

The Hordes of Hell Are Marching

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The Evil Army

I saw a demonic army so large that it stretched as far as I could see. It was separated into divisions, with each carrying a different banner. The foremost and most powerful divisions were Pride, Self righteousness, Respectability, Selfish Ambition, and Unrighteous Judgment, but the largest of all was Jealousy. The leader of this vast army was the Accuser of the Brethren himself. I knew that there were many more evil divisions beyond my scope of vision, but these were the vanguard of this terrible horde from hell that was now being released against the church.

The weapons carried by this horde had names on them: the swords were named Intimidation; the spears were named Treachery; and their arrows were named Accusations, Gossip, Slander and Faultfinding. Scouts and smaller companies of demons with such names as Rejection, Bitterness, Impatience, Unforgiveness and Lust were sent in advance of this army to prepare for the main attack. I knew in my heart that the church had never faced anything like this before.

The main assignment of this army was to cause division. It was sent to attack every level of relationship—churches with each other, congregations with their pastors, husbands and wives, children and parents, and even children with each other. The scouts were sent to locate the openings in churches, families or individuals that rejection, bitterness, lust, etc., could exploit and make a larger breach for the divisions that were coming.

The most shocking part of this vision was that this horde was not riding on horses, but on Christians! Most of them were well-dressed, respectable, and had the appearance of being refined and educated. These were Christians who had opened themselves to the powers of darkness to such a degree that the enemy could use them and they would think that they were being used by God. The Accuser knows that a house divided cannot stand, and this army represented his ultimate attempt to bring such complete division to the church that she would completely fall from grace.

The Prisoners

Trailing behind these first divisions were a vast multitude of other Christians who were prisoners of this army. They were all wounded, and were guarded by little demons of Fear. There seemed to be more prisoners than there were demons in the army. Surprisingly, these prisoners still had their swords and shields, but they did not use them. It was shocking to see that so many could be kept captive by so few of these little demons of Fear. These could have easily been destroyed or driven off if the prisoners had just used their weapons.

Above the prisoners the sky was black with vultures named Depression. These would land on the shoulders of a prisoner and vomit on him. The vomit was Condemnation. When the vomit hit a prisoner he would stand up and march a little straighter for a while, and then slump over, even weaker than before. Again, I wondered why the prisoners did not simply kill these vultures with their swords, which they could have easily done.

Occasionally a weak prisoner would stumble and fall. As soon as he or she hit the ground, the other prisoners would begin stabbing them with their swords, scorning them as they did so. They would then call for the vultures to begin devouring the fallen one even before they were dead.

As I watched, I realized that these prisoners thought that the vomit of condemnation was truth from God. Then I understood that these prisoners actually thought they were marching in the army of God! This is why they did not kill the little demons of fear, or the vultures—they thought these were messengers from God! The darkness from the cloud of vultures made it so hard for these prisoners to see that they naively accepted everything that happened to them as being from the Lord.

The only food provided for these prisoners was the vomit from the vultures. Those who refused to eat it simply weakened until they fell. Those who did eat it were strengthened, but with the strength of the evil one. They would then begin to vomit on the others. When one began to do this a demon that was waiting for a ride would be given this one and he or she would be promoted to the front divisions.

Even worse than the vomit from the vultures was a repulsive slime that these demons were urinating and defecating upon the Christians they rode. This slime was the pride, selfish ambition, etc., that was the nature of the division they were a part of. However, this slime made the Christians feel so much better than the condemnation that they easily believed that the demons were messengers of God, and they actually thought this slime was the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Then the voice of the Lord came to me saying, "This is the beginning of the enemy's last day army. This is Satan's ultimate deception, and his ultimate power of destruction is released when he uses Christians to attack other Christians. Throughout the ages he has used this army, but never has he been able to capture so many to be used for his evil purposes. Do not fear. I have an army too. You must now stand and fight, because there is no longer any place to hide from this war. You must fight for My Kingdom, for truth, and for those who have been deceived."

I had been so repulsed and outraged by the evil army that I had wanted to die rather than live in such a world. However, this word from the Lord was so encouraging that I immediately began yelling to the Christian prisoners that they were being deceived, thinking that they would listen to me. When I did this, it seemed that the whole army turned to look at me, but I kept yelling. I thought that the Christians were going to wake up and realize what was happening to them, but instead many of them

started reaching for their arrows to shoot at me. The others just hesitated as if they did not know what to make of me. I knew then that I had done this prematurely, and that it had been a very foolish mistake.

The Battle Begins

Then I turned and saw the army of the Lord standing behind me. There were thousands of soldiers, but we were still greatly outnumbered. Only a small number were fully dressed in their armor so that most were only partially protected. A large number were already wounded. Most of those who had all of their armor still had very small shields which I knew would not protect them from the onslaught that was coming. The majority of these soldiers were women and children.

Behind this army there was a trailing mob similar to the prisoners who followed the evil army, but very different in nature. These seemed to be very happy people, and were playing games, singing songs, feasting and roaming about from one little camp to the next. It reminded me of the atmosphere at Woodstock. I tried to raise my voice above the clamor to warn them that it was not the time for this, that the battle was about to begin, but only as few could even hear my voice. Those who did gave me the "peace sign" and said they did not believe in war, and that the Lord would not let anything bad happen to them. I tried to explain that the Lord had given us armor for a reason, but they just retorted that they had come to a place of peace and joy where nothing would happen to them. I began praying earnestly for the Lord to increase the faith (shields) of those with the armor, to help us protect those who were not ready for the battle.

A messenger came up to me, gave me a trumpet and told me to blow it quickly. I did, and those who had on at least some of their armor immediately responded, snapping to attention. More armor was brought to them, which they put on quickly. I noticed that those who had wounds did not put armor over their wounds, but before I could say anything about this enemy arrows began raining down on us. Everyone who did not have on all of his or her armor was wounded. Those who had not covered their wounds were struck again in the same place.

Those who were hit by arrows of slander immediately began to slander those who were not wounded. Those who were hit with gossip began to gossip, and soon a major division had been created within our camp. Then vultures swooped down to pick up the wounded to deliver them into the camp of prisoners. The wounded still had swords and could have smitten the vultures easily, but they didn't. They were actually carried off willingly because they were so angry at the rest of us.

The scene among those in the camp behind our army was even worse. There seemed to be total chaos. Thousands lay on the ground wounded and groaning. Many of those who were not wounded just sat in a stupor of unbelief. The wounded and those who sat in unbelief were being quickly carried away by the vultures. Some were trying to help the wounded, and keep the vultures off of them, but the wounded were so angry they would threaten and drive away those who were trying to help them. Many who were not wounded were simply running as fast as they could from the scene of battle. This first encounter with the enemy was so devastating that I was tempted to join them in their flight. Then, very quickly, some of these began reappearing with full suits of armor on, and large shields. The mirth of the party had changed into an awesome resolve. They began to take the places of those who had fallen, and even began forming new ranks to protect the rear and flanks. These brought great courage, and everyone resolved to stand and fight until death. Immediately three great angels named Faith, Hope, and Love came and stood behind us, and everyone's shield began to grow.

The High Way

We had swords named the Word of God, and arrows that were named for biblical truths. We wanted to shoot back, but did not know how to without hitting the Christians that were ridden by the demons. Then it occurred to us that if these Christians were hit with the truth they would wake up and fight off their oppressors. I fired off a few arrows. Almost all of them hit Christians. However, when the arrow of truth went into them, they did not wake up, or fall down wounded-they became enraged, and the demon riding on them grew much larger. This shocked everyone, and we began to feel that this may be an impossible battle to win, but with Faith, Hope and Love we were very confident that we could at least hold our own ground. Another angel named Wisdom then appeared and directed us to fight from the mountain behind us.

On the mountain there were ledges at different levels for as high as you could see. At each higher level the ledges became narrower, and harder to stand on. Each level was named after a biblical truth. The lower levels were named after foundational truths such as "Salvation," "Sanctification," "Prayer," "Faith," etc., and the higher levels were named after more advanced biblical truths. The higher we climbed, the larger both our shields and our swords grew, and fewer of the enemy arrows could reach that position.

A Tragic Mistake

Some who had stayed on the lower levels began picking up the enemy arrows and shooting them back. This was a tragic mistake. The demons easily dodged the arrows and let them hit the Christians. When a Christian was hit by one of the arrows of Accusation or Slander, a demon of Bitterness or Rage would fly in and perch on that arrow. He would then begin to urinate and defecate his poison upon that Christian. When a Christian had two or three of these demons added to the Pride or Self righteousness he already had, he began to change into the contorted image of the demons themselves.

We could see this happening from the higher levels, but those on the lower levels who were using the enemy's arrows could not

see it. Half of us decided to keep climbing, while the other half descended back to the lower levels to explain to those still on them what was happening. Everyone was then warned to keep climbing and not stop, except for a few who stationed themselves on each level to keep the other soldiers moving higher.

Safety

When we reached the level called "The Unity of the Brethren," none of the enemy's arrows could reach us. Many in our camp decided that was as far as they needed to climb. I understood this because with each new level the footing was more precarious. However, I also felt much stronger and more skillful with my weapons the higher I went, so I continued climbing.

Soon my skills were good enough to shoot and hit the demons without hitting the Christians. I felt that if I kept going higher I could shoot far enough to hit the leaders of the evil horde who stayed behind their army. I was sorry that so many had stopped on the lower levels, where they were safe but could not hit the enemy. Even so, the strength and character that grew in those who kept climbing made them great champions, each of which I knew would destroy many of the enemy.

At each level there were arrows of Truth scattered about which I knew were left from those who had fallen from that position. All of the arrows were named after the Truth of that level. Some were reluctant to pick up these arrows, but I knew we needed all that we could to destroy the great horde below. I picked one up, shot it, and so easily hit a demon that the others started picking them up and shooting them. We began to decimate several of the enemy divisions. Because of this, the entire evil army focused its attention on us. For a time it seemed the more we achieved the more we were opposed. Though our task seemed endless, it had become exhilarating.

The Word Is Our Anchor

Our swords grew as we reached each level. I almost left mine behind because I did not seem to need it at the higher levels. I finally decided that it had been given to me for purpose, so I had better keep it. I drove it into the ground and tied myself to it while I shot at the enemy. The voice of the Lord then came to me, saying: "You have used the wisdom that will enable you to keep climbing. Many have fallen because they did not use their sword properly to anchor themselves." No one else seemed to hear this voice, but many saw what I had done and did the same thing.

I wondered why the Lord had not spoken to me before I had made this decision. I then had a sense of knowing that He had already spoken this to me somehow. Then I perceived that my whole life had been training for this hour. I was prepared to the degree that I had listened to the Lord and obeyed Him throughout my life. I also knew that for some reason the wisdom and understanding I now had could not be added to or taken away from while in this battle. I became profoundly thankful for every trial I had experienced in my life, and sorry for not appreciating them more at the time.

Soon we were hitting the demons with almost perfect accuracy. Rage rose from the enemy army like fire and brimstone. I knew that the Christians trapped in that army were now feeling the brunt of that rage. Unable to hit us they were now shooting at each other. With his arrows now ineffective against us, the enemy sent the vultures to attack. Those who had not used their swords as anchors were able to strike down many of the vultures, but they too were being knocked from the ledges where they were standing. Some of these landed on a lower level, but some fell all the way to the bottom and were picked up and carried off by the vultures.

A New Weapon

The arrows of Truth would rarely penetrate the vultures, but they hurt them enough to drive them back. Every time they were driven back some of us would climb to the next level. When we reached the level called "Galatians Two Twenty," we were above the altitude that the vultures could fly. At this level the sky above almost blinded us with its brightness and beauty. I felt peace like I had never felt it before.

Previously much of my fighting spirit had really been motivated out of as much hatred and disgust for the enemy as it had been for the sake of the kingdom, truth, and love for the prisoners. But it was on this level that I caught up to Faith, Hope, and Love, which before I had only been following at a distance. On this level I was almost overpowered by their glory. When I caught up to them they turned to me, and began repairing and shining my armor. Soon it was completely transformed and exuded the glory that was in them. When they touched my sword, great bolts of brilliant lightning began flashing from it. Love then said, "Those who reach this level are entrusted with the powers of the age to come, but I must teach you how to use them."

The "Galatians Two Twenty" level was so wide that there was no longer any danger of falling. There were also unlimited arrows with the name Hope written on them. We shot some of them down at the vultures, and these arrows killed them easily. About half who had reached this level kept shooting while the others began carrying these arrows down to those still on the lower levels.

The vultures kept coming in waves upon the levels below, but with each one there would be fewer than before. From "Galatians Two Twenty" we could hit any enemy in the army except the leaders themselves, who were still out of range. We decided not to use the arrows of Truth until we had destroyed all of the vultures, because the cloud of depression they created made the truth less effective. This took a very long time, but we never got tired.

Faith, Hope and Love, who had grown like our weapons with each level, were now so large that I knew people far beyond the

battle area could see them. Their glory even radiated into the camp of prisoners who were still under a great cloud of vultures. The exhilaration continued to grow in all of us. I felt that being in this army, in this battle, had to be one of the greatest adventures of all time.

