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THE WAY TO THE TREE OF LIFE

No.236

TAKE HEART

It was night time and as I was getting ready for bed, I felt the tiredness and weariness of my eighty-two year old body. I began to talk to my Father and found myself telling Him how thankful I truly am for the life that He has given me here on earth and most of all for the revelation of His Son in me.

I continued my little prayer saying, *“Father, most of all I am so thankful for the walk that you have given me with your Holy Spirit. I fully believe that the time of our transformation has begun. As we have followed you, you have brought us into our land of Promise. You have defeated all the enemies that have presented themselves before us. I believe that the last enemy to overthrow is mortality and that you have been preparing me for this.*

However, it is possible that my mission on this earth may be accomplished before that time and that you would then choose to take me behind the veil. I know that I am prepared for this also. Father, may it be according to your will.

Basically, this was my little conversation with the Father and I went to bed. During the night, I had this dream, *“I was visiting “retirement villages.” They were all so very beautiful. One in particular was exquisite. In beauty, it reminded me of the French Riviera where I spent some of my childhood. But the peace and well-being that I felt was beyond compare. I definitely desired to stay there. But then I was told that there was no room for me at this time and my name was at the bottom of a very long list.”* (End of dream)

The Lord had given me my answer. My mission was not yet accomplished in the earth. This made me know without the shadow of a doubt that even some of us old-timers are still in line for overcoming death in the flesh.

Yes, we have gone through our wilderness experience when we went from one church to the next and we learned to overcome all the obstacle on the way. Then we came to the borders of the land and we did not turn back in dismay. Rather we followed the Spirit of Joshua and Caleb and forged our way through to overcome the giants of unbelief and doubts in our own land.

But now we are facing the last of these giants, even the one called “Death or Mortality.” It is at this point more than ever that we must be reminded that our Lord has gone before us. He is the Captain of our salvation (deliverance from death). As He laid in the tomb, He faced and conquered that last enemy until the Spirit of holiness quickened His mortal body and raised Him from the dead.

Then the angels came and rolled back the stone and brought Him out forever. *“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”* (Rom.8: 11)

Jesus was prepared. He had come face to face with the devil and the devil could find nothing in Him. There is a people in the earth that have followed the

Spirit of Joshua and Caleb in the land and they are coming to the place where the devil can find nothing in common with them. They no longer have anything in common with the devil's works. They are ready to tackle the last enemy in the land which is death and mortality. Hallelujah!

We are at the door! We have walked through the land with our Joshua and Caleb. We have followed the Christ within and have been sanctified (set apart for a holy purpose) by the truth. We have taken hold of the nature of Caleb too. The name Caleb means "to attack as a dog." In the Spirit, I always thought of Caleb as a "bulldog."

A bulldog is very muscular and has strong jaws and a short muzzle. This is perfect for hanging tenaciously to whatever he takes hold of. And so it is in the Spirit, we are called to take on the Spirit of Caleb and tenaciously restrain this enemy until we have brought him down to the ground. With our Joshua and Caleb we are possessing the land that belongs to us in Christ.

MADE OF A WOMAN MADE UNDER THE LAW

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal.4: 4-5)

God's Lamb is the perfect sacrifice for sin. He was "...The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev.13: 8b) Yet it was not "till the fulness of time was fully come" that He came and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin.

Creation had to develop, mature and be totally ready for this to happen. Man had to come face to face with his earthly, beastly nature and know the evil thereof. He had to suffer the fiery trials that would bring him to that realization.

When we come into this world, we are made or born of woman, made or born under the law. We are subject to the law of sin and death, which promises death to everyone who sins. No matter how "good"

we may be, we cannot escape this law, we are born this way and we are in need of "redemption." We need to offer a sacrifice that will redeem us from the penalty of this law.

Our God is a God of Law. His entire creation is governed by laws. Laws control the planets in space and laws control life on earth. There is no escaping Law. The laws that govern the Universe are no less important than the Law of Moses. As men evolved on the planet, they have discovered many of God's laws. Newton discovered the three Laws of Motion and the Law of Gravity.

