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Angèle Caporaso
10552 SE 151st Street
Summerfield Fl. 34491
Ph.352-288-5257
jackie9957@gmail.com
Website: jackiecap.site

ETERNAL LIFE AND IMMORTALITY

ETERNAL LIFE- It was at the tomb of Lazarus, that Jesus taught the clearest word about resurrection. Lazarus' sister Martha met Him there and said, *"if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask. Jesus said to her, your brother will rise again. Martha answered, I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. He said, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"* (Jn.11:21-26) It is clear, anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God who died and was raised from the dead, has eternal life.

In a dialogue between Jesus and some argumentative Jews, He declared, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall be all taught of God." Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."* (Jn.6:44-47) This was spoken to the Jews; they did not have the written Gospel at that time; they had the Word in flesh and blood. It was the Father in Jesus who taught them. And it was the Father, in Christ. who brought them through that terrible wilderness. Later in the chapter, Jesus reminds them of the manna that fed them for forty years in the wilderness. It fed them daily and kept them alive, but now their life had come as the Bread of life. That Bread would give them eternal life, if only they could see that it was the same God who sent His Son to give them more than natural life in the wilderness. But they were blinded.

So the Father sent the Son to the Gentiles. Would they believe that He is that Bread of life? Would they eat of that Bread as they trudge through the terrible wilderness of this world's systems of governments, societies and religions. But just as out of the Jewish nation, only a remnant could hear and believe, so out of the Gentile nations, only a remnant are able to hear and to follow the Word of life. All has to be done in God's order. One has to hear the voice of the Son of God. *"Most assuredly I say to you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."* (Jn.5:25)

THE GREAT AWAKENINGS- There have been many awakenings in Christian history, some on a large scale, and some small; all have been significant. History records four great awakenings that shaped America. One called the "great awakening" started in Britain and in the American colonies in 1730-1740, led by preachers such as George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards. There were other great moves that followed--the moves of the 1900s when the Holy Spirit revivals stirred many with gifts of the Spirit like speaking in tongues, and miracles. Pentecostal moves led by such as Oral Roberts along with many gifted preachers who pitched their large tents from town to town and held lively revival meetings, preaching the Gospel with signs and wonders. There were huge evangelistic crusades, where tens of thousands would gather in sports arenas to hear the Word preached by Billy Graham. Such was the beginning of the evangelical movement which is still growing and today is a powerful lobby in our government. Starting in early 1900 there were moves like Sonship and Reconciliation which are less known but still growing until today. All these moves hold

various doctrines, but all are based on the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ and eternal life. Personally, each of us has experienced spiritual awakenings as we grow in Christ. With each awakening we have found ourselves moving from church to church, from glory to glory.

THE DREAM AND THE GREATEST AWAKENING- Recently I had this dream, *"I was with a couple other people, in a wind-swept isolated area by the ocean. I entered an old building, like a wooden shack the size of a warehouse. Inside, many shelves were built all around the walls, and on them were peculator coffee pots. They were like the kind we used in the past century. They had the little glass button on the lid where the water boiled up until it became coffee. There were all sizes of these, but I was looking for a size four, one that would serve four cups; none other would do. I looked at so many, and finally found one, hid in the back of the shelves."* There were oodles of these coffee pots, all different sizes but I only found one size four. It was hid in the dimness of the shack, at the end of all the rows behind many other pots.

In biblical numerology, the number four refers to the earth creation. The Bible refers to the four corners and the four winds of the earth, *"After these things, I saw four angels, standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth..."* (Rev.7:1) There are the four points of a compass--north, south, east and west and the four elements, earth, water, air and fire. There are four kingdoms of existence, human, animal, vegetable and mineral. Indeed the number four is the number that denotes the entire earthly creation.

With this in mind, we conclude that the size 4 coffee pot is symbolic of the awakening, (coffee is a wake-upper), of the entire creation. The dream is saying that there have been many messages or words from God, (all the many coffee peculators), which brought new spiritual understandings to those who had an ear to hear, but there is a message, a word that has been kept in the hidden place of the Christ within us, (we are the shack), a Word that is more powerful and much greater than any Word that brought about the awakenings of the past. This new awakening will shake up and awaken the entire creation. This means that now, God is leading those who are called, to find the Word fit for the hour, that is to brew the coffee that will awaken the whole world, and deliver the entire creation. This points to the elect sons that God has called and matured for this purpose. *"Because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption, (death), unto the glorious liberty of the sons of God."* (Rom.8:21) I do not know how the sons will preach this Word, but I do not believe that it will be as anything we have seen or done in the past. The world is now being made ready to receive this Word of life, which will come, not with preaching, but with mighty manifestations of God's power. Jesus told those who could not believe that He was the Son of God, *"If I do not do the works of my Father, do not believe Me. But if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."* (Jn.10:37-38) Jesus did many wonderful works and miracles, that they might believe in Him, but He said to the disciples and us, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to My Father."* (Jn.14:12) The time of the greater works that Jesus did, will be the greatest awakening of the whole world.

IMMORTALITY- At this time, all believers have eternal life, but only Jesus has immortality. The word immortal or immortality is not found in the Old Testament and is only found five times in the new. Jesus' sacrifice pays the penalty of the law for us, *"All souls are mine...the soul who sins shall die."* (Eze.18:4). The blood sacrifice of Jesus, totally redeems us from the curse of the Law. It is God's grace that gives our souls eternal life although our mortal bodies still die and decay. If it were not for the sacrifice of Jesus, after the death of the mortal body, the soul would land in Sheol or Hades, which is the place of the dead. However, in Jesus, the soul receives the covering of salvation, the robe of righteousness, and eternal life, for Jesus is the Savior of the world. *"And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the*

Saviour of the world." (I Jn.4:14) Peter wrote, *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* (II Pet.3:9) All souls await the resurrection, howbeit, there is a first resurrection, and more later, each in God's timing. This is a study by itself.