After destroying most of the vultures that had been attacking our mountain, we began picking off the vultures that had covered the prisoners. As the cloud of darkness began dissipating and the sun began to shine down on them, they began to wake up as if they had been in a deep sleep. They were immediately repulsed by their condition, especially by the vomit that still covered them, and began cleaning themselves up. As they beheld Faith, Hope and Love, they saw the mountain we were on and began running for it. The evil horde rained arrows of Accusation and Slander at them, but they did not stop. By the time they got to the mountain many had a dozen or more arrows stuck in them, but seemed not to even notice. As soon as they began to scale the mountain their wounds began to heal. With the cloud of depression being dispelled it seemed as if everything was getting much easier.

The Trap

The former prisoners had great joy in their salvation. They seemed so overwhelmed with appreciation for each level as they began to scale the mountain that it gave us a greater appreciation for those truths. Soon a fierce resolve to fight the enemy also arose in the former prisoners. They put on the armor provided and begged to be allowed to go back and attack the enemy. We thought about it, but then decided we should all stay on the mountain to fight. Again the voice of the Lord spoke, saying: "A second time you have chosen wisdom. You cannot win if you try to fight the enemy on his own ground, but must remain on My Holy mountain."

I was stunned that we had made another decision of such importance by just thinking and discussing it briefly. I then resolved to do my best to not make another decision of any consequence without prayer. Wisdom then stepped up to me quickly, took both of my shoulders firmly and looked me intensely in the eyes, saying: "You must do this!" I then noticed that, even though I had been on the broad plateau of "Galatians Two Twenty," I had drifted to the very edge without even knowing it, and could have easily fallen. I looked again into the eyes of Wisdom, and he said with the utmost seriousness, "Take heed when you think you stand, lest you fall. In this life you can fall from any level."

The Serpents

For a long time we continued killing the vultures and picking off the demons that were riding the Christians. We found that the arrows of different Truths would have more of an impact on different demons. We knew that it was going to be a long battle, but we were not taking any more casualties now, and we had already passed the level of "Patience." Even so, after these Christians had the demons shot off them, few would come to the mountain. Many had taken on the nature of the demons, and continued in their delusion without them. As the darkness of the demons dissipated we could see the ground moving around the feet of these Christians. Then I saw that their legs were bound by serpents called Shame.

We shot arrows of truth at the serpents, but they had little effect. We then tried the arrows of Hope, but without result. From "Galatians Two Twenty" it was very easy to go higher, so we started up to the higher levels. Soon we happened upon a garden that was the most beautiful place I had ever seen. Over the entrance to this garden was written, "The Father's Unconditional Love." It was the most glorious and inviting doorway I had ever seen, so we were compelled to enter. As soon as we did, we saw the Tree of Life in the middle of this garden. It was still guarded by angels of awesome strength. They looked as if they had been expecting us, so we had the courage to pass them and walk up to the tree. One of them said, "Those who make it to this level, who know the Father's love, can eat."

I did not realize how hungry I was. When I tasted the fruit, it was better than anything I had ever tasted, but was also somehow familiar. It brought memories of sunshine, rain, beautiful fields, the sun setting over the ocean, but even more than that, of the people I loved. With every bite I loved everything and everyone more. Then my enemies started to come to mind, and I loved them, too. The feeling was soon greater than anything I had ever experienced, even the peace on "Galatians Two Twenty." Then I heard the voice of the Lord, and He said, "This is now your daily bread. It shall never be withheld from you. You may eat as much and as often as you like. There is no end of My love." I looked up into the tree to see where the voice had come from, and saw that it was filled with pure white eagles. They had the most beautiful, penetrating eyes I have ever seen. They were looking at me as if waiting for instructions. One of the angels said, "They will do your bidding. These eagles eat snakes." I said, "Go! Devour the shame that has bound our brothers." They opened their wings and a great wind came that lifted them into the air. These eagles filled the sky with a blinding glory. Even as high as we were, I could hear the sounds of terror from the enemy camp at the sight of these eagles coming toward them.

The Lord Jesus Himself then stood in our midst. He touched each one, then said, "I must now share with you what I shared with your brothers after My ascension-the message of My Kingdom. The enemy's most powerful army has now been put to flight, but not destroyed. Now it is time for us to march forth with the gospel of My kingdom. The eagles have been released and will go with us. We will take arrows from every level, but I am your Sword, and I am your Captain. It is now time for the Sword of the Lord to be unsheathed." I then turned and saw that the entire army of the Lord was standing in that garden. There were men women and children from all races and nations, each carrying their banners that moved in the wind with perfect unity. I knew

that nothing like this had been seen in the earth before. I knew that the enemy had many more armies, and fortresses throughout the earth, but none could stand before this great army. I said almost under my breath, "This must be the day of the Lord." The whole host then answered in an awesome thunder, "The day of the Lord of Hosts has come."

We stood in the Garden of God under the Tree of Life. It seemed that the entire army was there, kneeling before the Lord Jesus. He had just given us the charge to return to the battle for the sake of our brothers who were still bound, and for the world that He still loved. It was both a wonderful and a terrible command. It was wonderful just because it came from Him. It was terrible because it implied that we would have to leave His manifest presence, and the Garden that was more beautiful than anything I had ever seen before. To leave all of this to go into battle seemed incomprehensible.

The Lord continued His exhortation: "I have given you spiritual gifts and power, and an increasing understanding of My word and My kingdom, but the greatest weapon that you have been given is the Father's love. As long as you walk in My Father's love you will never fail. The fruit of this tree is the Father's love which is manifested in Me. This love which is in Me must be your daily bread."

The Lord was not what we might consider to be of a strikingly handsome appearance, but was rather ordinary. Even so, the grace with which He moved and spoke made Him the most attractive person I had ever seen. He was beyond human definition in dignity and nobility. No painting that has sought to capture what He looked like could ever do it, but somehow most of them do resemble Him. I began to think of how He was everything that the Father loves and esteems. He truly is full of grace and truth, to the point that it seemed that nothing but grace and truth should ever matter.

When I ate the fruit from the Tree of Life, the thought of every good thing I had ever known seemed to fill my soul. When Jesus spoke it was the same, only magnified. I never wanted to leave this place. I remembered how I had once thought it must have been boring for those angels who did nothing but worship Him before the throne. Now I knew that there was nothing more wonderful or exhilarating than simply worshipping Him. That would surely be the best part of heaven. It was hard to believe that I had struggled so much with boredom during worship services. I knew that it was only because I had been almost completely out of touch with reality during those times.

Worship in Spirit and Truth

I was almost overwhelmed with the desire to go back and make up those times during worship when I had allowed my mind to wander, or had occupied myself with other things. The desire to express my adoration for Him became almost uncontrollable. I had to praise Him! As I opened my mouth I was shocked by the spontaneous worship that erupted from the entire army at the same time. I had almost forgotten that anyone else was there, but we were all in perfect unity. The glorious worship could not be expressed in human language.

As we worshiped, a golden glow began to emanate from the Lord, then there was silver around the gold. Then colors, the richness of which I have never seen with my natural eyes, enveloped us all. With this glory I entered a realm of emotion that I had never experienced before. Somehow I understood that his glory had been there all along, but when we focused on Him the way that we did in worship, we simply began to see more of His glory. The more intensely we worshiped, the more glory we beheld. If this was heaven, it was much, much better than I had ever dreamed.

Finding His Dwelling Place

I have no idea how long this worship lasted. It could have been months, there was simply no way to measure time in that kind of glory. For a time I closed my eyes because the glory I was seeing with my heart was as great as what I was seeing with my physical eyes. When I opened my eyes I was surprised to see that the Lord was not there any longer, but a troop of angels was standing where He had been. One of them stepped up to me and said, "Close your eyes again." When I did, I beheld the glory of the Lord again and was greatly relieved.

Then the angel explained, "What you see with the eyes of your heart is more real than what you see with your physical eyes." I had myself made this statement many times, but how little I had truly walked in it! The angel continued, "It was for this reason that the Lord told His first disciples that it was better for Him to go away so that the Holy Spirit could come. The Lord dwells within you. You have taught this many times, but now you must live it, for you have eaten of the Tree of Life."

The angel then began to lead me back to the gate. I protested that I did not want to leave. Looking surprised, the angel took me by the shoulders and looked me in the eyes. That is when I recognized him as the angel, Wisdom. "You never have to leave this garden. This garden is in your heart because the Creator Himself is within you. You have desired the best part, to worship and sit in His presence forever, and it will never be taken from you."

I acknowledged what Wisdom had said, and then looked past him at the fruit on the Tree of Life. I had a compulsion to grab all that I could before leaving. Knowing my thoughts, Wisdom gently shook me. "No. Even this fruit, gathered in fear, would rot. This fruit and this tree are within you because He is in you. You must believe."

I closed my eyes and tried to see the Lord again but couldn't. When I open my eyes Wisdom was still staring at me. With great patience he continued, "You have tasted of the heavenly realm, and no one ever wants to go back to the battle once they do. No one every wants to leave the manifest presence of the Lord. When the apostle Paul came here he struggled for the rest of his life as to whether he should stay and labor for the Lord, or return here to enter into his inheritance; but his inheritance was

magnified the longer he stayed. Now that you have the heart of a true worshiper you will always want to be here, and you can when you enter into true worship. The more focused you are on Him, the more glory you will see, regardless of where you are." Wisdom's words had finally calmed me. Again I closed my eyes just to thank the Lord for this wonderful experience, and the life He had given me. As I did, I started to see His glory again, and all of the emotion of the previous worship experience flooded my soul. The Lord's words to me were so loud and clear that I was sure they were audible; "I will never leave or forsake you."

"Lord, forgive my unbelief," I responded. "Please help me to never leave or forsake you."

Walking With Wisdom

As I opened my eyes, Wisdom was still gripping my shoulders. "I am the primary gift that has been given to you for your work," he said, "I will show you the way, and I will keep you on it, but only love will keep you faithful. The highest wisdom is to love the Lord."

Then Wisdom released me and started to walk toward the gate. I followed with ambivalence. I remembered the exhilaration of the battle and the climb up the mountain, and it was compelling, but there was no comparison to the presence of the Lord and the worship I had just experienced. Leaving this would be the greatest sacrifice I had ever made. Then I remembered how it was all inside of me, amazed that I could even forget that so quickly. I began to think about the great battle that was raging within me, between what I saw with my physical eyes and what I saw with my heart.

I moved forward so that I was walking beside Wisdom, and asked, "I have prayed for 26 years to be caught up into the third heaven as Paul had. Is this the third heaven?"

"This is part of it," he replied, "but there is much more."

"Will I be allowed to see more?" I asked.

"You will see much more. I am taking you to see more now," he replied.

I started thinking of the Book of Revelation. "Was John's revelation part of the third heaven?" I asked.

"Part of John's revelation was from the third heaven, but most of it was from the second heaven. The first heaven was before the fall of man. The second heaven is the spiritual realm during the reign of evil upon the earth. The third heaven is when the love and domain of the Father will again prevail over the earth through your King."

"What was the first heaven like?" I inquired, strangely feeling a cold chill as I asked.

"It is wisdom not to be concerned about that now," my companion responded with increased seriousness as my question seemed to jolt him. "Wisdom is to seek to know the third heaven just as you have. There is much more to know about the third heaven than you can know in this life, and it is the third heaven, the kingdom, that you much preach in this life. In the ages to come you will be told about the first heaven, but it is not profitable for you to know at this time."

I resolved to remember the cold chill I had just felt, and Wisdom nodded, which I knew to be an affirmation to that thought.

"What a great companion you are, I had to say as I was just flooded with appreciation for this angel. "You really will keep me on the right path."

"I will indeed," he replied.

I was sure I felt love coming from this angel, which was unique, since I had never felt this from other angels, which showed more of a concern out of duty than love. Wisdom responded to my thoughts as if I had spoken them out loud.

"It is wisdom to love and I could not be Wisdom if I did not love you. It is also wisdom to behold the kindness and the severity of God. It is wisdom to love Him and fear Him. You are in deception to do otherwise. This is the next lesson that you must learn," he said with unmistakable earnest.

"I do know that, and have taught it many times," I responded, feeling for the first time that maybe Wisdom did not fully know me.

"I have been your companion for a very long time, and I know your teachings," Wisdom replied. "Now you are about to learn what some of your own teachings mean. As you have said many times, 'It is not by believing in your mind, but in your heart that results in righteousness.'"

I apologized, feeling a bit ashamed at having even questioned Wisdom. He graciously accepted my apology. It was then that I realized I had been questioning and challenging him most of my life, often to my injury.

The Other Half of Love

"There are times to adore the Lord," Wisdom continued, "and there are times to honor Him with the greatest fear and respect. Just as there is a time to plant, and a time to reap, and it is wisdom to know the time for each. True wisdom knows the times and seasons of God. I brought you here because it was time to worship the Lord in the glory of His love. I am now taking you to another place because it is time for you to worship Him in the fear of His judgment. Until you know both we can be separated from each other."

"Do you mean that if I had stayed back there in that glorious worship I would have lost you?" I asked in disbelief.