Einstein fine-tuned the understanding of the Law of Gravity with his theory of relativity. There are Laws of dynamics and Laws of quantum mechanics and physics. There are Laws of Rhythm that govern the ocean tides and many more. The Wright brothers superseded the Law of Gravity with Laws of aerodynamics. God's entire Universe is governed by Laws.

Jesus said that He came to fulfill the Law. He said, *"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."* (Matt.5: 18)

Jesus was speaking of the Law of Moses. This is the Law God gave to His people. They were to conduct their daily lives by that Law. Jesus said that all had to be fulfilled. God's laws can never be eliminated, they have to be fulfilled.

When Adam sinned, humanity was plunged into the realm of death. From that time on man born of woman is given only temporary life. He is a mortal subject to death. Because man is now "dead on arrival," he is also a "sinner" on arrival. The nature of the man born "dead" is "sin."

Because he is born in darkness, man cannot help but sin. Trying to lift himself up by his own boot straps, man falls right back down into sin. Sin separates us from God so in order to not sin, man must be restored to God. It is when we see this that we realize our need for a Savior. Any other teaching does away with the need for the blood sacrifice of Jesus.

Paul says that the Law is holy, *“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.”* (Rom.7: 12) God in His mercy gave the people the Law and the commandments so that they could find temporary forgiveness for their sins. But they had to continually offer these sacrifices because they continually kept sinning. Man in darkness cannot help himself; he sins. Man is deceived into thinking that by his own knowledge and reasoning he can keep from sinning. This is the deception of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The Law says, *“Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”* (Eze.18: 4) Man is trapped by his carnal, earthly nature. He cannot help but sin because he is in darkness and the Law that he is born under condemns him to more darkness and death.

The Law of sin and death is the Law of condemnation. Woe is me cried Paul, *“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death.”* (Rom.7: 24) Jesus Christ pays the penalty of the Law and delivers man from darkness. Paul answered his question, *“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* (Vs.25a)

Israel of old had a priesthood and they had sacrifices. While their sacrifices gave them forgiveness for their past and present sins, they could not change their nature and so they sinned again. Man needed a sacrifice that would totally take away the sin nature and would redeem him from the death that he could not escape.

The Lamb of God is an absolutely wonderful, marvelous, irreplaceable sacrifice because it not only provides for the forgiveness of sins, it provides a way to never sin again. And this is not only provided for the people of God but for everyone who is born in Adam. *“For as in Adam all (sin) die, even so in Christ shall all be made (sinless) alive.”* (I Cor.15: 22)

The Lamb of God is powerful enough to take every man out of the darkness of death and bring them into the Light of life. Hallelujah! What a Saviour! In Christ, we are no longer condemned to eternal

judgment. He has paid the penalty of the Law and He has made us free. In Him we are under the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. *“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”* (Rom.8: 2)

Under the Law of sin and death we are continually judged. This is the rule of that Law. This is why there is so much suffering in the world. The Law of sin and death is continually at work among us to judge us, condemn us and punish us.

Along with the sacrifice of Jesus, God has given us gifts. One of these great gifts is “repentance.” When we realize that our enemy is the sin that works in our members and we want to turn from it, God provides a way to turn around; it is called “repentance.”

Through repentance we enter into a new covenant with God. It is the New covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ. We offer Him as a sacrifice for our sins. It is then that we come under a new Law. One must remember that God is a God of Law and at no time can we find ourselves without Law. We are either under the Law of sin and death or the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

In Christ we are joined to a brand new congregation! The Jerusalem from above. This is the congregation under the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ. The old Jerusalem was the church under the Law of sin and death.

The true Church of the Living Christ is made up of an innumerable company of angels. Just think of that, we are in the company of so many angels that they cannot be counted. David said, *“There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”* (Ps.91: 10-12)

This is the company that is escorting us each day and night as we walk on to know our God. The journey is prepared for us. At the finish line we will be one with the true Bridegroom and know the true God. This is eternal life. It is a higher level of life.

