

**Association of 7th Day Pentecostal Assemblies
(Esreso)**

2017 End-of-Year Camp Meeting

Sermon

By

Elder Enoch Ofori Jnr
(Senior Pastor)
(Saturday, 30th December, 2017)

Title: Elijah's Mantle and the Crossing of the Jordan

“Where's the God of Elijah”

Real men of God talk to us about God, walk the talk (that is, demonstrate by personal example and commitment that God is real and active in their life) and give clarity to His purposes in our lives.

But they do much more. They guide us into a personal relationship with God; they provide a spiritual mentoring that should see us grow in Him – in knowledge of His will, ways and operations. In time, our own lives come to validate the spiritual truths we have learnt about God – the fact of His existence, truth and working power!

But this does not come without a *moment of truth*; a time when you get to know a person or something for what they truly are; an opportunity to prove or disprove their claims, a time when you move from theory to practice, from being a student of the word to being a practitioner of the word. At this point in our spiritual journey, it's a make or break affair – either God is real and He intervenes directly in our situation, or He simply is a myth and our so-called spiritual mentor pulled the wool over our eyes.

This crucial point reached is usually a crisis point reached where the situation is beyond our ability to solve or overcome. This is where, like Elisha, we ask, “where is the God of Elijah?” River Jordan lies before him!

Elijah, the great prophet of God, through whom he saw God operate mightily and wonderfully had just left the scene; he had left his place in his life—taken away by God in a whirlwind! If his God was true, let Him prove Himself true to him in this hour of difficulty!

Elisha had accompanied the prophet on the final stretch of his earthly walk with God – from Gilgal to Bethel, to Jericho to the Jordan – despite all attempts by the older man to discourage him from following him:

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

“And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

“He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

“And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over” (2 Kings 2:11-14).

It’s a situation I can identify with. And I believe most of us here share in the same feeling.

Our own “Elijah” has been taken away from us after 40 years of dedicated service in the ministry. We all watched him preach and minister powerfully under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The oppressed were set free, the sick healed, demons cast out, doors were opened, problems solved, and spiritual and financial breakthroughs made by the ever present, unmatched power of God. Truly, “all the signs of an apostle” were found in him. (See 2 Cor. 12:12). But our Elijah is no more. He fought and won many spiritual battles for God’s church and overcame great obstacles which came his way as we followed him in his walk with God. Yet in crossing the Jordan of obstruction and opposition and challenges of his own time, he didn’t swallow up the waters after him, leaving for us an all-dry land to walk on all the rest of our lives!

We returned from a befitting send-off to see Jordan staring us in the face! How do we cross the overflowing waters of the River Jordan now that Elijah is gone?

How many times haven’t I cried out, “where is the God of Elder Enoch Ofori? The God of my father?”

The departure of the church's longtime leader, Apostle Elder Enoch Ofori, plunged the church into crisis – assailed on all fronts by the enemy. That was our threatening Jordan minus the physical presence of our very own Elijah!

But as in the case of Elisha, the protégé of the great prophet Elijah, he left us his mantle – his divine mantle of righteousness and Holy Spirit anointing!

However, like Elisha, we need to tear our own clothes and take firm hold of the Elijah mantle of power to part the waters of the Jordan! And we tear them apart not only in expression of grief but more importantly to show that we have made a break with our old selves so that we might grasp the mantle and use it to perform the same mighty deeds of old and more! (See John 14:12).

Rend your Hearts!

It virtually involves an exchange. The effective use of Elijah's mantle requires the tearing of our own personal clothes into shreds. Both can't be used at the same time. Our old clothes – our old identity – must go!

This represents total commitment to our holy calling which we received when the man of God cast his mantle upon us by the preaching of the word:

“So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

“And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah...” (1 Kings 19:19-20).

Elisha called Elijah “my father” not because Elijah was his biological father or even a close relation. It was because he cast his mantle upon him! He instructed him in the ways of God and nurtured him spiritually over the years.

The same can be said of the late Apostle Enoch Ofori. For many of us, he was not our biological father, but God used him as His instrument to lead us to the saving truth in Jesus. Indeed, he was not remiss at all in feeding us the pure word of in all its richness and power. It's in this context that we may call him “father”. The Apostle Paul reminded the church in Corinth:

“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

“Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me” (1 Cor. 4:15-16).

A son never deserts his father. He follows him; he emulates him. He rends his own clothes and puts on his father's.

Therefore, let's rend our spiritual garments of pride and self-serving interests and put on the mantle of service and dedication to God. That way, every Jordan obstructing our path will part before us. The miracle power of God flows through the mantle.

We read in Joel 2:12-13:

“Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

“And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil.”

It appears no return to God is valid unless the heart, which the Prophet Jeremiah describes as “desperately wicked”, is rent – the old self is destroyed, “crucified with Christ” – and we begin afresh with God in righteousness and holiness. For “in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim 2:20-21).

So rend your heart and be a vessel of honour, and you will be able to use the mantle passed on to us by our late Elder for the performance of miracles, signs and wonders!

Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. So remember to hold onto the very same words of God which Elder taught us (Heb. 13:7-8). Henceforth, what we learnt from him and saw him do in the name of the Lord (Php. 4:9) will translate into tangible victories for us.

A Legacy of Victory

We have received “a double portion” of the late Apostle’s spirit because we belong to the “church of the firstborn which are written in heaven” (Heb. 12:23). Scripturally, firstborns receive “a double portion” of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17).

Not surprisingly, the mantle Apostle-Elder Enoch Ofori passed on to us has broken the power of the enemy; it has left them in perpetual confusion. And it's not by our might or by our power. Elder's God of power and victory is the same God of ours because we hold his mantle.

Many are sadly ignorant of the fact that true men of God don't bequeath material riches but spiritual riches. When Apostle Ofori departed this earth, many were those who fought carnal wars to seize the physical properties of the church.

In the process, they missed the real treasure. If in doubt, go ask Isaac!

What sustained Isaac, to whom his father Abraham “gave all that he had” (Gen. 25:5), was not the physical wealth which was in all likelihood wiped out in a famine (Gen. 26:1-2) but the spiritual legacy of a covenantal relationship with the God of truth.

It was from Him that the word came to Isaac in that same year of famine:

“And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:

“Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;

“And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

“Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.

“And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

“Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.

“And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

“For he had possession of flocks, and possessions of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him” (Gen 26:2-5, 12-14).

Such is the legacy the late Elder Enoch Ofori left us. We will not only speak of the things God did in the past during the lifetime of the late Elder but also the very same wonderful things He is doing in our midst now. He’s our “present help” (Ps. 46) because we serve “not the God of the dead, but the God of the living” (Mark 12:27).

He will repeat, in our time, the victory and deliverance He wrought in Elder’s day:

“We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

“How Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them; how Thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

“For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them.

“Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

“Through Thee will we push down our enemies: through Thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

“For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

“But Thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

“In God we boast all the day long, and praise Thy name for ever. Selah” (Ps. 44:1-8).

The God of Elder Enoch Ofori, the God he taught us about and demonstrated His miracle power before our very eyes, is not a God who fails to deliver or disappoints. “As I was with Moses”, He assured Joshua, Moses’ successor, “so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. ...Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest” (Joshua 1:5, 7-9).

Only hold the mantle tightly, and Jordan will be a pushover. It will give way, and you will just cross it to your next level of blessing in Christ Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today and forever. Amen!