"Yes. I would have always visited with you when I could, but we would have rarely crossed paths. It is hard to leave such glory and peace, but that is not the whole revelation of the King. He is both the Lion of Judah and the Lamb. To the spiritual children

He is the Lamb. To the maturing He is the Lion. To the fully mature He is both the Lion and the Lamb. You have known this in your mind, and I have heard you teach it, but now you will know it in your heart, for you are about to experience the judgment seat of Christ.

The Return to the Battle

Before leaving the gates to the Garden I asked Wisdom if I could just sit for a while to ponder all that I had just experienced. "Yes, you should do this," he replied, "But I have a better place for you to do it."

I followed Wisdom out of the gates and we began to descend down the mountain. To my surprise the battle was still going on, but not nearly as intensely as it was when we ascended. There were still arrows of accusation and slander flying about on the lower levels, but most of the enemy horde that was left was furiously attacking the great white eagles. The eagles were easily prevailing.

We kept descending until we were almost at the bottom. Just above the levels of "Salvation" and "Sanctification" was the level "Thanksgiving and Praise." I remembered this level very well because one of the greatest attacks of the enemy came as I first tried to reach it. Once we got here the rest of the climb was much easier, and if an arrow got through your armor it healed much faster.

As soon as the enemy spotted me on this level (the enemy could not see Wisdom), a shower of arrows began to rain down on me. I so easily knocked them down with my shield that the enemy quit shooting. Their arrows were now almost gone and they could not afford to waste any more.

The soldiers who were still fighting from this level looked at me in astonishment with a deference that made me very uncomfortable. It was then that I first noticed that the glory of the Lord was emanating from my armor and shield. I told them to climb to the top of the mountain without stopping and they, too, would see the Lord. As soon as they agreed to go they saw Wisdom. They started fall down to worship Him, but he restrained them, and sent them on their way.

The Faithful

I was filled with love for these soldiers, many of whom were women and children. Their armor was a mess, and they were covered in blood, but they had not quit. In fact, they were still cheerful and encouraged. I told them that they were deserving of more honor than I was, because they had borne the greatest burden of the battle, and had held their ground. They seemed not to believe me, but appreciated that I would say it. However, I really felt that it was true.

Every level on the mountain had to be occupied or the vultures that were left would come and foul it with vomit and excrement until it was difficult to stand on. Most of the ledges were occupied by soldiers which I recognized to be from different denominations or movements which emphasized the truth of the level they were defending. I was embarrassed by the attitude I had maintained toward some of these groups. I had considered some of them out of touch and backslidden at best, but here they were fighting faithfully against a terrible onslaught of the enemy. Their defense of these positions had probably enabled me to keep climbing as I had.

Some of these levels were situated so that there was a view of a good part of the mountain or battlefield, but some were so isolated that the soldiers on them could only see their own position, and seemed not to even know about the rest of the battle raging. They were often so wounded from the slander and accusations that they would be resistant when someone came down to them from a higher level and encouraged them to climb higher. However, when some began to come down from the top reflecting the glory of the Lord, they listened with great joy, and soon began to climb themselves with courage and resolve. As I beheld all of this, Wisdom did not say much, but he seemed very interested in my reactions.

Reality Discovered

I watched as many soldiers who had been to the top began descending to all of the levels to relieve those who had been taking their stand on those truths. As they did, each level began to shine with the glory they carried. Soon the whole mountain was beginning to shine with a glory that was blinding to the vultures and demons that were left. Soon there was so much glory that the mountain began to have the same feel as the Garden.

I started thanking and praising the Lord and immediately I was in His presence again. It was hard to contain the emotions and glory that was flooding my innermost being. The experience became so intense that I stopped. Wisdom was standing beside me. Putting his hand on my shoulder he said, "You enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise."

"But that was so real! I felt like I was there again," I exclaimed.

"You were there," replied Wisdom. "It has not gotten more real, but you have. Just as the Lord told the thief on the cross, 'Today' you will be with Me in Paradise, you can enter Paradise at anytime. The Lord, His Paradise, and this mountain, are all abiding in you, because He is in you. What were but foretastes before are now a reality to you because you have climbed the mountain. The reason that you can see me and others cannot is not because you have entered the one in which I dwell. This is the reality that the prophets knew that gave them great boldness even when they stood alone against armies."

The Deadly Trap

I then looked out over the carnage below, and the slowly retreating demonic army. Behind me more of the glorious warriors were constantly taking their places on the mountain. I knew there was now enough to attack and destroy what was left of this enemy horde. "Not yet," said Wisdom. "Look over there." I looked in the direction in which he was pointing, but had to shield my eyes from the glory emanating from my own armor to see anything. Then I caught a glimpse of movement in a valley. I could not make out what I was seeing, because the glory being emitted from my armor made it difficult to see into the darkness. I asked Wisdom to give me something to cover my armor with so I could see it. He then gave me a very plain mantle to put on. "What is this?" I inquired, a little insulted by its drabness. "Humility," said Wisdom. "You will not be able to see very well without it." Reluctantly I put it on and immediately I saw many things that I could not see before. I looked toward the valley and the movement I had seen. To my astonishment there was an entire division of the enemy horde that was waiting to ambush anyone who ventures from the mountain.

"What army is that?" I asked, "and how did they escape the battle intact?"

"That is Pride," explained Wisdom. "That is the hardest enemy to see after you have been in the glory. Those who refuse to put on this cloak will suffer much at the hands of this most devious enemy."

As I looked back at the mountain I saw many of the glorious warriors crossing the plain to attack the remnants of the enemy horde. None of them were wearing the cloaks of humility and they had not seen the enemy that was ready to attack them from their rear. I started to run out to stop them, but Wisdom restrained me. "You cannot stop this," he said. "Only the soldiers who wear this cloak will recognize your authority. Come with me. There is something else that you must see before you can help lead in the great battle that is to come."

The Foundation of Glory

Wisdom led me down the mountain to the very lowest level, which was named "Salvation." "You think that this is the lowest level," declared Wisdom, "but this is the foundation of the whole mountain. In any journey, the first step is the most important, and it is usually the most difficult. Without 'Salvation' there would be no mountain."

I was appalled by the carnage on this level. Every soldier was very badly wounded, but none of them were dead. Multitudes were barely clinging to the edge. Many seemed ready to fall off at any moment, but none did. Angels were everywhere ministering to the soldiers with such great joy that I asked, "Why are they so happy?"

"These angels have beheld the courage that it took for these to hold on. They many not have gone any further, but neither did they give up. They will soon be healed, and then they will behold the glory of the rest of the mountain, and begin to climb. These will be great warriors for the battle to come."

"But wouldn't they have been better off to climb the mountain with the rest of us?" I protested, seeing their present condition. "It would have been better for them, but not for you. By staying here they made it easier for you to climb by keeping most of the enemy occupied. Very few from the higher levels ever reached out to help others come to the mountain, but these did. Even when these were barely clinging to the mountain themselves, they would reach out to pull others up. In fact, most of the mighty warriors were led to the mountain by these faithful ones. These are no less heroes than those who made it to the top. They brought great joy to heaven by continually leading others to 'Salvation.' It was for this reason that all the angels in heaven wanted to come to minister to them, but only the most honored were permitted."

Again I felt a terrible shame at my attitude toward these great saints. Many of us scorned them as we climbed to the higher levels. They had made many mistakes during the battle, but they had also displayed more of the Shepherd's heart than the rest of us. The Lord would leave the ninety-nine to go after the one who was lost. These had stayed in the place where they could still reach the lost, and they paid a dear price for it. I, too, wanted to help but did not know where to start.

Wisdom then said, "It is right for you to want to help, but you will help most by going on to what you have been called to do. These will all be healed and will quickly climb the mountain. They will join you again in the battle. These are fearless ones who will never retreat before the enemy."

The Power of Pride

I was thinking how descending the mountain was teaching me as much as climbing it had, when noise from the battlefield drew my attention. By now there were thousands of the mighty warriors who had crossed the plain to attack the remnant of the enemy horde. The enemy was fleeing in all directions, except for the one division, Pride. Completely undetected, it had marched right up to the rear of the advancing warriors, and was about to release a hail of arrows. It was then that I noticed the mighty warriors had not armor on their backsides—they were totally exposed and vulnerable to what was about to hit them.

Wisdom then remarked, "You have taught that there was no armor for the backside, which meant that you were vulnerable if you ran from the enemy. However, you never saw how it made you vulnerable if you advanced in pride."

I could only nod my acknowledgment. It was too late to do anything, and it was unbearable to watch, but Wisdom said that I must. To my amazement, when the arrows of pride struck the warriors they did not even notice. However, the enemy kept shooting. The warriors were bleeding and getting weaker fast but would not acknowledge it. Soon they were too weak to hold up their shields and swords, and cast them down, declaring that they did not need them anymore. Then they started taking off their armor, saying it was not needed anymore either.

Then another enemy division appeared and moved up swiftly. It was called Strong Delusion. They released a hail of arrows that all hit their mark. I then watched as just a few of the demons of delusion led off this once great army of glorious warriors. They were taken to different prison camps, each named after a different doctrine of demons. I was astounded at how this great company of the righteous had been so utterly defeated, and they still did not even know what had hit them. "How could those who were so strong, who have been all the way to the top of the mountain, who have seen the Lord as they have, be so vulnerable?" I blurted out.

"Pride is the hardest enemy to see, and it always sneaks up behind you," Wisdom lamented. "In some ways, those who have been to the greatest heights are in the greatest danger of falling. You must always remember that in this life you can fall at any time from any level. 'Take heed when you think you stand, lest you fall,' When you think you are the least vulnerable to falling is in fact when you are the most vulnerable. Most men fall right after a great victory."

Wisdom for the Battle

"How can we keep from being attacked like this?" I asked.

"Stay close to me, inquire of the Lord before making any major decisions, and keep that mantle on, and the enemy will never be able to blindside you as he did those."

I looked at my mantle. It looked so plain and insignificant. I felt that it made me look more like a homeless person than a warrior. Wisdom responded as if I had been speaking out loud, "The Lord is closer to the homeless than to princes. You only have true strength to the degree that you walk in the grace of God, and 'He gives His grace to the humble.' No enemy weapon can penetrate this mantle, because nothing can overpower His grace. As long as you wear this mantle you are safe from this kind of attack."

I then started to look up to see how many warriors were still on the mountain. I was shocked to see how few there were. I then noticed that they all had on the same mantle on humility. "How did that happen?" I inquired.

"When they saw the battle you just witnessed, they all came to me for help, and I gave them their mantles," Wisdom replied.

"But I thought you were with me that whole time?"

"I am with all who go forth to do the will of the Father," Wisdom answered.

"You're the Lord!" I cried

"Yes," He answered. "I told you that I would never leave you or forsake you. I am with all of My warriors just as I am with you. I will be to you whatever you need to accomplish My will, and you have needed wisdom." Then He vanished.

Rank in the Kingdom

I was left standing in the midst of the great company of angels who were ministering to the wounded on the level of "Salvation." As I began to walk past these angels, they bowed to one knee and showed me the greatest respect. I finally asked one of them why they did this, as even the smallest was much more powerful than I was. "Because of the mantle," he replied. "That is the highest rank in the kingdom."

"This is just a plain mantle," I protested.

"No!" the angel protested. "You are clothed in the grace of God. There is no greater power than that!"

"But there are thousands of us all wearing the same mantle. How could it represent rank?"

You are the dread champions, the sons and daughters of the King. He wore the same mantle when He walked on this earth. As long as you are clothed in that there is no power in heaven or earth that can stand before you. Everyone in heaven and hell recognizes that mantle. We are His servants, but He abides in you, and you are clothed in His grace."

Somehow I knew if I had not been wearing the mantle, and if my glorious armor had been exposed, that the angel's statement, and their behavior toward me, could have really fed my pride. It was simply impossible to feel prideful or arrogant while wearing such a drab, plain, cloak. However, my confidence in the mantle was growing fast.

The Return of the Eagles

Then on the horizon I saw a great white cloud approaching. Hope arose in me just by seeing it. It actually filled the atmosphere with hope just as the sun rising chases away the darkness of night. As it grew closer I recognized the great white eagles that had flown from the Tree of Life. They began landing on the mountain, taking their place on every level beside the companies of warriors. I carefully and respectfully approached the eagle who had landed near me because his presence was so awesome. when he looked at me with his penetrating eyes, I knew I could hide nothing from him. His eyes were so fierce and resolute that I trembled as chills ran through me just looking at them. Before I could even ask, he answered me.

"You want to know who we are. We are the hidden prophets who have been kept for this hour. We are the eyes of those who have been given the divinely powerful weapons. We have been shown all that the Lord is doing, and all that the enemy is planning against you. We have scoured the earth and together we know all that needs to be known for the battle." "Did you not see the battle that just took place?" I asked with as much irritation as I dared to express. "Couldn't you have helped those warriors that were just taken captive?"

"Yes. We saw it all, and we could have helped if they had wanted it. But our help would have been to restrain them. We can only fight in the battles that the Father commands, and we can only help those who believe in us. Only those who receive us as who we are, the prophets, can receive the prophet's reward, or the benefit of our service. Those who were ambushed did not yet have the mantle that you are wearing, and those who do not have the mantle cannot understand who we are. We all need each other, including these here who are still wounded, and many others who you do not yet know."