SEARCHING FOR FATHER

A couple of nights ago I had this dream. *"I was in Paris looking for my father's house. In the dream, my father lived "Rue des Chretiens." I did not know where that was and felt lost when a young man appeared at my side. He signaled me to follow him. He went ahead and led me through narrow streets and wide avenues. Turn right here and left there. I had to follow carefully. This man truly knew his way around Paris and I fully trusted that I would find my father's house."*

Paris is actually called "City of Lights." So the dream denotes that now we have entered the City of Lights spiritually speaking. We are no longer in the dark. We have the Word and the Spirit to guide us. In reality, because I was raised in Paris, I am quite good at finding my way around the city, but in the dream I was not. This shows that in the City of Lights, where we are spiritually located, we cannot find our way to Father's house with our natural abilities and knowledge.

The goal in the dream was to find my Father's house. This is our next step in the Lord. For this, we have been given a very able guide. He is the Holy Spirit who knows how to take us through the narrow streets and wide avenues too. He knows all the turns and straight ways and most of all, He knows where to find Father's house.

I was reminded of a previous dream from several years ago, where I was in Paris looking for my father's house too. Only in that dream, he lived "Rue des Etres." Now in this new dream, he lives "Rue des Chretiens." This denotes a new meaning of where we are in finding our Father's house.

Rue des Etres translates, "Street of the "Beings" while Rue des Chretiens translates, "Street of the Christians." In the first dream the Lord reveals that we find Father's house when we become who we are called to be in Christ.

Now we find Father's house when we find the Street of the Christians or the Body of Christ in the earth. He is the One who leads us to this. The Body

of Christ is not any organized group, they are those who have the Spirit of Christ and are led by Him. As we follow Him, we are being joined to His Body and we are finding a new walk with each other in that City of Light; Street of the Christians.

We come to Father through the Son who is leading us there. He is the only One who knows how to find Father's house in the City of Lights. It is not enough to know the Word and possess a lot of information, it is not even enough to have the revelation of the Word, we must actually be aware of His presence in our lives each day. To know Him is eternal life. *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."* (Jn.17: 3)

THE DAY OF FIRE

John writes, *"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstones: which is the second death."* (Rev.21: 7-8)

It is through our carnal minds that fear and unbelief and all these things have been ruling our beings. They are part of the teachings that have been ingrained in our souls and spirits as we grew in this world. They are the things that the Holy Spirit is leading us to overcome as we allow His Light to shine in our darkness.

Paul writes, *"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."* (Rom.6: 11-12)

We have learned to pass the buck and play the blame game but now, by the brightness of His coming within, we face our "selves" and the old can no longer stand. Our darkness flees as the truth is making us free; we are being delivered and made able to deliver creation. It is when we reckon ourselves dead to our old nature that we are able to take hold

of His life in us and overcome the lusts or strong desires of our mortal body and natural man. His brightness slays the darkness within.

Because of His love, He puts us in situations where we have to face the truth of ourselves. If we react with carnal emotions we create more death for ourselves. We bury ourselves deeper into the pit but the fires that are kindled in our lives burn and destroy all that defiles out of us; this is His consuming fire. It is His love. If we continue to yield to our carnal minds when we have been given the light, we suffer the fires.

Paul wrote, *“Now if a man build upon this foundation (Jesus Christ) gold, silver, precious stone, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is...If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”* (I Cor.3: 12-13,15)

This is very clear that Paul is not speaking of a certain group of Christians; he says ANY MAN. This is not for a certain day in the future, this is every day. The day that declares these works is when the Light of God shines upon them. He is the Day. This comes to each and every one as the Lord chooses. When the time comes for the Spirit to reveal a certain thing in us, the day of fire has begun for us concerning this thing.

Today, we are all feeling the pinch of the changes that are taking place in the world and in our lives; everything that made us feel secure is shaking. Indeed, the fire of the Spirit is touching the things that men have been cherishing but that are indeed wood, hay and stubble.

The Light brings us face to face with our own Adam nature. As we look at ourselves we hear the words of Jesus, *“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”* (Matt.15: 19) These are but a few of the things that work in the hearts of men. We can add “Fears, unbelief and lies” as men-

tioned in John's letter. As we face these things and run to Him who is holy and true we are being changed into His image.

It was when Saul was after David's life that David realized how wicked his own heart really was. David found murder in his heart. He could have easily killed Saul and when he had the opportunity to do so he would have been justified by man; but God taught Him another way. So David waited on God and God gave him a place of refuge within his own spirit.

