

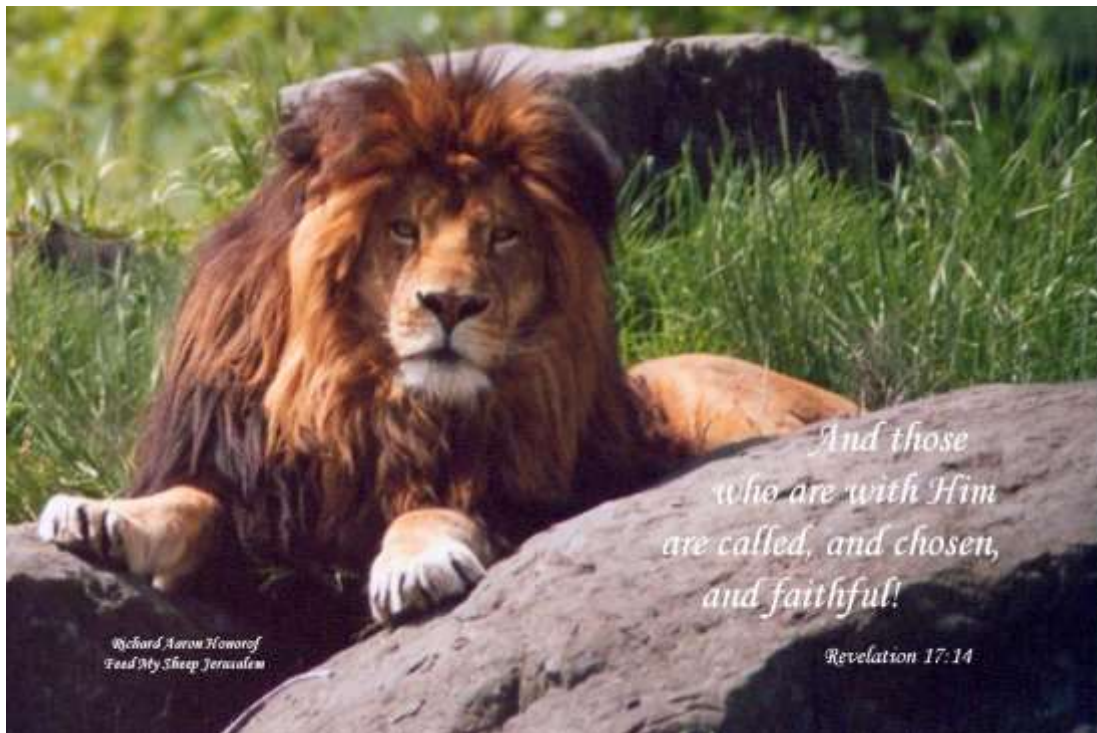
Coming Home!

The Brave Heart Generation

End Time Novel of devastation, hope, and glory

by Faith Christine Honorof

(Book # 3 of the Escape Series)



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Copyright page

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Coming Home!

The Brave Heart Generation

The Beast Government Takes Over

This book is the 3rd novel in the Escape Series. The first novel, titled: **“The Long Night’s Journey! (Escape from America)”** follows Shimon Cohen and his family and friends as they try to escape the Nazi Holocaust in Europe in the 1940’s. Shimon’s children and his grandchildren are involved in the 2nd novel.

“End Time America! A Time to Stand, A Time to Flee,” America is brought down through physical disasters and economic collapse, and a dictatorial government takes over. This second book deals with the desperate need for the Jews to flee America and make aliyah to their ancient homeland, Israel. It also describes how God’s faithful Christians stand in the worst of times.

“Coming Home! The Brave Heart generation” continues the escape saga. Although this book is a novel, and any of the characters resembling actual people is simply a coincidence, much of it is based on real events now taking place in America and Pakistan. This book focuses on the continual rise of anti-

Semitism in Europe and America, and the desperate need for the Jewish people to leave and come back to Israel. But this book also reveals the harsh conditions that Christians in the Martyred Church in Pakistan must survive in from one day to the next—always wondering if it will be their last day on earth.

Will Benjamin and Jody (Shimon's granddaughter and Messianic Rabbi friend) find a way to escape back to Israel? Will their budding romance continue? Or will they be sent with others to a FEMA camp.

Will Robert McClaren find his way back to God and to a reuniting with his family?