The Heart of the Eagle

By talking to the eagle I started very quickly to think like the eagle. After this short discussion I could see into the eagle's heart and know him like he knew me. The eagle recognized this.

"You have some of our gifts," the eagle noted, "though they are not very well developed. You have not used them much. I am here to awaken these gifts in many of you, and to teach you to use them. In this way our communication will be sure. It must be sure or we will all suffer many unnecessary losses, not to mention missing many great opportunities for victory."

"Where did you just come from?" I asked.

"We eat snakes," the eagle replied. "The enemy is bread for us. Our sustenance comes from doing the Father's will, which is to destroy the works of the devil. Every snake that we eat helps to increase our vision. Every stronghold of the enemy that we tear down, strengthens us so we can soar higher and stay in the air longer. We have just come from a feast, devouring the serpents of shame who have bound many of your brothers and sisters. They will be here soon. They are coming with the eagles we left behind to help them find the way, and to protect them from the enemy's counterattacks."

These eagles were very sure of themselves, but not cocky. They knew who they were, what they were called to do. They also knew us and they knew the future. Their confidence was reassuring to me, but even more so to the wounded that were still lying all around us. Those who had recently been too weak to talk were actually sitting up listening to my conversation with the eagle. They looked at him like a lost child would look to his parent who had just found him.

The Wind of the Spirit

When the eagle looked upon the wounded his countenance changed as well. In place of the fierce resolution I had stood before, toward the wounded he was like a soft, compassionate old grandfather. The eagle opened his wings and began to gently flap them, stirring up a cool refreshing breeze that flowed over the wounded. It was not like any other breeze I had ever felt before. With each breath I felt I was gaining strength and clarity of mind. Soon the wounded were standing and worshiping God with a sincerity that brought tears to my eyes. Again I felt a profound shame at having scorned those who stayed on this level. They had seemed so weak and foolish to those of us who were ascending the mountain, but they had endured much more than we had and remained faithful. God had kept them and they loved Him with a great love.

I looked up at the mountain; all of the eagles were gently flapping their wings. Everyone on the mountain was being refreshed by the breeze they were stirring up, and everyone on the mountain was beginning to worship the Lord. At first there was some discord between the worship that was coming from the different levels, but after a time everyone on every level was singing in perfect harmony. Never on earth had I heard anything that beautiful. I never wanted it to end. Soon I recognized it as the same worship that we had known in the Garden, but now it sounded even more full and rich. I knew that it was because we were worshiping in the very presence of our enemies, in the midst of such darkness and evil that surrounded the mountain, that it seemed so much more beautiful.

I do not know whether this worship lasted hours, days, or minutes, but eventually the eagles stopped flapping their wings and it stopped. "Why did you stop?" I asked the eagle that I had been talking to.

"Because they are now whole," he replied, indicating the wounded who were now all standing and appeared to be in perfect condition. "True worship can heal any wound," he added.

"Please do it again," I begged.

"We will do this many times, but it is not for us to decide when. The breeze that you felt was the Holy Spirit. He directs us; we do not direct Him. He has healed the wounded and begun to bring about the unity that is required for the battles ahead. True worship also pours the precious oil upon the Head, Jesus, which then flows down over the entire body, making us one with Him and each other. No one who becomes one with Him will remain wounded or unclean. His blood is pure life, and it flows when we are joined to Him. When we are joined to Him we are also joined to the rest of the body, so that His blood flows through all. Is that not how you heal a wound to your body, by closing the wound so that the blood can flow to the wounded member to bring regeneration? When a part of His body is wounded, we must join in unity with that part until it is fully restored. We are all one in Him."

The euphoria from the worship was still prevailing so that this little teaching seemed to be the most profound that I had ever heard, even though I had know it and taught it myself before. When the Holy Spirit moved every word seemed glorious, regardless of how elementary it was. It also filled me with so much love that I wanted to hug everyone, including the fierce old eagles. Then, like a jolt, I remembered the mighty warriors who had just been captured. The eagle sensed this but did not say anything. He just watched me intently. Finally, I spoke up; "Can we recover those who were just lost?"

The Wounded Heart of the King

"Yes, it is right for you to feel what you do," the eagle finally said. "We are not complete, and our worship is not complete, until the whole body is restored. Even in the most glorious worship, even in the very presence of the King, we will all feel this emptiness until all are one, because our King also feels it. We all grieve for our brothers in bondage, but we grieve even more for the heart of our King. Just as you love all of your children, but would be grieved for the one that was sick or wounded, He too loves all of His children, but the wounded and oppressed have most of His attention now. For His sake we must not quit until all have been recovered. As long as any are wounded, He is wounded."

Faith That Moves Mountains

Sitting down by the eagle, I thought deeply about what he said. Finally I asked, "I know that Wisdom now speaks to me through you, because I hear His voice when you speak. I was so sure of myself before that last battle, but I was almost carried away with the same presumption that they were carried away with, and could very easily have been captured with them if Wisdom had not stopped me. I was going out of hatred for the enemy more than wanting to set my brothers free, though that was part of my motive. Since first coming to this mountain, and fighting in the great battle, I now think that most of the right things I did, I did for the wrong reasons, and many of the wrong things I did, I had good motives for. The more I learn, the more unsure of myself I feel."

"You must have been with Wisdom a long time," the eagle responded.

"He was with me a long time before I began to recognize Him, but I am afraid that most of that time I was resisting Him. Somehow I now know that I am still lacking something very important, something that I must have before I go into battle again, but I do not know what it is."

The great eagle's eyes became more penetrating than I had ever seen them as he responded, "You also know the voice of Wisdom when He speaks to you in your own heart. You are learning well because you have the mantle. What you are feeling now is the true faith."

"Faith!" I shot back. "I'm talking about serious doubts."

"You are wise to doubt yourself. But true faith depends on God, not yourself, and not your faith. You are close to the kind of faith that can move this mountain, and move it must. It is time to carry it to places that it has not gone to before. However, you are right. You are still lacking something very important. You must yet have a great revelation of the King. Even though you have climbed to the top of the mountain, and received from every truth along the way, and even though you have stood in the Garden of God, tasted of His unconditional love, and have seen His Son many times now, you still only understand a part of the whole counsel of God, and that only superficially."

I knew that this was so true that it was very comforting to hear it. "I have judged so many people and so many situations wrongly. Wisdom has saved my life many times now, but the voice of Wisdom is still a very small voice within me, and the clamor of my own thoughts and feelings are still far too loud. I hear wisdom speaking through you much louder than I hear Him in my own heart, so I know I must stay very close to you."

"We are here because you need us," the eagle replied. "We are also here because we need you. You have been given gifts that I do not have, and I have been given gifts that you do not have. You have experienced things that I have not experienced, and I have experienced things that you have not known. The eagles have been given to you until the end, and you have been given to us. I will be very close to you for a time, and then you must receive other eagles in my place. Every eagle is different. It is together that we have been given to know the secrets of the Lord, not individually."

The Doors of Truth

The eagle then lifted up from the rock on which he had been perched, and soared over the edge of the level on which we stood. "Come," he said. As I approached him I saw steps that led down to the very base of the mountain. There was a small door.

"Why have I not seen this before?" I asked.

"When you first came to the mountain you did not stay on this level long enough to look around," he answered.

"How did you know that? Were you here when I first came to the mountain?"

"I would have known if I had not been here, because all who miss this door do so for the same reason, but in fact I was here," he responded. "I was one of the soldiers you so quickly passed on your way up the mountain."

It was then that I recognized the eagle as a man whom I had met soon after my conversion, whom I had actually had a few conversations with. He continued, "I wanted badly to follow you then. I had been on this level for so long that I needed a change. I just could not leave all of the lost souls that I was still trying to lead here. When I finally committed myself to doing the Lord's will, whether it was to stay or go, Wisdom appeared to me and showed me this door. He said it was a shortcut to the top. That is how I got to the top before you did, and was changed into an eagle."

I then remembered that I had seen doors like this on a couple of the levels, I had even peeked into a couple of them and remember how amazed I had been at what I saw. I did not venture into any of them very far, because I was so focused on the battle and trying to get to the top of the mountain. "Could I have entered any of those doors and gone right to the top?" I asked.

"It is not quite that easy," the eagle remarked, seeming a little irritated. "In every door there are passage ways, one of which leads to the top." Obviously knowing my next question, he continued. "The other ones lead to the other levels on the mountain. The Father designed each so that everyone would choose the one that their level of maturity dictated that they needed."

"Incredible! How did He do that?" I thought to myself, but the eagle heard my thoughts.

"It was very simple," continued the eagle as if I had spoken my thoughts out loud. "Spiritual maturity is always determined by the willingness of one to sacrifice their own desires for the interests of the kingdom or for the sake of others."

I was carefully noting all that was said. I somehow knew that I must enter the door before me, and that it would be wise for me to learn all that I could from someone who had been there before and had obviously chosen the right door to the top.

"I did not go directly to the top, and neither have I met anyone who has," the eagle continued. "But I went there much faster than most because I had learned so much about self-sacrifice while fighting here on the level of 'Salvation.' I have shown you this door because you wear the mantle and would have found it anyway, but the time is short and I am here to help you mature quickly. There are doors on every level, and every one leads to treasures that are beyond your comprehension. They cannot be acquired physically, but every treasure that you hold in your hands you will be able to carry on in your heart. Your heart is meant to be the treasure house of God. But the time you reach the top again, your heart will contain treasures more valuable than all of the treasures of the whole earth. They will never be taken from you, but they are yours for eternity, because you are

God's. Go quickly. The storm clouds are now gathering, and the great battle is near."

"Will you go with me?" I pleaded.

"No," he responded. "This is where I now belong. I have much to do to help these who were wounded. But I will see you here again. You will meet many of my brother and sister eagles before you return, and they will be able to help you better than I at the place where you meet them."

The Treasures of Heaven

I already loved that eagle so much that I could hardly stand to leave him. I was glad to know I would see him again. Now the door was drawing me like a magnet. I opened it and entered. The glory that I beheld was so stunning that I immediately fell to my knees. The gold, silver and precious stones were far more beautiful than anything I had ever seen on the earth. The room was so large that it seemed to be without end. The floor was silver, the pillars gold, and the ceiling was pure diamond that emitted every color I had ever known and many that I had not known. Angels without number were everywhere, dressed in different robes and uniforms that were of no earthly origin.

As I began to walk through the room, the angels all bowed in salute. One stepped forward and welcomed me by name. He explained that I could go anywhere and see anything that I wanted in the room. Nothing was withheld from those who came through the door.

I could not even speak I was so overwhelmed by the beauty. I finally remarked that this was even more beautiful than the Garden had been. Surprised, the angel responded, "This is the Garden! This is one of the rooms in your Father's house. We are your servants."

As I walked, a great company of angels followed me. I turned and asked the leader why they were following. "Because of the mantle," he said. "We have been given to you, to serve you here and in the battle to come."

I did not know what to do with the angels so I just continued walking. I was attracted to a large blue stone that appeared to have the sun and clouds within it. When I touched it the same feeling flooded over me as when I ate the fruit of the Tree of Life. I felt energy, great mental clarity, and love for everyone and everything being magnified. I started to behold the glory of the Lord. The longer I touched the stone the more the glory increased. I never wanted to take my hand off of the stone, but the glory became so intense that I had to look away.

Then my eyes fell on a beautiful green stone. "What does that one have in it?" I asked the angel standing nearby.

"All of these stones are the treasures of salvation. You are now touching the heavenly realm, and that one is the restoration of life," he continued.

As I touched the green stone I began to see the earth in rich and spectacular colors. They grew in richness the longer I had my hand on the stone, and my love for all that I saw grew. Then I began to see a harmony between all living things on a level that I had never seen before. Then I began to see the glory of the lord in the creation. It began to grow until again I had to turn away because of the intensity.

Then I realized that I had no idea how long I had been there. I did know that my comprehension of God and His universe had grown substantially by just touching these two stones, and there were many, many more. There was more in that one room than a person could have absorbed in a whole lifetime. "How many more rooms are there?" I asked the angel.

"There are rooms like this on every level of the mountain that you climbed."

"How can one ever experience all that is in just one of these rooms, much less all of them?" I asked.

"You have forever to do this. The treasures contained in the most basic truths of the Lord Jesus are enough to last for many of your present lifetimes. No man can know all that there is to know about any of them in just one life, but you must take what you need and keep proceeding toward your destiny."

I started thinking about the impending battle again, and the warriors who had been captured. It was not a pleasant thought in such a glorious place, but I knew I would have forever to come back to this room, and only had a short time to find my way back to the top of the mountain, and then back to the battle from again.

I turned to the angel. "You must help me find the door that leads to the top."

The angel looked perplexed, "we are your servants," he responded, "but you must lead us. This whole mountain is a mystery to us. We all desired to look into this great mystery, but after we leave this room that we have come to know just a little about, we will be learning even more than you."

"Do you know where all of the doors are?" I asked.

"Yes, But we do not know where they lead. There are some that look very inviting, and some that are plain, and some that are actually repulsive. One is even terrible."

"In this place there are doors that are repulsive?" I asked in disbelief. "And one that is terrible ? How can that be?"

