music. This year we will have the music ready so the whole congregation can learn the hymns and sing them, and I believe this will add a great deal to this Feast of Tabernacles.

Again this year we will serve meals ourselves in the dining room at cost. In fact it will cost you less than it does to buy groceries at home, because some of the brethren are bringing meat and vegetables which we will not need to charge for. I cannot say definitely, until we arrive in Oregon and see what the food will cost this year, what the price of meals will be. The first two years we charged \$1.00 per day per person, making no charge, I believe, for the little kiddies. Last year we were forced to raise that price. I hope we can keep it this year the same as last, but if groceries are much higher we may have to raise it a little. I cannot tell you at this writing what Mr. Bigelow, owner of the hotel, will charge this year for rooms and cottages, but I presume it will be the same very reasonable charge as last year, unless a slight increase is necessary because of the increase in price of everything. When it is considered that he makes no charge for use of the large and beautiful lounge-room we use for service and visiting, or the dining room and kitchen, and use of his utensils, except that a portion of the charge of each room pays for the use of all this and the beautiful wooded grounds, it should be realized the charges are really very low.

If you occupy a cabin, BRING BEDDING -- but if a hotel room, DON'T bring bedding. The cabins are limited -- don't count on finding one vacant unless you reserve it ahead of time.

This year some of our new brethren from Pasadena and Southern California, and some of the college students from Ambassador College, will undoubtedly make the trip and be with us -- and you'll LOVE THEM ALL! We have baptized several here in our own baptistery at the college during the past year -- one more just a week ago. Now brethren REMEMBER -- this is not only something you REALLY WANT TO DO, something you'll ENJOY more than anything else thru the year, but something you OUGHT to do, are COMMANDED to do by God Himself, and therefore MUST do. If we neglect, or refuse, or make excuse now, how will we fare in the Kingdom? We in Southern California are looking forward eagerly to this fellowship with you all. Since the headquarters have been moved to Pasadena, all the more reason to write in your reservation early. Address all communications to me, at Pasadena.

With love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong