

Walking with God

*From a sermon delivered by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya
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"And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

"And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for. God took him" (Genesis 5:22-24).

Enoch was a human being like you and me. The difference between these patriarchs of old and we of today is that, while they lived for many years, we have few years to live in our own generation. Enoch, according to Bible record walked with God. He started to walk with God until he had a son Methuselah, the man who lived longest in all the generations. After he got Methuselah, he continued to walk with God and he walked with God for 300 years. This is a very long period. He walked with God, what does that mean? He did all that pleased God. He complied with God's rules. He did all that God instructed him to do. Whatever pleased the Lord, he did. And whatever he knew displeased God, he shunned. He was thereby able to please God. He would go at God's command, and stay at God's command. So, he walked with God and was able to please God in all his ways. God was so pleased with him that God said, 'This man, who has been walking with me, carrying out my orders, pleasing me in all ways; I had better take him to myself to rest for all eternity.' God took him away alive as the Bride of Christ will be translated one of these days at the Rapture.

The theme of the camp meeting is **The Bride of Christ**. We want to be a part of the Bride of Christ. What we have come here to learn is how we can walk with God in such a way that we shall be taken away to be with Him for eternity. That was exactly what preoccupied the mind of David when he wrote Psalm 15.

"LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" (Psalm 15:1).

This verse is a question to us. It is usual with God to provide a very good place for His Own children to live in. God will not make His people to live in a desert, live as destitutes, or in suffering; rather, He will provide a very good place for them. He made such a provision for the Children of Israel, when He delivered them from slavery and took them to a fertile land.

"But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

"Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offering, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the Lord:

And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God; ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is' within- your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you" (Deuteronomy 12:5;11,12).

This passage is God's command to the Children of Israel. The very day God liberated them from slavery in Egypt, He commanded that, that day would be the first day of the 'first year in all their generations and should be commemorated. When God delivered the Children of Israel from the bondage in Egypt, He led them through the valley, through the hills, sometimes through the 'desert, and through the mountains. God Himself was their Leader and their Guide. He did not allow them to wander away. He was always present with them. He was determined to take them to a

place where He had provided; a land which was His Own possession. He did not allow them to make any choice of their own, to live in any land or any other country because He was taking them to a particular country, a holy land, a land which He had taken care of for many years because of them. Just imagine the great privilege the Children of Israel had! God, the Mighty Creator and Controller of Heaven and earth was the same God Who said He was taking these people as His Own treasure, and was leading them to the place where they would abide. It is a wonderful privilege that God is doing the same for His Own children, the redeemed, those who are saved, whose sins have been washed away by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

God told the Children of Israel that when they got to that land, they should live there and not in any other place, with their children and servants. Their offerings should be brought to a particular place God had appointed. All their sacrifices, offerings and vows should be brought to that place and no other place. It is the same provision that God has made for the children of God. God has appointed a place for us. He will not want us to make a choice of our own. God wants us to say, "Yes Lord, it is where You want me to live that I will live, it is where You want me to go; that I will go, it is where You want me to stay that I will stay." That is exactly what God expects from everyone of us. God wants us to live and abide in the place He has chosen for us. Consider the victories we have been experiencing in our lives. Sometimes, the enemy will shoot an arrow and the arrow will strike, but immediately you cry and call the Name of the Lord, you are safe, because the Name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runs into it and he is safe. When you call the name of Jesus Christ and say, "Jesus, remove this pain by Thy Blood," immediately, the poison is removed and all the effect vanishes! This is what we have been experiencing. The enemy surrounds us but God will not allow him to have victory over us. Maybe you commit sin, then you begin to wonder, "Lord where am I, Lord how did I get into this? Please, come and help me; save me and forgive me." Immediately, God forgives you. It is a wonderful experience!

Enoch walked with God for 300 years. It was a wonderful experience indeed. When it was time, God took him away alive to live with Him eternally. It is the same provision God has made for His children. As for us, after we have completed the number of days God wants us to live here, He has made a provision whereby, He will pick us up by Rapture. If we are still alive, He will translate us, clothe us with glorified body, and take us to eternal glory where we shall live with Him for eternity.

What shall we do before we can inherit the prepared place?

"He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart" (Psalm 15:2).

We want to see what that means. In Proverbs 28:6, there is further explanation.

"Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich."

That is the explanation of Psalm 15:2. The poor that walks in uprightness is the person who will abide in the Holy Place of God. When a person comes to God and prays earnestly for forgiveness of sin, promising God that he will do away with anything that will constitute a hindrance in his walk with God, God forgives that poor sinner; then he will begin to walk with God. That is what everyone of us did when we came to God. But it is on the condition that we are upright, steadfast on our covenant with God, that we shall be able to inherit that place which God has provided. If we will be true to ourselves, we shall see that we fail in our uprightness and in the covenant which we had made with God; we are no more standing on the promises made. God wants us to come back to that particular covenant just as Jonah did.

God sent Jonah on an errand, but he refused to go. He wanted to go somewhere else. Jonah suddenly found himself inside the fish. He wondered where he was, he found himself in a dungeon, in a coffin that was more than an ordinary one. Jonah cried unto the Lord, he prayed to God. Jonah did not make a change of his vow. What did he do? He renewed his vow; he renewed his covenant with the Mighty God, the God of Heaven and earth. Where was God? God was in Heaven, but He could see Jonah right inside the great fish. Having heard the prayers of Jonah, having heard the renewal of Jonah's vow, and having accepted the renewal of the vow, God commanded the fish to go right to the beach of Nineveh and vomit Jonah. God commanded

the great fish, and the fish was obedient to God while human beings are disobedient to Him. The fish obeyed God and went straight to Nineveh, opened its mouth and vomited Jonah. In the same way, the ass on which Balaam rode, saw the angel of God with a drawn sword, while Balaam, the great prophet, was blind.

We, too, have made sacrifices. We have brought our offerings to God on the altar as Abraham did. The birds and fowls came, but Abraham would not allow them to devour his offering; he drove them away. This is exactly what God expects from all of us. He expects everyone of us to renew our vows, pray earnestly to God and say, "All these things I have acquired and accumulated, all that made me fail in my vows to God, I will bring back to the altar, I will renew my vows."

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment" (Proverbs 12:19).

Many of us have withdrawn our vows because we are in the habit of comparing our lives with the lives of others. When we were in trouble, cornered up, had difficulties in our lives, we came to God at a time nobody could help us, nor effect a change in the situation we were in. We opened our mouth and made vows to God. It was not you who made the vows, it was God who led you into them. As a result, God rescued you and made the change you so much desired. People rejoiced and praised God with you. But when you had the peace of mind, contentment and those things you desired, then you felt at ease, unwilling to pay the vows. You then ran to the minister of God, and narrated to him the vows you had made. The Bible says that, it is better not to make a vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. For the minister of God to inadvertently get in between you and God, tampering with the vow which you had made, is a very serious mistake.

Whatever may be the content of your vow, if you lead the minister into the mistake of saying that it is a rash vow, you have misled him. It is a false teaching to say the vow is rash.

If you hear such a comment from me, it is a false teaching; and if you hear it from anybody, that person is a false teacher. You have said it and God has written it down. It is steadfast. It is written in Heaven and God is expecting you to fulfil that, which has come from your lips.

This is not the church where celibacy is preached. No, not by any means. But if you have made a vow not to get married, your covenant with God is your personal vow on the altar of prayer. It may be in the Church here or at the place of work, or any other place. That which came out of your lips, God has laid His hands on. It is a vow, you don't have to withdraw it. God will reject you if you do.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20).

Some people have had practical experience of what the text says and that does not pertain to the question of marriage at all. A child of God was, led to withdraw his vow. God was not pleased with him. God cornered him up, he became seriously ill. At that time, he had become a minister of God. He prayed and was not healed. All other ministers prayed earnestly for him, he was not healed. Then he was left all alone with God. God reminded him of the vow he had made. He went back to it, renewed that vow and stood by it. Then he was healed. That is why we should be very careful as ministers and preachers. Do not put yourself in-between any person and God. Do not tamper with anybody's vow. The vow anybody makes is between him and God. You should be careful also, not to be forward, especially you ministers' wives, in the way you advise people, in order not to lead people astray. If you lead any person to withdraw his vow or to fail in his covenant with God, you may bring troubles into his life. You will cause him a lot of trouble and he will not inherit that beautiful place God has gone to prepare.

"He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour" (Psalm 15:3).

We all take delight in reading this particular verse of the Scriptures, but usually, we fail to apply the Word in our lives. Backbiting is very common among people. Many men have been led into trouble because

they delight in hearing sweet words from the mouth of women. It is a very common practice among people in the world and people are not careful enough to know that God brings judgment on the practice. We can read about the judgment of this particular habit in Psalm 101:5

"Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."

This verse makes it explicitly clear to us that, any one who backbites his neighbour puts himself in the danger of God's judgment and the judgment of God on such person will be very severe. The Word of God tells us that, the wages of sin is death but when people get into sin and they are not found dead instantly, we feel that there is no judgment on what they have done. But the saints of God who really understand the Word of God and the mind of God, know that such people are dead spiritually according to the Word of God. When Adam and Eve disobeyed the law of God, they did not die physically immediately, but God sent them out and the experience was the hard proof that they were dead spiritually.

"Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour him will I cut off." That is the judgment on the habit and practice of slandering. Slandering is a common practice. Whether it is a child of God, neighbour, or someone who doesn't come to church at all; whosoever is slandered, the judgment of God is very great. God says, anybody who does it "will I cut off." The moment you start to slander, God has withdrawn all the graces He has given you, you just have a mere profession which does not amount to anything in the presence of God. You are already cut off! Discussing people and matters you don't know the details of, is a very bad habit and the judgment of God on that practice is the danger of being cut off; it is the danger of hell. God wants us to be very careful.