"We do not know, but I can show it to you," he responded.

"Please do," I said.

We walked for quite a time, passing treasures unspeakable, all of which I had great difficulty not stopping to touch. There were also many doors, with different biblical truths over each one. When the angel had call them "inviting" I felt that he had quite understated their appeal. I badly wanted to go through each one, but my curiosity about the "terrible door" kept me moving. Then I saw it. "Terrible" had also been an understatement. Fear gripped me so that it took my breath away.

Grace and Truth

I turned away from the door and retreated fast. There was a beautiful red stone nearby, which I almost lunged at to lay my hands on it. Immediately I was in the Garden of Gethsemane beholding the Lord in prayer. The agony I beheld was even more terrible than the door I had just seen. Shocked, I jerked my hand away from the stone and fell to the floor in exhaustion. I badly wanted to return to the blue or green stones, but I had to regather my energy and sense of direction. The angels were quickly all around me serving me. I was given a drink that began to revive me. Soon I was feeling well enough to stand and begin walking back to the other stones. However, the recurring vision of the Lord praying compelled me to stop.

"What was that back there?" I asked.

"When you touch the stones we are able to see a little of what you see, and feel a little of what you feel," said the angel. "We know that all of these stones are great treasures, and all of the revelations they contain are priceless. We beheld for a moment the agony of the Lord before His crucifixion, and we felt briefly what He felt that terrible night. It is hard for us to understand how our God could ever suffer like that. It makes us appreciate much more what an honor it is to serve you whom He did it for."

The angels' words were like lightning bolts straight to my soul. I had fought in the great battle. I had climbed to the top of the mountain. I had become so familiar with the spiritual realm that I hardly noticed angels any more, and I could speak on nearly equal terms with the great eagles, yet I could not bear to share in even a moment of the sufferings of My King without wanting to flee to a more pleasurable experience. "I should not be here," I almost shouted. "I, more than anyone, deserve to be a prisoner of the evil one!"

"Sir," the angel said almost shyly. "We understand that no one is here because they deserve it. You are here because you were chosen before the foundation of the world for a purpose. We do not know what your purpose is, but we know that it is very great for everyone on this mountain."

"Thank you. You are most helpful. My emotions are being greatly stretched by this place, and they have tended to overcome my understanding. You are right. No one is here because they are worthy. Truly, the higher we climb on this mountain, the more unworthy we are to be there, and the more grace we need to stay there. How did I ever make it to the top the first time?"

"Grace," my angel responded.

"If you want to help me," I then said, "please keep repeating that word to me when ever you see me in confusion or despair. That word I am coming to understand better than any other, and it always brings great illumination to my soul."

"Now I must go back to the red stone. I know now that is the greatest treasure in this room, and I must not leave until I am carrying that treasure in my heart," I said with more resolution in my words than I felt in my heart at that time, but I nevertheless knew that it was true."

The Truth of Grace

The time that I spent at the red stone was the most painful that I have ever experienced. Many times I simply could not take any more but had to withdraw my hand. Several times I went back to the blue or green stones to rejuvenate my soul before I returned. It was extremely hard to return to the red stone each time, but my love and appreciation for the Lord was growing through this more than anything I had ever learned or experienced.

Finally, when the presence of the Father departed from Jesus on the cross, I could not stand it anymore. I quit. I could tell that the angels, who were also experiencing what I was, were in full agreement. The willpower to touch the stone again simply was not in me anymore. I did not even feel like going back to the blue stone. I just laid on the floor weeping over what the Lord had gone through. I also wept because I knew that I had deserted Him just like His disciples. I failed Him when He needed me the most, just like they did.

After what seemed like several days, I opened my eyes. Another eagle was standing beside me. In front of him were three stones, one blue, one green, and one red. "Eat them," he said. When I did, my whole being was renewed, and both a great joy and great soberness flooded my soul.

When I stood up, I caught sight of the same three stones set into the handle of my sword, and then on each of my shoulders. "These are now yours forever," the eagle said. "They cannot be taken from you, and you cannot lose them."

"But I did not finish this last one," I protested.

"Christ alone will ever finish that test," he replied. "You have done well, but you must go on now."

"Where to?" I asked.

"You must decide, but with time getting shorter I will suggest that you try to get to the top soon," the eagle replied as he departed in an obvious hurry.

Then I remembered the doors. I immediately started toward the doors that had been so appealing. When I reached the first one it simply did not appeal to me anymore. Then I went to another, and it felt the same. "Something seems to have changed," I remarked out loud.

"You have changed," the entire troop of angels replied at once. I turned to look at them and was amazed at how much they had changed. They no longer had the naive look they had before, but were now more regal and wise-looking than any of the angels I had seen. I knew they reflected what had also taken place in me, but I now felt uncomfortable just thinking about myself.

"I ask for your counsel," I said to the leader.

"Listen to your heart," he said. "That is where these great truths now abide."

"I have never been able to trust my own heart," I responded. "It is subject to so many delusions, deceptions, and selfish ambitions, that it is hard to even hear the Lord speaking to me above the clamor of it."

"Sir, with the red stone now in your heart, I do not believe that will continue to be the case," the leader offered with uncharacteristic confidence. I leaned against the wall, thinking that the eagle was not here when I needed him the most. He had

been this way before and would know which door to choose. As I pondered, the "terrible door" was the only one that I could think of. Out of curiosity I decided to go back and look at it. I had departed from it so fast the first time that I had not even noticed which truth it represented.

As I approached it I could feel the fear welling up inside of me, but not nearly as bad as the first time. In great contrast to the others, it was very dark around this door, and I had to get very close to read the truth over it. Mildly surprised, I read THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST. "Why is this truth so fearful?" I asked aloud, knowing that the angels would not answer me. As I looked at it I knew that it was the one I should go through.

"There are many reasons that it is fearful," the familiar voice of the eagle responded.

"I'm glad you came back," I replied. "Have I made a bad choice?"

"No! You have chosen well. This door will take you back to the top of the mountain faster than any other. It is fearful because the greatest fear in the creation has its source through that door-the holy fear of God. The greatest wisdom that men can know in this life, or in the life to come, are found through those doors, but very few will go through them."

But why is this door so dark?" I asked.

"The light of these doors reflect the attention that the church is presently giving to the truths behind them. The truth behind that door is one of the most neglected of these times, but it is one of the most important. You will understand when you enter. The greatest authority that men can receive will only be entrusted to those who will go through this door. When you see Christ Jesus sitting on this throne, you too will be prepared to sit with Him on it."

"Then this door would not be so dark and forbidding if we had just given more attention to this truth?"

"That is correct. If men knew the glory that is revealed behind that door, it would be one of the most brilliant," the eagle lamented. "However, it is still a difficult door to pass through. I was told to return and encourage you because you will soon need it. You will see a greater glory, but also a greater terror than you have ever known. But know that because you have chosen the difficult way now, it will be much easier for you later. Because you are willing to face this hard truth now, you will not suffer loss later. Many love to know His kindness, but very few are willing to know His severity. If you do not know both you will always be in danger of deception and a fall from His great grace."

"I know that I could never come here if I had not spent the time that I did at the red stone. How could I keep trying to take the easy way when that is so contrary to the nature of the Lord?"

"But now you have chosen, so go quickly. Another great battle is about to begin, and you are needed at the front."

The Judgment Seat of Christ

I gazed one final time around the huge room inside of the mountain. The treasures of the truth of Salvation were kept here. It seemed that there was no end to their expanse or beauty. I could not imagine that the rooms which contained the other great truths of the faith could be any more glorious. This helped me to understand why so many Christian never wanted to leave this place. The large gems which represented the different aspects of Salvation all exuded a glory far beyond any earthly beauty. It was wonderful beyond description, and I knew that I could stay here for eternity and never get bored.

The eagle who was standing next to me almost shouted: "You must go on!" Then more calmly he continued, "There is no greater peace and safety than to abide in the Lord's salvation. You were brought here to know this because you will need it where you are now going. But you must not stay here any longer."

The eagle's statement about the peace and safety touched something in me. I thought about the courageous warriors who had fought in the battle from the first level of the mountain, "Salvation." They had fought so well and delivered so many, but they had also all been badly wounded. Then the eagle again interrupted my thoughts as if he were listening to them.

"God has a different definition of peace and safety than we do. To be wounded in the fight is a great honor. That is why the apostle Paul boasted of his beatings and stonings. There is no courage unless there is real danger. The Lord said He would go

with Joshua to fight for the Promised Land, but over and over exhorted him to be strong and courageous because he was going to have to fight, and there would be dangers. It is in this way the Lord proves those who are worthy of the Promises—they love God and His provision more than their own security. Courage is a demonstration of true faith. The Lord never promised that His way would be easy, but it would be worth it. The courage of those who fought from the level of Salvation moved the angels of heaven to esteem what God has wrought in the fallen race of men. They took their wounds in the terrible onslaught, but they did not quit, and they did not retreat. Even so, by climbing the mountain you were able to fight with an authority that ultimately freed even more souls. Many more souls will fill these rooms, to the great joy of heaven, if you go on."

I then turned and looked at the dark and forbidding door over which was written: The Judgment Seat of Christ. Just as warmth and peace had flooded my soul each time I looked at this door. Everything in me wanted to stay in this room, and nothing in me wanted to go through that door. Again the eagle answered my thoughts.

"Before you enter the door to any great truth you will have these same feelings. You even felt that way when you entered into this room to the treasures of salvation. These fears are the result of the fall. They are the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The knowledge from that tree made us all insecure and self-centered. The knowledge of good and evil makes the true knowledge of God seem fearful, when in fact every truth from above leads to an even greater peace and security. Even the judgments of God are to be desired, because all of His ways are perfect."

By now I had experienced enough to know that what seems right is often the least fruitful path, and sometimes the road to tragedy. Throughout my journey, the path on which it seemed that the most was risked was the path that led to the greatest reward. Even so, each time it seemed that more was being risked. To make the choice to go on therefore got harder each time.

"It takes more faith to walk in the higher realms of the Spirit," the eagle stated, seeming a little more irritated. "The Lord gave us a map to His kingdom when He said, 'If you seek to save your life you will lose it, but if you will lose your life for My sake you will find it.' Those words alone can keep you on the path to the top of the mountain, and will lead you to victory in the great battle ahead. They will also help you to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ," he added, looking toward the door.

I knew I had to go. I knew that I should remember this glorious room and the treasures of salvation, but I also knew that I should not look back to them again. I had to go on. I turned and with all of the courage I could muster, opened the door to the Judgment Seat of Christ and stepped through it. The troop of angels that had been assigned to me took positions all around the door, but did not enter.

"What's the matter? Aren't you coming?" I demanded, badly wanting the security of their company.

"Where you are going now you must go alone. We will be waiting for you on the other side."

Without responding, I turned and started walking before I could change my mind. It was the hardest thing I had ever done. I was in the most frightening darkness I had ever experienced. The most terrible fears rose up within me. Soon I began to think that I had stepped into hell itself. I thought about retreating, but when I looked back I could see nothing. The door was closed and I could not even see where it was located. Resolving that I now had to go on, I moved slowly, praying for the Lord to help me. As I did, peace began to grow in my heart.

I then noticed that the dark was no longer cold, but began to feel comfortable. Then I started to behold a dim light. Gradually it became a glorious light so wonderful that I felt that I was entering into heaven itself. Now the glory increased with every step. I wondered how anything this wonderful could have an entrance so dark and forbidding. I wanted to savor every step before taking another.

Soon the path opened into a hall so large that I felt that the earth itself could not contain it. The beauty of it could not even be imagined by human architects. I had never experienced anything like what filled my soul as I beheld this room. At the far end was the Source of the glory that emanated from everything else in the room. I knew that it was the Lord, and I was a little bit afraid as I began to walk toward Him. I did not even think about how great the distance was. It was all so wonderful that I felt that I could walk forever and enjoy every step. In earthly terms, that somehow did not relate here, it would have taken me many days to reach the throne.

My eyes were so fixed on the glory of the Lord that I had walked a long time before I noticed that I was passing multitudes of people who were standing in ranks to my left (There were just as many to my right but they were so far away that I did not notice them until I reached the throne). As I looked at them I had to stop. They were dazzling, more regal than anyone I had ever seen. Their countenance was captivating. Never had such peace and confidence graced a human face. Each one was

beautiful beyond any earthly comparison. As I turned toward those who were close to me they bowed in a greeting as if they knew me.

"How is it that you know me?" I asked, surprised at my own boldness to ask such a question of them.

"You are one of the saints who is fighting in the last battle," a man close by responded. "Everyone here knows you, and all of those who are now fighting on the earth. We are the saints who have served the Lord in the generations before you. We are the great cloud of witnesses who have been given the right to behold the last battle. We know all of you, and we see all that you do."

I then noticed someone I had known on earth. He had been a faithful believer, but I did not think he had done anything of significance. He was so physically unattractive on earth that it had made him shy. Here he had the same features, but was somehow more handsome than any person I had known on earth. He stepped up to me with an assurance and dignity that I had never seen in him, or anyone, before.

