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ELIJAH AND ENOCH

THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH- Both Enoch and Elijah escaped the grave. Jesus said that John the Baptist was Elijah in his day. Jesus said about John the Baptist, *"For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"* (Matt.11:13-15) The spirit of Elijah was the fire that stirred in John the Baptist to preach repentance. He was the last of the Old Testament prophets who fearlessly point their finger to sin and corruption. He opened the way to life through the baptism of repentance, and he was the one who introduced Jesus as the Son of God who takes away the sins of the world. As Elijah who revealed the corruption that was in Ahab and Jezebel and all the prophets of Baal who were deceiving the people in that day, John faced Herod the Tetrarch, and uncovered the perverse and fraudulent regime that was setting over the people of that day. John gave his life as a martyr for the cause. Since John the Baptist, many tempetuous preachers have preached repentance from their pulpits, and from missionary fields. Some have given their lives for their faithfulness to Christ.

The spirit of Elijah has indeed been in the world and still is. John gave his life, but the spirit of Elijah and of John has never stopped blowing in the land. Faithful men and women have turned many to the truth that Jesus is their Savior and that He died for their sins. They have preached the Gospel of repentance with zeal and fervor, and many have suffered great persecutions for their conviction and dedication. The Spirit of Elijah will continue to work mightily in the earth until the work is complete. Today, we hear of mighty moves of God's Spirit among young people in universities and in assemblies everywhere. These are not the kind of events that appear on the evening news, but they are very much alive.

THE SPIRIT OF ENOCH- God works in seasons; He sends His Word like mighty winds into the hearts of believers who are eager to hear it. The Bible tells us that *"By faith, Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found because God had taken him; for before he was taken, he had this testimony, that he pleased God."* (Heb.11:5) Genesis tells us that *"He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him."* (Gen.5:24) As sons, we understand the Word of overcoming death in the flesh. We have read such teachings from the apostle Paul, we have heard that Word from daring and dedicated teachers, but somehow, most of it has remained on back burner. Yet, is it not the spirit of Enoch who urges us through the writer of the book of Hebrews saying, *"Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, (perfection), not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits."* (Heb.6:1-3)

That was written to the Jews who had received Christ, and had been enlightened. They knew the truth revealed by the Holy Spirit, yet they yearned to turn back to their old traditions. They are an example for us who have moved on in Christ, and have followed the Holy Spirit, yet have stopped in our tracks, returning over and over to the foundational teachings. About such, the Spirit writes, *"For it is*

impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt." (Heb.6:4-6). In so doing, they have gone back to offering their own works of righteousness as sacrifices, and have fallen from the grace of God.

As we walk with God and follow His Spirit, we have no need of statutes and commandments contained in the law given to Moses. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is even more stringent than the law of Moses. *"You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak also."* (Matt.5:38-40) This is not a written law; but it is the law that the Holy Spirit writes in our hearts, as He teaches us and transforms us daily, through the many experiences and circumstances of life.

In his short epistle, Jude quotes from the book of Enoch, *"Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, (wicked), saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with, (or in), ten thousands of His saints." (Jude vs.14)* The prophecy of Enoch is not included in the New Testament although some of the earlier fathers, as Jude, gave it all the weight of a canonical book. The first chapter of the book of Enoch begins, *"Blessing to the elect and righteous who will be living in the day of tribulation when all the wicked and godless are to be removed."* Enoch saw into our day as well as into the age to come. He did not mention the "rapture of the church" or a city in the sky; he knew the truth. He knew that it is the wicked and godless who are removed and not the godly.

Enoch was the seventh from Adam; he was the first human to walk with God and to by-pass death. Paul tells us that there will be some at the end of the age, who will also by-pass the grave.

Immortality is the crown of life promised to those who love God and walk with Him to the end. *"Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."* (Jms.1:12) This is the message that the Spirit is bringing to our hearts today. The spirit of Elijah who moved John the Baptist's ministry, continues to work through preachers and evangelists to call new Christians, and to lead them through the doctrinal steps they need. At the same time, as Elijah, it uncovers corruption in high places and tests the false prophets by fire. The work of John the Baptist is still bringing souls to repentance and it is a work of the Spirit of God in the world. But for those who have become followers of the Lamb, those who have become mature and are able to hear the deep things of God's purposes for the world, there is a need to move on and to walk only with God.

ENOCH'S MESSAGE TO THE SONS- Enoch is the Spirit who calls us to walk with God unto immortality. When the time is full, this will surely happen, but in the meantime, those who believe and are here now should not let go of this hope. Through faith in Christ, we learn to obey the Holy Spirit as He takes us through various places and ways of worship, many teachings, glorious and often painful experiences to bring us to maturity in Him. The goal is always transformation, perfection and resurrection. Resurrection is when death is fully overcome. The steps we are taking as we follow the Lamb, are steps toward overcoming death. It is the Lamb and not the Lion that we follow. The walk to immortality is a walk of meekness and of laying our lives down; we overcome death through death. Only that Lamb nature is able to break the seals and open the Book at the end of this age.