And what will happen to the Christians who have laid down their lives for each other in the Martyred Church in Pakistan? And will the true Church in America have to go underground to survive?

When will the Lord come for His bride? And will He make a way for many to be saved before His Wrath has to be poured out upon the world for the sake of saving His elect and destroying His enemies?

“And when all these things begin to happen, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.” Luke 21: 28

Acknowledgement Page

I want to thank all of my friends who have encouraged me to write these three novels, as we see the real End-time days approaching. I especially want to thank my husband, Richard—my chief editor—for reviewing and editing this book, and offering many new thoughts. His efforts have been a big help to me.

I also want to acknowledge Richard, and also our good friend Sherwood Burton for the pictures that have been used in this book.

I especially want to thank all of God's true 'Brave Hearts', wherever they may be in this world. For surely our great, and saving, redeeming God will say to each one of you in that day, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Thank you Yeshua for showing me how to write this book. I truly hope it brings You pleasure.

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Prologue

Melissa sat down and looked out her living room window. Her two children, Samuel and Cindy were in school—a school that she feared and despised. She had no say in what they did with her kids. Tears came to her eyes as she looked out the window and remembered when Robert had played ball with his son and daughter. Those had been good days—normal ups and downs, but still good.

When Robert had left his job with the ad agency for a top position with the ‘corporation’ everything had changed drastically for the worse. The fast life track, jet-style reality, had been too much for him. And over night he had become a different man. During those hard years he was gone most of the time, and when he was home he had little time for family things. Somehow he had gone from a loving, Christian husband and father to a man consumed with living on the edge. When she questioned him about his marital fidelity he did not lie. They had been divorced now for five years. But he had been faithful to support her and the children financially.

In the last couple of years America had undergone a great economic collapse and several disasters. Things were hard, and no one knew what was coming next.

Melissa pulled the drapes shut when Jody came up the stairs and sat down at the small, kitchen table. She did not need any snooping neighbors looking in and wondering who Jody was. It was time for their afternoon tea break. These were moments during the day that she looked forward to. They would read the Bible scriptures together and pray for one another, and encourage each other as best they could.

Melissa had been directed by God to offer Jody, her Jewish friend, a place of hiding, for they had become very close friends. After the economic collapse, and the war in Israel, the anti-Semitic intensity in America had sky-rocketed out of control, and all of a sudden Jewish people were viewed as the enemy, but also the increase in hatred for true Christians had become a dangerous reality.

It had all happened so fast. Bible believing Christians were now considered traitors and suspected of collaborating with the enemy if they maintained relationships with their past Jewish friends. And of course to provide a hiding place for a Jew was against the law. But Melissa had never regretted her decision to help Jody. The children loved her, and she had been a big help to Melissa during these difficult days.

She had not heard anything from Robert for a few weeks. This was very unusual. She knew he had gone on a business trip to Pakistan, but he had never missed a child support payment, and now her funds were starting to get low. But she was also concerned for the man she had once loved. She sat down at the table with Jody. They would pray.

1 The Journey begins

Santa Monica, California...Present time

“Pakistan?” Robert McLaren let out a sigh. He jerked the top secret coded slender cell phone away from his ear. “Tom, I’ve had plans made and confirmed for over a month now. I am going to take Sylvia to the Bahamas for Christmas...I mean for the holidays. They are predicting some descent weather for a change. I set this up and it was approved. Don’t ask me to change things now.”

“Robert, I am not the one asking you. This has come down from the top. This country—and you know what I am talking about—is willing to pay big dollars for what we have, but their top military general, Abdel Karrie, wants things done now—not after your holiday plans. Somebody, Bob, has got to make the hard choices, and you’ve been chosen.” He smirked. “Listen, I’ve got a conference call in an hour, so I don’t have time to listen to you whine. I need you in my office by eight o’clock in the am...okay?”

“Yeah...I’ll be there.” Robert dropped the small, slip of a phone on the desk in front of him. He hated it when Tom called him ‘Bob.’ He knew he did it to aggravate him. He also knew that he would have to call Sylvia and cancel their plans for the Bahamas. He closed his eyes for a moment—letting his imagination wander to envisioning Sylvia, with her tall curvy body, in a tiny string bikini, but then quickly snapped himself back into the reality that was before him. He would also have to tell his twelve year old son, Sam, and his ten year old daughter, Cindy, that he would not be able to take them to Idaho for skiing, during their school break. “Oh, well,” he murmured, “kids adjust to everything.” And besides, the winter weather for the last couple of years had really been bizarre. It was snowing where it was not supposed to, and not snowing where it was expected to.