"Heaven is much greater than we could have dreamed while on earth," he began. "This room is but the threshold of realms of glory that are far beyond the ability we had to comprehend. It is also true that the second death is much more terrible than we understood. Neither heaven or hell are like we thought they were. If I had known on earth what I know here I would not have lived the way that I did. You are blessed with a great grace to have come here before you have died." he said while looking at my garments.

I then looked at myself. I still had the old mantle of humility on, with the armor under it. I felt both foul and crude standing before those who were so regal and beautiful. I began to think that I was in serious trouble if I was going to appear before the Lord like this. Like the eagles, my old acquaintance could understand my thoughts, and he replied to them:

"Those who come here wearing that mantle have nothing to fear. That mantle is the highest rank of honor, and it is why they all bowed to you while you passed."

"I did not notice anyone bowing to me," I replied, a bit disconcerted.

"It is not improper," he continued. "Here we show each other the respect that is due. Even the angels serve us here, but only our God and His Christ are worshiped."

I was still ashamed. I had to retrain myself to keep from bowing to these glorious ones, while at the same time wanting to hide myself because I looked so bad. Then I began lamenting the fact that my thoughts here were just as foolish here as they were on earth, and here everyone knew them! I felt both stained and stupid standing before these who were so awesome and pure. Again my old acquaintance responded to these thoughts.

"We have our incorruptible bodies now, and you do not. Our minds are no longer hindered by sin. We are therefore able to comprehend many times what even the greatest earthly mind can fathom, and we will spend eternity growing in our ability to understand. This is so that we can know the Father, and understand the glory of His creation. On earth you cannot even begin to understand what the least of these here know, and we are the least of those here."

"How could you be the least?" I asked with disbelief.

"There is an aristocracy here. The rewards for our earthly lives are the eternal positions that we have here. This great multitude here are those whom the Lord called 'foolish virgins.' We knew the Lord, and trusted in His cross for deliverance from damnation, but we did not really live for Him, but for ourselves. We did not keep our vessels filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit. We have eternal life, but we wasted our lives on earth."

I was really surprised by this, but I also knew that no one could lie in that place.

"The foolish virgins gnashed their teeth in the outer darkness," I protested.

"And that we did. The grief that we experienced when we understood how we had so wasted our lives was beyond any grief possible on earth. The darkness of that grief can only be understood by those who have experienced it. Such darkness is magnified when it is revealed next to the glory of the One we failed. You are standing now among the lowest rank in heaven. There are no greater fools than the ones who know the great salvation of God, but then go on living for themselves. To come

here and learn the reality of that folly is a grief beyond what an earthly soul can experience. We are those who suffered this outer darkness because of this greatest of follies."

I was still incredulous. "But you are more glorious and full of more joy and peace than I even imagined, even for those in heaven. I do not feel any remorse in you, and yet I know that here you cannot lie. This does not make sense to me."

Looking me straight in the eyes, he continued, "The Lord also loves us with a love greater than you can yet understand. Before His judgment seat I tasted the greatest darkness of soul and remorse that can be experienced. Though here we do not measure time as you do, it seemed to last for as long as my life on earth had lasted. All of my sins and follies which I had not repented of passed before me, and before all who are here. The grief of this you cannot understand until you have experienced it. I felt that I was in the deepest dungeon of hell, even as I stood before the Lord. He was resolute until my life had been completely reviewed. When I said I was sorry and asked for the mercy of His cross, He wiped away my tears and took away the great darkness. He looked at me with a love that was beyond anything that you can now understand. He gave me this robe. I no longer feel the darkness or bitterness that I knew as I stood before Him, but I remember it. Only here can you remember such things without continuing to feel the pain. A moment in the lowest part of heaven is much greater than a thousand years of the highest life on earth. Now my mourning at my folly has been turned into joy, and I know that I will know joy forever, even if I am in the lowest place in heaven."

I began to think again of the treasures of salvation. Somehow I knew that all that this man had told me was revealed by those treasures. Every step I had taken up the mountain, or into it, had revealed that His ways are both more fearful and more wonderful than I had known before.

Looking at me intently, my former acquaintance continued. "You are not here to understand, but to experience. The next level of rank here is many times greater than what we have. Each level after is that much greater than the previous one. It is not just that each level has an even more glorious spiritual body, but that each level is closer to the throne where all of the glory comes from. Even so, I no longer feel the grief of my failure. I really deserve nothing. I am here by grace alone, and I am so thankful for what I have. He is so worthy to be loved. I could be doing many wondrous things now in the different realms of heaven, but I would rather stay here and just behold the glory, even if I am on the outer fringes."

Then, with a distant look in his eyes, he added, "Everyone in heaven is now in this room to watch His great mystery unfold, and to watch those of you who will fight the last battle." "Can you see Him from here?" I asked. "I see His glory far away, but I cannot see Him."

"I can see many times better than you can," he answered. "And yes, I can see Him, and all that He is doing, even from here. I can also hear Him. I can also behold the earth. He gave us all that power. We are the great cloud of witnesses who are beholding you."

He departed back into the ranks and I began walking again, trying to understand all that he had said to me. As I looked over the great host that he had said were the foolish virgins, the ones who had spiritually slept away their life on earth, I knew that if any one of them appeared on earth now that they would be worshiped as gods, and yet they were the very least of those who were here!

I then began to think of all of the time that I had wasted in my life. It was such an overwhelming thought that I stopped. Then parts of my life began to pass before me. I began to experience a terrible grief over this one sin. I too had been one of the greatest of fools! I may have kept more oil in my lamp than others, but now I knew how foolish I had been to measure what was required of me by how others were doing. I, too, was one of the foolish virgins!

Just when I thought I would collapse under the weight of this terrible discovery, a man who I had known and esteemed as one of the great men of God I had known, came forward to steady me. Somehow his touch revived me. He then greeted me warmly. He was a man that I had wanted to be discipled by. I had met him, but we did not get along well. Like a number of others I had tried to get close enough to learn from, I was an irritation to him and he finally asked me to leave. For years I had felt guilty about this, feeling that I had missed a great opportunity because of some flaw in my character. Even though I had put it out of my mind, I still carried the weight of this failure. When I saw him it all surfaced, and a sick feeling came over me. Now he was so regal that I felt even more repulsive and embarrassed by my poor state. I wanted to hide but there was no way I could avoid him here. To my surprise, his warmth toward me was so genuine that he quickly put me at ease. There did not seem to be any barriers between us. In fact, the love I felt coming from him almost completely took away my self-consciousness.

"I have waited eagerly for this meeting," he said.

"You were waiting for me?" I asked. "Why?"

"You are just one of many that I am waiting for. I did not understand until my judgment that you were one that I was called to help, to even disciple, but I rejected you."

"Sir," I protested. "It would have been a great honor to be discipled by you, and I am very thankful for the time that I did have with you, but I was so arrogant I deserved your rejection. I know that my rebellion and pride has kept me from ever having a real spiritual father. This was not your fault, but mine."

"It is true that you were prideful, but that is not why I was offended with you. I was offended because of my insecurity, which made me want to control everyone around me. I was offended that you would not accept everything that I said without questioning it. I then started to look for anything that was wrong with you to justify my rejection. I began to feel that if I could not control you that you would one day embarrass me and my ministry. I esteemed my ministry more than I did the people for whom it was given to me, so I drove many like you away," he said.

With a genuineness that is unknown in the realms of earth, he continued, "All children are rebellious, and think that the world revolves around them. That is why they need parents to raise them. Almost every child will at times bring reproach on his family, but he is still a part of the family. I turned away many of God's own children that he had entrusted to me for getting them safely to maturity. I failed with most of them. Most of them suffered terrible wounds and failures that I could have helped them to avoid. Many of them are now prisoners of the enemy. I built a large organization, and had considerable influence in the church, but the greatest gifts that the Lord trusted to me were the ones who were sent to me for discipline, many of whom I rejected. Had I not been so self-centered and concerned with my own reputation I would be a king here. I was called to one of the highest thrones. All that you have and will accomplish would have been in my heavenly account as well. Instead, much of what I gave my attention to was of very little true eternal significance. What looks good on earth looks very different here. What will make you a king on earth will often be a stumbling block to keep you from being a king here. What will make you a king here is lowly and unesteemed on earth. Will you forgive me?"

"Of course," I said, quite embarrassed. "But I, too, am in need of your forgiveness. I still think that it was my awkwardness and rebellion that made it difficult for you."

"It is true that you were not perfect, and I discerned some of your problems rightly, but that is never cause for rejection," he replied. "The Lord did not reject the world when I saw its failures. He did not reject me when He saw my sin. He laid down His life for us. It is always the greater who must lay down his life for the lesser. I was more mature. I had more authority than you, but I became like one of the goats in the parable; I rejected the Lord by rejecting you and the others that He sent to me."

As he talked, his words were striking me deeply. I, too, was guilty of everything that he was relenting of. Many young men and women who I had brushed off as not being important enough for my time were now passing through my mind. How desperately I wanted to return now and gather them together! This grief that I began to feel was even worse than I had felt about wasting time. I had wasted people! Now many of these were prisoners of the enemy, wounded and captured during the battle on the mountain. This whole battle was for people, and yet people were often regarded as the least important. We will fight for truths more than for the people for whom they are given. We will fight for ministries while running roughshod over the people in them. "And many people think of me as a spiritual leader! I am truly the least of the saints," I thought to myself.

"I understand how you feel," remarked another man I recognized as one I considered one of the greatest Christian leaders of all time. "Paul the apostle said near the end of his life that he was the least of the saints. Then just before his death he even called himself 'the greatest of sinners.' Had he not learned that in his life on earth he, too, would have been in jeopardy of being one of the least of the saints in heaven. Because he learned it on earth he is now one of those closest to the Lord, and will be one of the highest in rank for all of eternity."

Seeing this man in the company of "The foolish virgins" was the greatest surprise I had yet. "I cannot believe that you, too, are one of the foolish who slept away their lives on earth. Why are you here?"

"I am here because I made one of the most grave mistakes you can make as one entrusted with the glorious gospel of our Savior. Just as the apostle Paul progressed from not considering himself inferior to the greatest apostles, to being the greatest of sinners, I took the opposite course. I started out knowing that I had been one the greatest of sinners who had found grace, but ended up thinking that I was one of the greatest apostles. It was because of my great pride, not insecurity like our friend here, that I began to attack everyone who did not see everything just the way I did. Those who followed me I stripped of their own callings, and

even their personalities, pressuring them to all become just like me. No one around me could be themselves. No one dared to question me because I would crush them into powder; I thought that by making others smaller I made myself larger. I thought that I was supposed to be the Holy Spirit to everyone. From the outside my ministry looked like a smooth running machine where everyone was in unity and there was perfect order, but it was the order of a concentration camp. I took the Lord's own children and made them automatons in my own image instead of His. In the end I was not even serving the Lord, but the idol I had built to myself. By the end of my life I was actually an enemy of the true gospel, at least in practice, even if my teachings and writings seemed impeccably biblical."

"If that is true, that you became an enemy of the gospel, how is it that you are still here?" I questioned.

"By the grace of God, I did trust in the cross for my own salvation, even though I actually kept other men from it, leading them to myself rather than to Him. The Lord remains faithful to us even when we are unfaithful. It was also by His grace that the Lord took me from the earth sooner than He would have just so those who were under me could find Him and come to know Him."

I could not have been more stunned to think that this was true of this particular man. History had given us a very different picture of him. Reading what was going on in my heart, he continued:

"God does have a different set of history books than those on the earth. You have had a glimpse of this, but you do not yet know how different they are. Earthly histories will pass away, but the books that are kept here will last forever. If you can rejoice in what heaven is recording about your life, you are blessed indeed. Men see through a glass darkly, so their histories will always be clouded, and sometimes completely wrong. Very few, even very few Christians, have the true gift of discernment. Without this gift it is impossible to accurately discern truth in those of the present or the past. Even with this gift it is difficult. Until you have been here, and been stripped, you will judge others through distorted prejudices, either positive or negative. That is why we were warned not to judge before the time. Until we have been here we just cannot really know what is in the heart of others, whether they are performing good or evil deeds. There have been good motives in even the worst of men, and evil motives in even the best of them. Only here can men be judged by both their deeds and their motives."

"When I return to earth, will I be able to discern history accurately because I have been here?"

"You are here because you prayed for the Lord to judge you severely, to correct you ruthlessly, so that you could serve Him more perfectly. This was one of the most wise requests you ever made. The wise judge themselves lest they be judged. The even wiser ask for the judgments of the Lord, because they realize that they cannot even judge themselves very well. Having come here you will leave with far more wisdom and discernment, but on earth you will always see through a glass darkly to at least some degree. Your experience here will help you to know men better, but only when you are fully here can you know them fully. When you leave here you will be more impressed by how little you know men rather than by how well you know them. This is just as true in relation to the histories of men. I have been allowed to talk with you because I have in a sense disciplined you through my writings, and to know the truth about me will help you greatly," the great Reformer concluded.

Then a woman stepped forward who I did not know. Her beauty and grace was breathtaking, but it was not sensual, or seductive in any way. She was the definition of dignity and nobility.