Being immortal is having a visible, imperishable, incorruptible body that will never die or decay. Jesus is the Savior of our souls and also of our bodies. *"...Christ is head of the church, and He is the Savior of the body."* (Eph.5:23b) When Christ saves us, He covers our souls with a robe of righteousness, and when our bodies die we are caught up in Him into eternal life. *"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful in my God. For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."* (Isa.61:10) This we receive when our mortal bodies die, and we join the witnesses who are also waiting for their full redemption in Christ.

Immortality will come at the first resurrection, when this mortal puts on a body that expresses our fully redeemed soul. Immortality is the clothing, or body that we will be adorned with in the ages to come: it is the same body that Jesus alone possesses. Paul explains that while the whole creation is groaning to be delivered from the bondage of death, *"... we also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance."* (Rom.8:23-25) It is hope that keeps us pressing for the *"...mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* (Phil.3:14 KJV) So while the world is groaning for deliverance from sin and corruption, we as sons, are also groaning, and eagerly waiting in hope, for the adoption, that is our placing of sons, and the redemption of our bodies unto immortality.

THE EXCEPTIONAL DEATH OF JESUS- Jesus obtained an immortal body when, after being dead for three days, He arose by the power of the Spirit of holiness which dwelt in Him. Without the decay and stench of death, He stepped out of the tomb, leaving behind only his linen cloths and the handkerchief that had been around His head. Jesus was perfectly sinless, He was tempted in all ways as we are, He went through all the temptations that the devil could possibly throw His way but never sinned. He was raised in immortality. When He showed His new body to His disciples, He said to Thomas, *"Reach your finger here, and look at my hands, and reach your hand here, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."* (Jn.20:27) Jesus' mortal body had put on immortality.

It is by dying a totally sinless death, that one puts on immortality. *"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead, will also give life to your mortal bodies."* (Rom.8:11) *"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this mortal 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 in victory.'" (I Cor.15:53-54)* At the end of this age, there will arise a people, who have walked the walk and be made sinless. These are they who will have overcome death, and put on immortality. By the same token, those whom Jesus brings with Him at the last trump, are also of those who have walked the walk and will also put on immortality. *"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord. that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who are asleep."* (I Thess.4:15)

Paul yearned to be found in that same death and resurrection. He paid a high price for this; he totally parted with his ties as a Pharisee of Pharisees, and forsook his high position of honor among them. He turned away from all the traditions of his Jewish ancestors, and from the teachings of his famous and highly

respected teacher Gamaliel. Paul considered all of these things as "dung" for the attaining to the death of Jesus. He writes, *"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means, I may attain to the resurrection of the dead."* (Phil.3:10-11) *"For if we have been united together in the likeness of His, (Jesus') death, certainly we shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."* (Rom.6:5) Paul suffered greatly in his own body, yet he did not attain to that which he was pressing for. *"I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church."* (Col.1:24) To this day, only Jesus Christ has attained to that death, resurrection and immortality.

"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us is God. Who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee." (II Cor.1:21-22) Both the KJV and Young's literal translate vs.22 as, *"...Who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."* According to Strong's concordance, the earnest is a pledge, a promise, a down payment of that which will come fully later. Jesus had the fulness of the Spirit, and we have an earnest or a pledge of getting the fulness later. The truth is that the Spirit of holiness that will raise us up into immortality, is Christ fully formed in us; it is the new creation man in us. It is the One who is our new life who will arise; the old man is dead and buried. *"I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me..."* (Gal.2:20)

"So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him, He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation." (Heb.9:28) This is not speaking of Jesus coming again, to sit on a throne in Jerusalem and rule the world. This appearing of Jesus will take place at the last trump when Jesus brings with Him, the saints whom He has kept in Him. It will be when God's firstfruit sons who are still on earth, have reached full maturity, and have overcome sin and corruption in the flesh. It will be when death has been swallowed up of life. *"For we who are in this tent, (this body), groan, being burdened not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up of life."* (I Cor.5:4) It will be the glorious time, when the saints who have been "asleep" in Jesus, (being asleep means no longer being active in the earth), the same who are in the cloud of witnesses and those who are still here on earth, will be caught up together into the same immortality as Jesus. *"...when He is revealed, (when He shall appear), we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."* (I Jn.3:2)

This is the first resurrection. It is when Christ Jesus, the Head of the body of sons, will no longer be the only immortal One, but His many brethren will arise in the same image and likeness as Him. Paul urged Timothy to remain blameless *"...until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, which He will manifest in His own time. He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen."* (I Tim 6:14b-16)

Jesus said that in His Father's house there are many mansions, or dwelling places; these are realms of life. He told His disciples that He went to prepare the place for them, that they might be where He is, that is in that same realm of life which is immortality. Others have their place in the Father as well, but in various realms. Paul explains that in the resurrection, there are many realms of life. He compares them to the sun, the moon and the stars. *"There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differs from another in glory. So also in the resurrection of the dead."* (I Cor.15:41-42a)

Hopefully, the Holy Spirit will reveal even more on this in the near future. If anyone has received more and would like to share it with us, it would be most welcome.

In God's eternal love, *Angèle Caporaso (Jackie)*