He brushed from the top of his desk a holographic postcard—displaying a picture of a creamy white beach and tall green palm trees. He had been looking forward to this break. The weather was going to be nice for a change in the Bahamas during the holidays.

Once again, for the third time this month, he thought about walking away from the business. But he knew he would not leave—at least he did not think he would. He had a lot of bills to pay, including alimony to an x-wife, child support, and the rent for one of the better penthouses in Santa Monica. And then there was Sylvia. Her tastes in the finer things of life cost him more than a little. He swiveled around in his leather chair and glanced out the expansive floor to ceiling window.

The view of Los Angeles was spectacular. He scanned the blue-gray horizon of the Pacific Ocean but then turned his head and admired, once again, his exquisitely decorated office. This nest, on the 26th floor of the US-Singapore Tower, was of course paid for by the corporation. He glanced out the window again. The sky was becoming dark, with heavy storm building clouds—a potential down pour of rain or even snow, and more chilling winds. A long deluge of rain would be greatly welcomed in California, but it never seemed to come—just plenty of cold, and little rain.

Everyone was depressed about the weather. The drought had gone on now for five years, but it seemed like forever. They had transported water from the Great Lakes to avoid a total catastrophe.

California was not on the top of the list of great places to live anymore, but then what was? The southern states were being ripped apart with violent tornado storms, and if the states were not drying up from drought, then they were inundated with tropical weather, and terrible floods. The weather had become a real concern, and somebody needed to fix the problem! Global warming should have been dealt with a long time ago. He slammed his fist down on his desk.

He dreaded having to drive home. There was always some kind of protest or riot going on. Of course FEMA police, in their riot gear, were everywhere—keeping things in order for people like himself, but it usually meant long stalls and delays.

The new one world currency had dramatically affected the working man's wallet, and in some cities had brought severe economic hardship and a reason for much of the rioting. He breathed a sigh of relief, that for the most part he had not been terribly subject to the

downturn. He grinned, reminding himself of the benefits of working for the corporation. They had well served the military industry. But he had to admit that in the last five years or so everything in the world around him had changed quite dramatically. He groaned just a little. There were no boundaries any more. Everyone did or became whatever they wanted.

Even though this did not interfere with his own personal life, so much, it did at times bother him—especially when it seemed like there was no end in sight to where things might end up. The live and let live mentality was where it was going. No questions asked.

Even the company where he worked encouraged the employees, and even mandated them, to spend at least twenty minutes a day in meditation—especially with the angry, bad attitudes that so many people were now carrying.

He understood, from the beginning, that this form of soul meditation had nothing to do with outdated Christian beliefs, but was a developed practice aimed at the higher social good of collective responsibility, and quieting one's mind. Robert did find it restful, but he had never experienced the higher goal of collective oneness; in fact most of the time he ended up falling asleep. But he had read many articles about a new device that would soon be available, and was already being used by some people groups. This implantable structure would make it possible for people to benefit and adapt more quickly and more easily to the need to be of one collective mind.

From his previous Christian life he understood that a successful community needed boundaries. "Hmm," he murmured out loud. "If all the fundamental Bible thumpers had made room for a little more diversity then things would probably not have gone so far off the deep end." He chuckled. He knew that Melissa would have something to say on that.

He turned from the window and looked briefly at himself in the full-length mirror that was wedged between an ornate book case and a wall that was paneled with Amazon Rosewood. He lightly brushed his hand over his curly dark brown hair—already streaked with a few silver and gray hairs. He was as usual dressed to the tee. He didn't look so bad, he thought, for forty five years old. He had on one of

his better, black silk suits. It fit perfectly. But then he worked out five days a week at the men's health gym. The Corporation wanted their employees to look their best. He adjusted his expensive light blue tie, and smiled at his image. He looked good.

He had been with the Corporation now for eight years. He had been hired because he had the kind of personnel experience they were looking for and of course because he had been educated at the well established Jesuit George Town University. He had done exceptionally well during his college years, and had ended it with a big bang! He had written a Master's thesis on the significance of Global Citizenship. It had become one of the school's most talked about and prestigious papers.