Yes, Saul was a powerful enemy, but David knew that his worst enemy was his own wicked heart. This is why he wrote the beautiful words we sing today, *“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”* (Ps.51: 10)

The things in our own hearts are the things that defile and keep us from true fellowship with our God. We are called to more than a “relationship” with our God; we are called to “union.” It is an affair of the heart. We have been having fun with any lover that offered us a spiritual thrill but now we are being brought to the true Light. The stillness of holiness that we are beginning to feel is awesome.

THE BRIDE WORE ARMY BOOTS

Years ago I read a book with that title. I do not remember who wrote the book or even its contents, but the title stuck with me. Since then, I have realized that indeed the walk of the true bride is an army walk. There is warfare on every side. Daily, she faces the fierce enemy who has ruled her mind in the past and refuses to let her go. But in Christ, her feet are shod with army boots that enable her to keep her feet safe in the Way.

She is called to be the church triumphant, the woman who bruises the head of the serpent and gives birth to the new creation of God in the earth. This is serious warfare and she is equipped to victory. She will not be discouraged and she will not be stopped. She is going to meet her Bridegroom and her heart is fixed.

Paul speaks of the union between a man and his

wife as the union between Christ and the church. How He loves her, cleanses her and washes her with the water by the word, *“That he might present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”* (Eph.5: 26)

The Lord is painstakingly attentive to every detail in the preparation of His church. She is not the one with her many programs and good works that we see out in our world today. Nay, she is the one in whom His Holy Spirit deposits the Word of life, the seed that impregnates her so that she will give birth to the new creation of God. She is an awesome bride! She will have this Manchild!

God has dealt and is still dealing with each one of us individually, and He deals very seriously with His overcoming church. We have letters from Him to prove this. We find them in John's book of the Revelation. They are addressed to the churches of that time, howbeit, they apply to the entire church over the centuries.

These letters have been studied over and over again, but each time they reveal something new and marvelous. The first of these letters is addressed to the church at Ephesus.

EPHESUS

Ephesus was a wealthy and prosperous center. Its harbor could accommodate large ships and commerce was thriving. There were many magnificent Greek temples in Ephesus and the worship of many false God was everywhere. It was a hot bed of superstitions, notorious for magic. Paul said that he fought “with beasts at Ephesus” meaning that the people were enraged with demonic powers against him for exposing their false gods when he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In spite of all this, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Ephesus became the Christians' headquarters. This church had faced and overcome so much that they were certainly taken by surprise when they found out that their Lord had something against them.

Make no mistake, this church was beloved of the

Lord. He recognized their stand for truth, their labor and patience and their great discernment of false christis. *“...thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.”* (Rev.2: 2b) Ephesus is certainly a type of God's elect church in the last days.

They had everything going for them; they were rich in many ways. But their Lord wanted them to attain to His highest and they were missing an important ingredient: **THEY HAD LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE.**

This was very serious, *“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”* (Vs.5)

They needed to do the first works and rekindle the fire that they had once felt for Him who is the Word of God. This is an affair of the heart. Their affection had turned to worldly ambitions. They may have been reading and studying their Bibles each day, but the fire of love that they had once felt when He quickened the spirit of revelation in them, was nearly extinct. They heard the word but were no longer thrilled by what it meant in their lives.

Ezekiel speaks of the attitude of such ones in his time, *“And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.”* (Eze.33: 31-32)

This had become the condition of the church at Ephesus and it remains an easy slope to slide down into. It is as we recognize this condition and yield to the Holy Spirit who is able to separate us unto Himself and change our hearts that we come back to our first love. These are the first works and the reward is huge. Jesus told that church, *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the*

churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” (Rev.2: 7)

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TREE OF LIFE

The Lord was not offering this “tree” to whosoever came, He was speaking to a seasoned, spirit-filled church who had walked the walk and overcame the enemy on many sides. Yet they were coming up short of partaking of the tree of life.

This tree is not an ordinary fruit tree. First, it is found in the midst of the street of the city on either side of the river of life. *“...it bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” (Rev.22: 2b)*

We first find the Tree of life in the garden of Eden where the Lord God makes this astonishing statement. *“And the Lord God said, Behold, the MAN is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever.” (Gen.3: 22)*

The Tree of life is Christ as MAN's source of eternal life. Eternal life is to know the One true God and this can only be found in Christ. So we have been rightly saying all along that the Tree of life IS CHRIST. However, this is a “general” statement and perhaps the spirit of revelation would explain this in a little more details. The tree of life would have enabled THE MAN to be immortal. This means that the man's body would have never ever died and decayed.