If anything happens in a station or in any other location and you happen to hear or know about it, it means God wants you to know and effect a change for the better. If you can rectify that incident, God wants you to do it, but if you don't do it and you begin to spread the rumour, it is an evil thing. The judgment of God on that practice is that you will be cut off. It is not the practice of the child of God; it is not a practice to be known with anybody who professes salvation. It is a practice of the heathen. God wants you to pray for that person. Nobody wants to fall. It is not a pleasant thing that anybody falls or runs into sin. It displeases God and God has no pleasure in the death of a sinner.

"In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" (Psalm 15:4).

What we have just read from the Bible is what God wants us to do. Before we ever started to study the Bible, before we ever went into the reading of the Word of God, that was the first step we took. When we came to God, we promised, "God I will do Your will, whatever You want I will do, and whatever You don't want I will do away with." That was the promise you made. God wants you to come back to that promise, swearing to your own hurt and changing not. Some make friends by spreading rumour. They say "Come, let me tell you something that happened." Then you listen attentively, you want to hear. Is that how you make friends? God wants you to do away with such practices. They are not the practices to be found among the children of God.

God says, "in whose eyes a vile person is contemned." Anybody who brings a rumour to you or bad news which is not the Gospel, you should know that, that person has not grown in faith, he lacks understanding. God wants us to separate ourselves from such bad companies and line up with people who are God-fearing. Join the company of people who aspire for greater heights in the Lord. Keep company with people who fear God. Keep company with people who are out-and-out for the Gospel. That is the company God wants us to keep if we want to inherit that beautiful place which God has gone to prepare for us. We will do away with anything that pertains to rumour, spreading bad news, anything that portrays lack of love, malice, and hatred, as God wants us to do. Anybody who brings any of these to you, if he is an old timer, know that there is something wrong with his Christian life. If he is a new person, know that he is not actually mature in faith. Just re-, ject such things. Why? Because it is our behaviour, our attitudes among ourselves which may deprive us of the inheritance which God has prepared for us.

Paul the Apostle gave a strict warning about our behaviour, the sort of life we were living in the past before we knew the Lord.

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

"Neither give place to the 'devil.

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:22-32).

What we read in the Old Testament about the heritage which God has provided for us - that Glory Land, and the beautiful things which God has promised to be ours—is the same thing mentioned in the New Testament. The condition on which we can inherit those things is the way we comport ourselves among our fellow men. All the traits that are mentioned in the passage above are not new to us. These were the ways we behaved in the past, and after we were redeemed and regenerated we should not go back to them. God wants us to cast off "the old man" and put on "the new man," Jesus Christ, Who will enable us to inherit that beautiful heritage.

With our profession of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, if we still slander other people, keep malice, and exhibit bitterness, what spirit is that? Let us reason together, let us meditate on this. Keeping malice against some people for a year or two, with the profession of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost! What spirit is that? Is that the Spirit of regeneration? Or the Spirit of Jesus Christ? The Bible says, 'Be tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.' If there is no forgiveness in us, what spirit shall we call that? Is it the Spirit of God or a strange one?

When Jesus Christ wanted to leave the disciples, He gave them an assurance:

"LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

We have been told from the lips of Paul the Apostle that, 'eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him.' According to our experience in life, as Christians, we begin to have the foretaste of those things God has prepared for us. Apart from the brief description we have in the Revelation of John, how beautiful Heaven is, we too have personal experiences of the joy of Heaven on this earth when we come to God. We used to be afraid but when we got saved, we no more fear. We sleep like babies, and feel very comfortable in bed. We have the joy of Heaven, contentment, satisfaction, and peace of mind. We feel a great change in our lives, old things have passed away. All the fear, turmoil and the nightmares, have passed away, and everything becomes new. Furthermore, we begin to enjoy the love of God and the fellowship of the people of God. We have heard testimonies that among the people of God, there is great love; love that is greater than what you have among

your blood relations. Consider how the people of God take care of you when you are sick. They rally round and give you what you need. That is the love of God, the foretaste of the love which exists in Heaven. More than that, Jesus Christ has made a promise that He has gone to prepare a place for us.

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

"And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

"And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:22-27).

We have read it, you have heard it, and the pursuit to achieve it is now left to us, so that we may enter where Jesus said He has gone to prepare for us. There, you don't have teachings, it is in this world that we listen to teachings. It is left to you. Your power cannot take you there but the power of Jesus can take you there.

The love of God is entreating you this morning to come and make a covenant with Him. If there is any covenant you have broken, come and renew your vows today. Believe God and trust in Him. Jesus is expecting you. God has revealed a great revelation to you this morning. You know what the obstacle is between you and God. It is a privilege for you this morning to reconcile with God. There is mercy for you. Go back to your former vows. Jesus demands the former vows from you.