As a young man Robert had been encouraged to go into government public service. There were certain, well placed, heads of state and administrators who had assured him that he would go far and fast. He had learned quickly in school that to advance in the important social or political arenas you had to be in good standing with a well established Jesuit college or university. And he was.

He had often regretted not going that route of public service. If he had not married Melissa so soon, and if she had not become pregnant so fast, then he might have gone for it. But with a wife and a child on the way he had to make some money. He was in no position to wait for his dreams to come true.

He had never liked his job at JP Ad Agency, although he had been their top salesman for a few years. And so when Tom, unexpectedly, walked into his office one day and offered him three times the pay, great benefits, his own personal secretary, two paid vacations a year and, well, other things that he might desire, he truly believed that God had answered his prayers for a better life.

"We're looking for men like you, Robert," Tom had said. "And all you have to do is what we tell you, and be ready to go wherever we need to send you." In the beginning he had been told that the Corporation, as it was called, needed people who could think fast on their feet. The business transactions would be done by the company ahead of time. All he would have to do is seal the deal, and make sure the digital money had been forwarded back to the Corporation.

They had also done more than just look at his most recent resume, and educational background. They knew everything about him and everything about his former wife and his children. They even knew who the women were that he had dated before he met Melissa. And he was sure they had kept a dossier on the women he had gotten to know, since joining the Corporation.

Robert soon learned that a lot of the business dealings that he had agreed to be a part of were not exactly legal. Digital money was transferred from one company to another through smart phones. And aside from his secretary, who had very little to do, he had never met any of the other employees of the Corporation—that is except for Tom. He had been told it was the way they wanted things done. He frequently made trips to Hong Kong and Singapore and other places in the Orient. And he was never surprised when they wanted him to travel to Mexico and South America. But Pakistan was something new. He had been told by Tom that the military there wanted some information that the Corporation could get for them, concerning certain kinds of new missile production plans.

Robert knew it was big money, and that there would be a healthy bonus for him—if everything went off as planned. He smiled just a little. Perhaps he would be back by the first of the New Year, and then they could plan their get-away to the Bahamas. He was sure Sylvia would understand.

He looked down for a moment at the picture of his son and daughter. The photo had been taken while he was still married to their mother, five years ago, and living at home. He did not like to think about the past. It was over and done with. He had more now than he ever did working for a second rate ad agency. But once he had started to move up in the world his marriage became a problem for him and for Melissa too. In the beginning, as he began to move onto the fast track, he had wanted Melissa to join him. He had asked her a few times to take the kids to her mom's and come with him, but she always said "no."

Her big thing in life was still church on the weekends, meeting the new visiting pastors, or an occasional neighborhood pot-lock dinner. He had out grown their marriage, but he was never sure he really

wanted out of the relationship. In some ways he still loved his sweetheart bride. She had been a good wife to him, and they had shared together good times and bad, and had always been able to work things out.

He knew that since joining the corporation his life aims and goals had changed. He was no longer satisfied with a nice ranch style home in the suburbs. And he wanted to do more exciting things than what the Christian life offered him. He had become intoxicated with the thrilling life he was living. He had even once suggested to Melissa that he wanted her to go with him to a remote island getaway, where they would be free to do whatever they wanted—even swim in the bare! She had mumbled something under her breath about a middle age crisis, and then left the room. But by that time they were arguing almost every evening, at least when he was home. Anything he said to her seemed to hit a wrong note.

He often wondered if he had deliberately or subconsciously forgotten to take the snapshot out of the side compartment of his carry-on luggage that he had left on their bed. It was a picture of him with his arm around a very attractive young blond lady that he had met in the building where he now worked. He was a little surprised at how unsurprised his wife was. The next day he moved out of their home, and two months later they were divorced. He had tried to maintain a friendship relationship with Melissa, but she had made it clear that she was not interested in the man he had become. He knew he had caused her much pain, but he didn't know what to do about it, or how to fix it. So he just didn't think about it anymore.

He had made a point of visiting the kids as often as he could, and occasionally he even went to church with them, but the older they got the less fun the visits became, and he found himself growing less anxious to keep the appointed get together times.

He put the picture back on his desk. It looked appropriate there—as if he had a nice family someplace. He still thought of himself as a Christian, but he really didn't miss going to church. He figured that one day, when he got too old to do the things he wanted, he would ask Jesus back into his life—before he died. Sometimes he had even wondered if the star struck, exciting life—and the many sleepless

nights—he had been living were beginning to lose the thrill that they once had for him. His left eye twitched for a second and he quickly turned away from the desk, and the picture.