"I was his wife on earth," she began. "Much of what you know of him actually came from me, therefore what I am about to say is not just about him, but about us. You can reform the church without reforming your own soul. You can dictate the course of history, and yet not do the Father's will, or glorify His Son. If you commit yourself to making human history, you may do it, but it is a fleeting accomplishment that will evaporate like a wisp of smoke."

"But your husband's work, or your work, greatly impacted every generation after him for good. It is hard to imagine how dark the world would have been without him," I protested.

"True. But you can gain the whole world and still lose your own soul. Only if you keep your own soul pure can you impact the world for the truly lasting eternal purpose of God. My husband lost his soul to me, and he only gained it at the end of his life because I was taken from the earth so that he could. Much of what he did he did more for me than for the Lord. I pressured him, and even gave him much of the knowledge that he taught. I used him as an extension of my own ego, because as a woman at the time I could not be recognized as a spiritual leader myself. I took over his life so that I could live my life through Him. Soon I had him doing everything just to prove himself to me."

"You must have loved her very much." I said looking at him.

"No. I did not love her at all. Neither did she love me. In fact, after just a few years of marriage we did not even like each other. But we both needed each other, so we found a way to work together. The more successful we became in this way, the more unhappy we became, and the more deception we used to fool those who followed us. We were empty wretches by the end of our lives. The more influence that you gain by your own self-promotion, the more striving you must do to keep your influence, and the more dark and cruel your life will become. Kings feared us, but we feared everyone from the kings to the peasants. We could trust no one because we were living in such deception ourselves we did not even trust each other. We preached love and trust, because we wanted everyone to love and trust us, but we feared and secretly despised everyone ourselves. If you preach the greatest truths but do not live them, you are only the greatest hypocrite."

Their words began to pound me like a hammer. I could see that already my life was heading in the same direction. How much was I doing to promote myself rather than Christ. I began to see how much I did just to prove myself to others, especially those who disliked me, or who I felt in competition with in some way. I began to see how much of my own life was built on the facades of a projected image that belied who I really was. But here I could not hide. This great cloud of witnesses all knew who I was beyond the veil of my projected motives.

I looked again at this couple. They were now so guileless and so truly noble that it was impossible to question their motives. They were gladly exposing their most devious sins for my sake, and were genuinely glad to be able to do it.

"I may have had a wrong concept of you by your history and your writings, but I have even more esteem for you now. I pray that I can carry from this place the integrity and freedom that you have now. I am tired of trying to live up to projected images of myself. How I long for that freedom." I lamented, wanting desperately to remember every detail of this encounter. Then the famous Reformer offered a final exhortation:

"Do not try to teach others to do what you are doing yourself. Reformation is not just a doctrine. True reformation only comes from union with the Savior. When you are yoked with Christ, carrying the burdens that He gives you, He will be with you and carry them for you. You can only do His work when you are doing it with Him, not just for Him. Only the Spirit can beget that which is Spirit. If you are yoked with Him you will do nothing for the sake of politics or history. Anything that you do because of political pressures, or opportunities, will only lead you to the end of your true ministry. The things that are done for the sake of trying to make history will at best doom your accomplishments to history, and you will fail to impact eternity. If you do not live what you preach to others you disqualify yourself from the high calling of God, just as we did. I will tell you what will keep you on the path of life-love the Savior and seek His glory alone. Everything that you do to exalt yourself will one day bring you the most terrible humiliation. Everything that you do out of true love for the Savior, to glorify His name, will extend the limits of His eternal kingdom, and ultimately result in a much higher place for yourself. Live for what is recorded here. Care nothing for what is recorded on earth."

As they walked away I was again being overwhelmed by my own sin. The times that I had used people for my own purposes, or even used the glorious name of Jesus, to further my own ambitions, or to make myself look better, began to cascade down upon me. Here, where I could behold the power and glory of the One I had so used, it became more repulsive than I thought I could stand. I fell on my face in the worst despair I had ever known. After what seemed like an eternity of seeing these people and events pass before me, I felt the woman lifting me to my feet again. I was overcome by her purity, especially as I now felt so evil and corrupt. I had the strongest desire to worship her because she was so pure.

"Turn to the Son," she said emphatically. "Your desire to worship me, or anyone else at this time, is only an attempt to turn the attention away from yourself, and justify yourself by serving what you are not. I am pure now because I turned to Him. You need to see the corruption that is in your own soul, but then you must not dwell on yourself, or seek to justify yourself with dead works, but turn to Him."

This was said in such genuine love and concern that it was impossible to be hurt or offended by it. When she saw that I understood, she continued:

"The purity that you saw in me was what my husband first saw in me when we were young. I was relatively pure in my motives then, but I corrupted his love and my own purity by letting him worship me wrongly. You can never become pure just by worshiping one who is more pure than you, but only by going beyond them to find for yourself the One who has made them pure, and in Whom alone is no sin. The more people praised us, and the more we accepted their praises, the further we departed from the path of life. Then we started living for the praises of men, and to gain power over those who would not praise us. That was our demise, and was the same for many who are here in the lowest place, but were called to be in the highest."

Wanting to simply prolong our conversation, I asked the next thing that came to my mind, "Is it difficult for you and your husband to be here together?"

"Not at all. All of the relationships that you have on earth are continued here, and they are all purified by the judgment. The more that you are forgiven the more that you love. Of course, the Lord forgave us more than anyone, and here we all love Him much more than anyone else. After we forgave each other we loved each other more. Now our relationship is continuing in much greater depth and richness because we are joint heirs of this salvation. As deep as the wounds went, that is how deep the love was able to go once we were healed. We could have experienced this on earth, but we did not learn forgiveness in time. If we had learned forgiveness the competition that entered our relationship, and sidetracked our life, would not have been able to take root in us. If you truly love, you will easily forgive. The harder it is for you to forgive, the further you are from true love. Forgiveness is essential if you are to stay on the path of life. Without it many things can knock you off the course chosen for you."

At the same time I realized that this woman, who had brought me into this confrontation with such pain at my depravity, was also the most attractive person I could ever remember meeting. It was not romantic attraction, but I just did not want to leave her. Perceiving my thoughts, she withdrew a step, indicating that she was about to go, but offered me one last insight.

"The pure truth, spoken in pure love, will always attract. You will remember the pain you feel here, and it will help you through the rest of your life. Pain is good; it shows you where there is a problem. Do not try to reduce the pain until you find and address the problem. God's truth often brings pain as it highlights a problem that we have, but His truth will always show us the way to freedom, and true life. When you know this you will even begin to rejoice in your trials, which are all allowed to help keep you on the path of life."

"Also, your attraction to me is not out of order. It is the attraction between male and female that was given in the beginning, which is always pure in its true form. When pure truth is combined with pure love, men can be the men they were created to be without having to dominate out of insecurity. Women can be the women they were created to be because their love has replaced their fear. Love will never manipulate or try to control out of insecurity, because love casts out all fear. The very place where relationships can be the most corrupted is also where they can be the most fulfilling. As your mind is renewed by the Spirit of Truth, you will not see relationships as an opportunity to get from others, but to give. Giving is the greatest fulfillment that we can ever know. It is a taste of heaven where we give to the Lord in pure worship, which has an ecstasy that even the most wonderful relationships on earth are but a fleeting glimpse of. What we experience in worship here your frail little unglorified body could not endure. The true worship of God will purify the soul for the glories of true relationships. Therefore, you must not seek relationships, but pure worship. Only then can relationships start to be what they are supposed to be. True love never seeks the upper hand, but the lowest place of service. If my husband and I had kept this in our marriage, we would be sitting next to the King now, and this great hall would be filled with many more souls."

With that she disappeared back into the ranks of the glorified saints. I looked again towards the throne and the glory that appeared so much more beautiful that I was taken aback. Another man standing close to me explained:

"With each encounter, a veil is being removed so that you can see Him more clearly. You are not changed just by seeing His glory, but by seeing it with an unveiled face. Everyone who comes to the true judgments of God walks a corridor such as this to meet those who can help them remove whatever veils they are still wearing; veils that will distort their vision of Him."

I had already absorbed more understanding than I felt like my many years of study on earth had given me. I then began to feel that all of my study and seeking on earth had only led me forward at a snail's pace. How could many lifetimes prepare me for the judgment? My life had already disqualified me more than all of those whom I had met, and they barely made it here!

Then another man emerged from the ranks. He had been a contemporary of mine, and I did not know that he had died. I had never met him on earth, but he had a great ministry which I respected very much. Through men that he had trained, thousands had been led to salvation, and many great churches had been raised up. He asked if he could just embrace me for a minute, and I agreed, feeling a bit awkward. When we embraced I felt such love coming from him that a great pain that was deep within me stopped hurting. I had become so used to the pain that I did not even notice it until it stopped. After he released me I told him that his embrace had healed me of something. His joy at this was profound. Then he began to tell me why he was in the lowest rank in heaven.

"I became so arrogant near the end of my life that I could not imagine that the Lord would do anything of significance unless He did it through me. I began to touch the Lord's anointed, and do His prophets harm. I was selfishly proud when the Lord used one of my own disciples, and I became jealous when the Lord moved through anyone who was outside of my own ministry. I

would search for anything that was wrong with them which I could attack. I did not know that every time I did this I only demoted myself further."

"I never knew that you had done anything like that," I said, surprised.

"I incited men under me to investigate others and do my dirty work. I had them scour the earth to find any error or sin in the life of others to expose them. I became the worst thing that a man can become on the earth—a stumbling block who produced other stumbling blocks. We sowed fear and division throughout the church, all in the name of protecting the truth. In my self-righteousness I was headed for perdition. In His great mercy the Lord allowed me to be struck by a disease that would bring about a slow and humiliating death. Just before I died I came to my senses and repented. I am just thankful to be here at all. I may be one of the least of His here, but it is much more than I deserve. I just could not leave this room until I had a chance to apologize to those of you that I so wronged."

"But you never wronged me," I said.

"Oh, but I did indeed," he replied. "Many of the attacks that came against you were from those whom I had agitated and encouraged in their assaults on others. Even though I may not have personally carried the attacks out, the Lord holds me as responsible as those who did."

"I see. Certainly I forgive you."

I was already beginning to remember how I had done this same thing, even if on a smaller scale. I recalled how I had allowed disgruntled former members of a church to spread their poison about that church without stopping them. I knew that by just allowing them to do this without correcting them I had encouraged them to continue. I remember thinking that this was justified because of the errors of that church. I then began to remember how I had even repeated many of their stories, justifying it by saying it was only to enlist prayers for them. Soon a great flood of other such incidents began to arise in my heart. Again, I was starting to be overwhelmed by the evil and darkness of my own soul.

"I, too, have been a stumbling block!" I wailed, dropping again to my knees. I knew that I deserved death, that I deserved the worst kind of hell. I had never seen such ruthlessness and cruelty as I was now seeing in my own heart.

"And we always comforted ourselves by actually thinking that we were doing God a favor when we attacked His own children," came the understanding voice of this man. "It is good for you to see this here, because you can go back. Please warn my disciples of their impending doom if they do not repent. Many of them are called to be kings here, but if they do not repent they will face the worst judgment of all—that of the stumbling blocks. My humbling disease was grace from God. When I stood before the throne I asked the Lord to send such grace to my disciples. I cannot cross back over to them, but He has allowed me this time with you. Please forgive and release those who have attacked you. They really do not understand that they are doing the work of the Accuser. Thank you for forgiving me, but please also forgive them. It is in your power to retain sins or cover them with love. I entreat you to love those who are now your enemies."

I could hardly hear this man I was so overwhelmed with my own sin. This man was so glorious, pure and obviously now had powers that were not known on the earth. Yet, he was entreating me with a greater humility than I had witnessed before. I felt such love coming from him that I could not imagine refusing him, but even without the impact of his love, I felt far more guilty than anyone could possibly be who was attacking me.

"Certainly I must deserve anything they have done to me, and much more," I replied.

"That is true, but it is not the point here," he entreated. "Everyone on earth is deserving of the second death, but our Savior brought us grace and truth. If we are to do His work we must do everything in both grace and truth. Truth without grace is what the enemy brings when he comes as an 'angel of light.'"

"If I can be delivered from this maybe I will be able to help them," I replied. "But can't you recognize that I am far worse than they could possibly be?"

"I know that what just passed through your mind was bad," he answered, but with a love and grace that was profound. I knew that he had now become as concerned for me and my condition as he had been for his own disciples.

"This really is heaven," I blurted out. "This really is light and truth. How could we who live in such darkness become so proud,

thinking that we know so much about God? Lord!" I yelled in the direction of the throne, "Please let me go and carry this light back to earth!"

Immediately the entire host of heaven seemed to stand at attention, and I knew that I was the center of their attention. I felt so insignificant before just one of these glorious ones, but when I knew they were all looking at me, fear came like a tidal wave. I felt that there could be no doom like I was about to experience. I felt like the greatest enemy of the glory and truth that so filled that place. I was too corrupted, I could never properly represent such glory and truth. There was no way that I could in my corruption convey the reality of the glorious place and Presence. I was sure that even Satan had not fallen as far as I had from grace. This is hell I thought. There can be no worse pain than to be as evil as I am and to know that this kind of glory exists. To be banned from here is a torture worse than I ever dreamed. No wonder the demons are so angry and demented, I thought.