The Tree of life is the Tree of immortality. Its fruits prevail over man's mortality. As the fruits of the Spirit work within us we overcome death in the flesh.

But man could not partake of this Tree without an atoning blood sacrifice acceptable to a holy God. This Law could not be changed. So God took action, *“... he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way*

of the tree of life.” (Gen.3: 24)

The Tree of life is in the earth but has its roots in the River of life. The River of life is God's Spirit flowing in His people in the earth. A river represents the flow of the Spirit in the earth. The church which is planted in the River of God's spirit and who is able to impart His life to the nations of the world, is the church who will come into immortality.

But she has to go through the fire of the flaming swords to partake of that Tree and attain to “first resurrection” and immortality. She will arise as a nation of kings and priests imparting life to the nations of the world.

We once laid our “worldly self” and our worldly desires on the cross but now it is the “religious” self that must also be crucified with Christ. We may have obtained the respect and admiration of the brethren and we may feel that we must not let them down. Surely the disciples felt that Jesus was letting them down when He went to the cross but He plainly told them that this was the Father's will. We must walk through the fire of the flaming sword that cuts to the marrow and consumes the rest of what defiles. This is the way to the Tree of life.

Those who attain to first resurrection are blessed and holy. They have been made holy through the fire. *“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Rev.20: 6)*

This is that thousand year period for healing the nations of the earth. It is not a thousand years as counted by our calendars, but it denotes a long period or a Day with God. A priesthood is a people who reconciles the people to God. They are the dispensers of God's redemption in the earth. This is a time of healing for the nations.

Death is an enemy and it is the last enemy. Death will be destroyed by the overcoming company that follows the Lamb. This is their mission in life. They will destroy death in their own body. They will de-

stroy death in the world and they will destroy death wherever it is found.

A WORD ABOUT ENOCH

In his short letter, Jude mentions Enoch, “*Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also...*” (Jude Vs.14) Enoch was the seventh from Adam. This is significant because seven is the number of completeness and spiritual perfection. So we understand why it could be said of Enoch, “*And Enoch walked with God and he was not; for God took him.*” (Gen. 5:24)

The Book of Hebrews explains, “*By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*” (Heb.11: 5)

It is significant that Enoch was the seventh from Adam for it is when the seventh day is accomplished and God's elect have walked with Him and pleased Him that death in the flesh will be overcome and we will enter the age of immortality.

About two hundred years ago, an Ethiopian Version of the Book of Enoch was found in Abyssinia. Then modern translations were subsequently written. Nearly all the writers of the New Testament were familiar with it and were more or less influenced by it. Some of the earlier fathers of the faith gave it 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.***” Can you see that all the godless ways of Adam are being removed in us and will be removed in the world as well. Enoch saw into our day and the next age. He did not believe in a rapture or a city in the sky. He knew the truth and he partook of the Tree of life as he walked with God and was not...

This is the Lord's plan for His firstfruits. The Tree is in the midst of the garden. The garden is not a piece of realty somewhere, it is our very soul where

we communicate with our God.

When we hear His word and we are quickened in our understanding, our soul is partaking of the Tree of life. We are working out the saving of our soul with fear and trembling as we partake of the Tree of life. This happens when the Christ Spirit reaches our consciousness and our thoughts become His thoughts and our ways become His ways. Then we are fully reconciled to God.

Paul wrote, “*For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* (II Cor. 11: 2) We have been espoused or betrothed to Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Betrothal is a time when we are legally married to Him. We were once married to the Law but through the cross, the Law is dead and we are now legally married to Christ. This is a period when we learn to really know Him and to love Him. This is the time when we are set free from all other lovers and we are cleansed and purified by the Word of truth. Then comes the blessed day when He makes us bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. This blessed day is at hand.

Because of His love, *Jackie Caporaso*

Do not worry over things, but always by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. (Phil. 4: 6-7)

Lamsa's translation.