Robert brought his favorite Starbucks Mocha latte to his lips. Tom looked at him for a moment, as if to say “real men drink their coffee black.” Robert blinked and smiled as best he knew how.

Tom’s office was more than a notch above Robert’s. It was a very large, plush room in the top of the Babel skyscraper, and included a separate two bedroom suite.

“You can take notes, Robert, but as usual, they must not make any sense to anyone else but you. Day after tomorrow you will board Qatar Airlines, flight 396 to Karachi. When you get there you will be picked up by a man dressed with a baseball hat and blue sweatshirt. He will look more American than Pakistani. He will greet you as if you are old friends. He will then drive you to an urban area, in Karachi, called Zamzama. You will be taken to a very nice apartment, belonging to a Miss Adeela Babar. You need to understand that your stay at her residence will only be for business purposes. She is very definite about this with all the company’s clients. You will have one day to rest before you are scheduled to meet the general. Adeela will drive you to meet him. This general is one of the very top decision makers in the Pakistani military. And don’t forget it! We cannot afford to lose his respect if we ever want to do business in this country again.

“While you are in his office you will give him the coded transistor. All the negotiations have been finalized. You will then leave with Miss Babar. When you are out on the street she will briefly go back to his office, and then she will come back to where you are in a few minutes. When she returns that will be your signal to check your smart phone, and make sure everything has gone through as planned. You will, of course, keep this on you at all times until the moment of transaction.” Tom then handed Robert the secret, coded device.

“After that if you want to see the sights of Pakistan for a few days we have no problem with that. It’s up to you. If you want to come back then call us on the bug and we will arrange an immediate flight. Is this all perfectly clear, Robert?”

Robert sat still for a minute, examining the brief notes he had scribbled down. He looked up at Tom. For some reason the only thought that came into his mind was that Tom was looking a lot older—pale and flabby. “How will I know that I am with the right person? What can you tell me about this Miss Adeela?”

Tom pulled out of a desk draw a picture. He stared at it for a minute—smiling as he raised his eyebrows, and then handed the picture to Robert. As you can see she is very attractive. She lives in apartment number 20, on the third floor, and she will address you by the name Bob.” Tom grinned back at Robert.

“Alrighty...” Robert responded. “I guess our business is finished for this morning.” He took a long last sip of his latte and smiled at Tom. “See you in a few days.”

2 The Disguise

Karachi, Pakistan

Adeela reached down and brushed back from the old lady's face a strand of damp hair. The coughing spasm had stopped for a while, and she was breathing a little easier. The door creaked in back of her and she turned as Zakia, an old and trusted friend, entered the small room.

"Ah, Adeela, you are here again. It is good." The old man smiled broadly. "It has been a hard night for Auntie."

"Zakia." Laila strained her voice so that he could hear her. "You must not encourage Adeela to come here. She is risking much. You know this!"

"No, dear Auntie." Adeela answered for Zakia. "You are too afraid. They will not find out that I am a Christian. They have no reason to be watching me. You have too big a worry, and besides, they need me. The work I do for them is important." For a moment Adeela turned from her old friend's bed and with one hand reached over and thumped with her knuckles at the small hole in the tin wall, where two sets of brown eyes peered through the dingy opening. The Muslim family that lived in the house next to her Auntie had nine children. They did not understand English, but were curious as to what was going on in the old lady's house. Today it bothered Adeela more than usual.

"Perhaps, Laila, I will make you a nice cup of tea?" The older, Christian man came closer to where Adeela stood. "It would be good for you."

"Yes." Laila let out a small moan and then leaned back and relaxed on the thin cotton mattress, held up by a wood frame and criss-crossed with rope netting. "A cup of tea would be nice. But now, Adeela, you must hurry home before it gets dark. You know this is not a safe place for a woman like you."

"All right, Auntie." She reached down and put a few rupees in her friend's hand. "This will last you for the week. Zakia will do the shopping for you, as usual." She reached down and kissed her gray thin face, as she started to drift off into a restless sleep.

Adeela walked quickly down the narrow path from the little tin house, which was just one of many small shanties in the crowded neighborhood. Laila was not really her Auntie, but she had called her that ever since she was a little girl.