Just when I felt that I was about to be sent to the deepest regions of hell, I simply cried "JESUS!" Quickly a peace came over me. I knew I had to move on toward the glory again, and somehow I had the confidence to do it. I kept moving until I saw a man who I considered one of the greatest writers of all time. I had considered his depth of insight into the truth to be possibly the greatest that I had encountered in all of my studies.

"Sir, I have always looked forward to this meeting," I almost blurted out.

"As have I," he replied with genuine sincerity.

"I feel that I know you, and in your writings I almost felt like you somehow knew me. I think that I owe more to you than to anyone else who was not canonized in Scripture," I continued.

"You are very gracious," he replied. "But I am sorry that I did not serve you better. I was a shallow person, and my writings were shallow, and filled with more worldly wisdom than divine truth."

"Since I have been here, and learned all that I have learned, I know that this must be true, but I still think they are some of the best that we have on earth," I answered.

"You are right," this famous writer admitted, with sincerity. "It is so sad. Everyone here, even those who sit closest to the King, would live their lives differently if they had them to live over, but I think that I would live mine even more differently than most. I was honored by kings, but failed the King of kings. I used the great gifts and insights that were given me to draw men more to myself and my wisdom than to Him. Besides, I only knew Him by the hearing of the ear, which is the way I compelled other men to know Him. I made them dependent on me, and others like me. I turned them more to deductive reasoning than to the Holy Spirit, Who I hardly knew. I did not point men to Jesus, but to myself and others like me who pretended to know Him. When I beheld Him here, I wanted to ground my writings into powder, just as Moses did to the golden calf. My mind was my idol, and I wanted everyone to worship my mind with me. Your esteem for me does not cause me to rejoice. If I had spent as much time seeking to know Him as I did seeking to know about Him in order to impress others with my knowledge, many of those who are in this lowest of companies would be sitting in the throne that was prepared for them, and many others would be in this room."

"I know by being here that your appraisal of your work is true, but are you not being a little too hard on yourself?" I questioned. "Your works fed me spiritually for many years, as I know they have multitudes of others."

"I am not being too hard on myself. All that I have said is true as it was confirmed when I stood before the throne. I produced a lot, but I was given more talents than almost anyone here, and I buried them beneath my own spiritual pride and ambitions. Just as Adam could have carried the whole human race into a most glorious future, but by his failure led billions of souls into the worst of tragedies, with authority comes responsibility. The more authority you are given, the more potential for both good and evil you will have. Those who will rule with Him for the ages will know responsibility of the most profound kind. No man stands alone, and every human failure, or victory, resonates far beyond our comprehension, even to generations to come. The many thousands who I could have led properly would have resulted in many more millions here. Anyone who understands the true nature of authority would never seek it, but only accept it when they know they are yoked with the Lord, the only One who can carry authority without stumbling. Never seek influence for yourself, but only seek the Lord and be willing to take His yoke. My influence did not feed your heart, but rather your pride in knowledge."

"How can I know that I am not doing the same?" I asked as I began to think of my own writings.

"Study to show yourself approved unto God, not men," he replied as he walked back into the ranks. Before he disappeared he

turned and with the slightest smile, offered one last bit of advice: "And do not follow me."

In this first multitude I saw many other men and women of God from both my own time and history. I stopped and talked to many more. I was continually shocked that so many who expected to be in the highest positions were in the lowest rank of the kingdom. Many shared the same basic story—they all had fallen to the deadly sin of pride after their great victories, or fallen to jealousy when other men were anointed as much as they were. Others had fallen to lust, discouragement, or bitterness near the end of their lives and had to be taken before they crossed the line into perdition. They all gave me the same warning: the higher the spiritual authority that you walk in, the further you can fall if you depart from love and humility.

As I continued toward the judgment seat I began to pass those who were of higher rank in the kingdom. After many more veils had been stripped away from me by meetings with those who had stumbled over the same problems that I had, I began to meet those who had overcome. I met couples who had served the Lord and each other faithfully to the end. Their glory here was unspeakable, and their victory encouraged me that it was possible to stay on the path of life, and serve Him in faithfulness. Those who stumbled, stumbled in many different ways. Those who prevailed all did it the same way—they did not deviate from their devotion to the first and greatest commandment—loving the Lord. By this their service was done unto Him, not men, not even for spiritual men. These were the ones who worshipped the Lamb, and followed Him wherever He went.

When I was still not even half way to the throne, what had been the indescribable glory of the first rank now seemed to be the outer darkness in comparison to the glory of those I was now passing. The greatest beauty on earth would not qualify to be found anywhere in heaven. And I was told that this room was just the threshold of realms indescribable!

My march to the throne may have taken days, months or even years. There was no way to measure time in that place. To my considerable discomfort, they all showed great respect to me, not because of who I was or anything that I had done, but simply because I was a warrior in the battle of the last days. Somehow, through this last battle, the glory of God would be revealed in such a way that it would be a witness to every power and authority, created or yet to be created, for all of eternity. During this battle the glory of the cross would be revealed, and the wisdom of God would be known in a special way. To be in that battle was to be given one of the greatest honors given to those of the race of men.

As I approached the Judgment Seat of Christ, those in the highest ranks were also sitting on thrones that were all a part of His throne. Even the least of these thrones was more glorious than any earthly throne many times over. Some of these were rulers over cities on earth who would soon take their place. Others were rulers over the affairs of heaven, and others over the affairs of the physical creation, such as star systems and galaxies. However, it was apparent that those who were given authority over cities were esteemed above those who had even been given authority over galaxies. The value of a single child was more than a galaxy of stars, because the Holy Spirit dwelt in men, and the Lord had chosen men as His eternal dwelling place. In the presence of His glory the whole earth seemed as insignificant as a speck of dust, and yet was so infinitely esteemed that the attention of the whole host of heaven was upon it.

Now that I stood before the throne, I felt very much less than a speck of dust. Even so, I felt the Holy Spirit upon me in a greater way than I ever had. It was by His power alone that I was able to stand. It was here that I truly came to understand His ministry as our Comforter. He had led me through the entire journey even though I had hardly noticed Him.

The Lord was both more gentle and more terrible than I had ever imagined. In Him I saw Wisdom who had accompanied me up the mountain, and felt the familiarity of many of my friends on earth. I recognized Him as the One I had heard speaking to me many times through others. I also recognized Him as the One that I had often rejected when He had come to me in others. I saw both a Lion and a Lamb, the Shepherd and the Bridegroom, but most of all I saw Him here as the Judge.

Even in His awesome presence, the Comforter was so mightily with me I was comfortable. It was also apparent that the Lord in no way wanted me to be uncomfortable; He only wanted me to know the truth. Human words are not adequate to describe either how awesome, or how relieving it was to stand before the Lord. I had passed the point where I was concerned if the judgment was going to be good or bad; I just knew it would be right, and that I could trust my Judge.

At one point the Lord looked toward the galleries of thrones around Him. Many were occupied by saints, and many were empty. He then said, "These thrones are for the overcomers who have served Me faithfully in every generation. My Father and I prepared them before the foundation of the world. Are you worthy to sit in one of these?"

I remembered what a friend had once said, "When an omniscient God asks you a question, it is not because He is seeking information." I looked at the thrones. I looked at those who were now seated. I could recognize some of the great heroes of the faith, but most of those seated I knew had not even been well known on earth. Many I knew had been missionaries who had

expended their lives in obscurity. They had never cared to be remembered on earth, but only to Him. I was a bit surprised to see some who had been wealthy, or rulers who had been faithful with what they had been given. However, it seemed that faithful, praying women and mothers occupied more thrones than any other single group.

There was no way that I could answer "yes" to the Lord's question if I considered myself worthy to sit here. I was not worthy to sit in the company of any who were there. I knew I had been given the opportunity to run for the greatest prize in heaven or earth, and I had failed. I was desperate, but there was still one hope. Even though most of my life had been a failure, I knew that I was here before I had finished my life on earth. When I confessed that I was not worthy, He asked:

"But do you want this seat?"

"I do with all of my heart," I responded.

The Lord then looked at the galleries and said, "Those empty seats could have been filled in any generation. I gave the invitation to sit here to everyone who has called upon My name. They are still available. Now the last battle has come, and many who are last shall be first. These seats will be filled before the battle is over. Those who will sit here you will know by two things: they will wear the mantle of humility, and they will have My likeness. You now have the mantle. If you can keep it and do not lose it in the battle, when you return you will also have My likeness. Then you will be worthy to sit with these, because I will have made you worthy. All authority and power has been given to Me, and I alone can wield it. You will prevail, and you will be trusted with My authority only when you have come to fully abide in Me. Now turn and look at My household."

I turned and looked back in the direction I had come from. From before His throne I could see the entire room. The spectacle was beyond any earthly comparison for its glory. Millions filled the ranks. Each individual in the lowest rank was more awesome than an army, and I knew had more power. It was far beyond my capacity to absorb such a panorama of glory. Even so, I could see the only a very small portion of the great room was occupied.

I then looked back at the Lord and was astonished to see tears in His eyes. He had wiped the tears away from every eye here, but His own. As a tear ran down His cheek he caught it in His hand. He then offered it to me.

"This is My cup. Will you drink it with Me?"

There was no way that I could refuse Him. As the Lord continued to look at Me I began to feel His great love. Even as foul as I was He still loved me. As undeserving as I was He wanted me to be close to Him. Then He said:

"I love all of these with a love that you cannot now understand. I also love all who are supposed to be here but did not come. I have left the ninety nine to go after the one who was lost. My shepherds would not leave the one to go after the ninety nine who are still lost. I came to save the lost. Will you share My heart to go to save the lost? Will you help to fill this room? Will you help to fill these thrones, and every other seat in this hall? Will you take up this quest to bring joy to heaven, to Me and to My Father? This judgment is for My own household, and My own house is not full. The last battle will not be over until My house is full. Only then will it be time for us to redeem the earth, and remove the evil from My creation. If you drink My cup you will love the lost the way that I loved them."

He then took a cup so plain that I was surprised that it even existed in a room of such glory, and He placed His tear in it. He then gave it to me. I have never tasted anything so bitter. I knew that I could in no way drink it all, or even much of it, but I was determined to drink as much as I could. The Lord patiently waited until I finally erupted into such crying that I felt like veritable rivers of tears were flowing from me. I was crying for the lost, but even more I was crying for the Lord.

I looked to Him in desperation as I could not take any more of this great pain. Then His peace began to fill me and mix with His love that I was feeling. Never had I felt anything so wonderful. This was the living water that I knew could spring up for eternity. Then I felt as if the waters flowing within me caught on fire. I began to feel that this fire would consume me if I could not begin declaring the majesty of His glory. I had never felt such an urge to preach, to worship Him, and to breathe every breath that I was given for the sake of His gospel.

"Lord!" I shouted out, forgetting everyone but Him. "I now know that this throne of judgment is also the throne of grace, and I ask You now for the grace to serve You. Above all things I ask You for grace! I ask You for the grace to finish my course. I ask You for the grace to love You like this so that I can be delivered from the delusions and self-centeredness that so pervert my life. I call upon You for salvation from myself and the evil of my own heart, and for this love that I now feel to flow continually in my heart. I ask You to give me Your heart, Your love. I ask You for the grace of the Holy Spirit to convict me of my sin. I ask You for the grace of the Holy Spirit to testify of You, as You really are. I ask for the grace to testify of all that You have

prepared for those who come to You. I ask for the grace to be upon me to preach the reality of this judgment. I ask for the grace to share with those who are called to occupy these empty thrones, to give them words of life that will keep them on the path of life, that will impart to them the faith to do what they have been called to do. Lord, I beg You for this grace."

The Lord then stood up. Then all of those who were seated upon the thrones for as far as I could see also stood up. His eyes burned with a fire I had not seen before.

"You have called upon Me for grace. This request I never deny. You shall return, and the Holy Spirit shall be with you. Here you have tasted of both My kindness and My severity. You must remember both if you are to stay on the path of life. The true love of God includes the judgment of God. You must know both my kindness and severity or you will fall to deception. This is the grace that you have been given here, to know both. The conversations you had with your brethren here were My grace. Remember them."

He then pointed His sword toward my heart, then my mouth, then my hands.

When He did this fire came from His sword and burned me with a great pain. "This too is grace," He said. "You are but one of many who have been prepared for this hour. Preach and write about all that you have seen here. What I have said to you say to My brethren. Go and call My captains to the last battle. Go and defend the poor and the oppressed, the widows and the orphans. This is the commission of My captains, and it is where you will find them. My children are worth more to Me than the stars in the heavens. Feed My lambs. Watch over My little ones. Give the word of God to them that they may live. Go to the battle. Go and do not retreat. Go quickly for I will come quickly. Obey Me and hasten the day of My coming."

A company of angels then came and escorted me away from the throne. The leader walked beside me and began to speak.

"Now that He has stood He will not sit again until the last battle is over. He has been seated until the time when His enemies are to be put under His feet. The time has now come. The legions of angels that have been standing ready since the night of passion have now been released upon the earth. The hordes of hell have also been released. This is the time that all of creation has been waiting for. The great mystery of God will soon be finished. We will now fight until the end. We will fight with you and your brethren."

I awoke.