In my time, I have heard many brethren declare that they will overcome death and the grave. They truly believed that they were among those who would be here on earth when this mortal puts on immortality. They truly believed, yet they went to their graves, and their followers became discouraged. The truth is that they were right to believe, for some must overcome death and the grave while still walking in the flesh. It will surely happen when the last trump blows, when God's last vibrant Word is spoken and heard. In the meantime, we are as it were, in a relay race, so let us keep this hope alive, let us pass the baton unto those who must also believe and hope. Whether I live through to immortality, or go to my grave first, the Word of God will be fulfilled, but I must keep the hope in my heart, that possibly, I will be here when it all happens." *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming, (appearing), of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*" (1 Thess.4:15-17)

These verses are often quoted to lend support to the rapture theory promoted by C.I. Scofield who based his theory on the teachings of John N. Darby, an Irish minister. Darby developed the pretribulation rapture concept in the 1830s. He claimed that God would secretly remove Christians from the earth before a seven-year period of severe tribulations. Darby's ideas were influenced by literally interpreting the visions of a Scottish woman named Margaret Macdonald in 1830. She claimed to have received a private revelation regarding a secret return of Christ. The Scofield Bible with footnotes of this theory, has served to spread this false and dangerous doctrine throughout the Christian communities. In trying to calm the fears of the coming tribulations, it gives the believers no incentive to get ready to overcome through the fire. It leaves them desperate when conditions all around them become seemingly too hard to deal with.

What Paul wrote in these verses are the words of a beautiful prophecy about Jesus appearing with the voice of the archangel, bringing the saints who are behind the veil with Him, and joining those who remain, together into His glorious resurrection. He comes as a vibrant, loud and clear Word, as of a trumpet sound. He descends from heaven, which means He reveals Himself out of the invisible realm of Spirit, to gather the firstfruits who remain on earth at that time, with those whom He is bringing with Him, and all will be caught up together to be as He is, "body, soul and spirit," into the first resurrection.

This great company are all those, from Abraham to the end of this age, who have walked with God and are raised into the first resurrection, to run through the earth as a river of life, and heal creation. *"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb."* (Rev.22:1) This company will flow as the river of the pure water of God's life to the earth. God will wipe away all tears, and there will be no more sin, no more anger and violence, no more sorrows, no more death nor funerals. Enoch saw this day and prophesied of the appearing of Jesus "with" ten thousands of His saints. Young's literal translation says "in" ten thousands of His saints. Enoch, who himself walked into immortality, is a strong witness to the firstfruits who are called to do the same.

THE "FEET" COMPANY- *"But this Man, (Jesus Christ), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool."* (Heb.10:12-13) Jesus Christ, our Head is waiting for His body, the feet, to put all enemies under His feet. Paul said that the *"last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."* (1 Cor.15:26) Because Enoch walked, he is also the spirit of the "feet" company, those who will keep walking until death has been

put under the feet of Christ. Paul told the Corinthian church a mystery that he must have seen when he visited the third heaven; he writes, "*Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised, incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting, O Hades, where is thy victory."*" (I Cor.15:51-55)

At this time I am reminded of an unforgettable dream that I once shared. In the dream *I was dancing gracefully, light as a feather, with a man whom I loved so much, and who loved me and cherished me. It was heavenly.* (I really dance with two left feet), *but in the dream, I just followed this man's lead with so much ease and delight.* In the dream, I represent all who are called to come into perfect unity with Christ. The Spirit was revealing the oneness that we are coming to in following Christ. The music stands for the Word.

Our walk is as a very lovely dance of perfect harmony with the Word. At the time, I saw this dance as our coming into perfect harmony with the Word and the will of God, the union that our souls are yearning for. Our oneness with God comes as a result of learning to be sensitive to His Spirit who gently leads us, and recognizing His presence who urges us each day. When we dance we give ourselves to the rhythm of the music and together, our feet move in the same direction, and hit the floor at the very same time; it is a beautiful thing to behold. The music is the Word that directs our steps and actions each day. Today, as we are caught up into the very spirit of the one who walks perfectly with God, we find that we are indeed walking and dancing in His very presence. All this happens because our soul loves to be everything that His Word is; it is our recognition of His moving in our lives that brings this wonderful union into being. "*The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. And he delights in His ways.*" (Ps.37:23)

Jude ends his letter, "*Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.*" (Jude vs. 24-25)

Blessings and love. "*Giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.*" (Col.1:12)

Because God is love, *Angèle Caporaso (Jackie)*