Laila had grown up with Adeela's mother in an impoverished area of Karachi. But her mother had been rescued out of it, when an American missionary couple adopted her and saved her from a life of extreme poverty and abuse. When she was twelve years old they took her back to America with them. She stayed there and went to school until she was twenty three years old, and then returned to Pakistan with her new husband, and two years later Adeela was born.

Adeela was used to the compacted masses of people, the permeating dust and the nauseating smells of urine and defecation. Emaciated beggars filled the streets and three-wheel baby taxis and coolies sounded their horns for her attention. As a child, Adeela had come to this part of Karachi with her mother to visit her grandmother and Laila—her mother's very dear friend. Her father had not been comfortable with these visits, but he had not forbid them.

When Adeela's father came back to Pakistan with his wife, it was to work for the United States Diplomatic Missions in Karachi. He was not a Christian, but did not oppose his wife's secret faith. Even though his position at the Missions allowed him to have a wife of any faith, they both felt that it would be better for his job and any children they might have, if she did not register as a Christian. But over the years her father's heart had been won over by how faithful God had been to his wife. Before he died Adeela had led him to the Lord. One day she would see him again in heaven, this she knew.

Her grandparents on her mother's side had been born in Pakistan, but they had both died before Adeela was ten years old. She had, however, lived with her father's parents for a short time while finishing her education in America. Adeela had dual citizenship in both Pakistan and America. She had grown up in a neighborhood not very far from where she currently lived—a modern part of Pakistan, called Zamzama—where designer outlets and cafes now filled the streets, so different from where her Auntie lived.

Adeela waved down a taxi. Before long she would be home. She closed her eyes, as she always did after leaving her Auntie's, and she prayed. She had really wanted her Auntie to leave Sadi Town and come and live with her, but she had always refused. She was sure that Adeela's success would be over in a flash, and even worse than that, if Laila, who was a known Christian, was to move in with her.

Adeela knew that what her old friend said was true, but she had thought that perhaps she could keep her in her home without anyone knowing about it. Her housemaid was a Christian and so that would not be a problem. But with all of her convincing arguments her Auntie had still always said 'no.'

Adeela worked for the Bureau of Political Consulting in Karachi. She was one of their very best personnel mediators. Of course she spoke English perfectly, had graduated from Harvard with a degree in business management and psychology, and had secured a long list of well known people who had given her recommendations. But then Adeela had competed with many well qualified people for the job she now had. She knew the job had been given to her not so much because she was so well qualified, but because she was lovely to look at. This mattered little to her, but much to the powerful men who had hired her.

She put her head back against the seat and closed her eyes again. It would be another hour before she was home. Ever since Laila had become sick with Tuberculosis, Adeela had made the long hour and a half drive to where she lived, at least once a week. She depended on Zakia to call her immediately if her friend grew worse, and now she was afraid that it was only a matter of days. She had prayed for her Christian friend many times, as had other believers, hoping that it was God's plan to heal her. But Laila was an old lady, and it might be God's will to take her home to be with Him. She had earned a good reward. At times she thought about what she would do if God chose to take her Auntie home to heaven. She would not have to return to Sadi Town, but then she knew that Auntie was not the only reason she kept going back there. It was in poor Sadi Town that she had such precious memories of her husband.

It had been a very long and tiring day. She drifted for a few minutes into a rough sleep. In the short dream she saw Danial standing near a stone wall. He was as she remembered him before he died—tall and handsome, with dark, wavy hair and magnetic blue eyes.

“Adeela,” he was saying, “come and let us count the clouds together.” It had been a game they played—making the clouds into angels or funny looking animals. But as soon as she drew near to him, he disappeared. She woke up feeling lonely and despondent. She had so loved her husband. She yearned to once again feel his arms around her, making her feel safe and secure. But that was not possible now, at least not on this earth. One day she would go home to be with Jesus and Danial, and all the other people she loved. But for now she not only had the work that God had given her to finish, but Danial’s legacy as well. Her homecoming would have to wait.

Adeela turned the key to her apartment door. The soft carpet under her feet and the rich shades of gold and brown that decorated her walls and curtains, and her lovely, luxurious, off white furniture made her feel uncomfortable when she thought of the degrading lifestyle her Auntie had been forced to live in during these last ten years. And yet she comforted herself with the knowledge that it was her job and lifestyle that had given her the ability to keep her old friend from being put out on the street with millions of homeless beggars.

Her long haired white Persian cat wrapped herself around Adeela’s legs, purring softly. Adeela reached down and picked up her cat and petted her for a moment. “Oh, Su Su, I am afraid I will not be able to play with you tonight. I must prepare for my meeting with Mr. Bob.” She grinned at the undignified name.

“Rabia,” she called to her maid. “Please come and take Su Su. And then please fix for us a very light dinner.”

Adeela stepped into her large, walk-in closet. In her work at the Bureau the Muslim dress was not needed or wanted. They always required her to dress in modern, business like apparel. But for later that night she would need to wear something attractive for Mr. Bob—but not too girlish. She pulled out a soft, green brocade dress, with a matching sleeveless coat. It was feminine, but not too much so, and it always complemented her slender figure.

She then thumbed through some of her less expensive clothes. For the early 4 am morning church meeting she would wear what she always did. The simple blue skirt and blouse made her look almost like a young student. She would cover her head, and would avoid wearing anything that might make people even mildly suspicious of her real identity as a Christian.

Adeela had received the appropriate information for every client that the general worked with. She would know exactly how to dress, and what type of conversation might be beneficial to engage in. The Bureau had gone to great extremes to know as much as they could about their clients. Even their preference in foods was given to her.

But her primary job was to make the department's visitors feel comfortable, and escort them wherever they needed to go, and then report back to the office if they said anything that could make for a problem. She kept the general well advised on every client. These businessmen often felt free to talk with her about many different things. She never had to worry about inappropriate behavior because they had all been told ahead of time that she was off limits. Only twice, in the years she had worked for the Bureau of Political Consulting, had she been forced to call security. Most of the business men that she dealt with were far more interested in the political and monetary reasons for being in Pakistan than for a pretty face. She had already been told that the incoming client had some very important information for the general. She would be on guard with Mr. Bob.

She shuddered for a moment, remembering her Auntie's words:

"It will not be good for you, Adeela, if they ever find out that you are a Christian."

Adeela had lived two different lives for a long time, and she had never really gotten over the fear of being discovered. She played the role of a very wise, discerning, and attractive employee for the Bureau of Political Consulting, while being very careful to keep her life as a committed Christian a secret. Her access to security information, in the job she worked at, gave her beneficial knowledge about the police activity concerning the Christian community. Many times she had been able to use this secret information to help prevent grave and even

deadly situations. It was important work for the Lord, and she took it very seriously.

To be a Christian in Pakistan was often a very dangerous and life threatening thing. Adeela knew this well. Not only had her dear husband, Danial, been imprisoned and then murdered for his faith, but thousands of Christians, especially under the new blasphemy law, were persecuted, imprisoned, or murdered because of their faith.

Every year hundreds of young Christian girls were abducted from their homes. They were raped, and then forced into marriage and conversion. The government authorities rarely took any kind of action, and the girls were never allowed to go back to their family or home, especially if they had become pregnant. Rape had become a common weapon of persecution against these young girls.

Adeela had known some of these Christian families who had lost their young daughters, and she had prayed and wept with them.

For a brief moment she thought about what her life would have been like if Danial had not been killed. She removed her Bible from under her pillow and took out the small picture of the only man she had ever loved. Her life as his secret wife had been so very short.

She held the snapshot close to her heart. He had been so handsome, and so pure in heart. It was Danial who had truly brought her to know and love her Lord and Savior, and he had encouraged her so many times, in her walk of faith. She did not know then how dangerous her faith journey would become and how it would impact every moment of her life. She put the picture back in the Bible, and returned it to its place under her pillow. And then she stepped into the fragrant, lavender bath water that had been prepared for her.

3 A Family Affair

Robert ruffled the top of Sammie's head—in an awkward attempt at showing affection. It had been a month since he had last visited his two children, and their response to him was not very loving or even friendly. He sighed when Sam remained quite after his attempt to break the ice.

“So tell me, Sam, what's new in school? I presume that what I am paying, for you to have this better education, means you are learning some valuable things.” He smiled with a little bit more authority, since the loving dad routine did not seem to be working.

“Well, we have a really good sex education program.” Sam looked down and giggled a little.

“I do think it's profitable to know about human sexuality.” Robert coughed, releasing a glitch in his throat. “And Cindy, what about you? How do you like your new school?”

“I enjoy the way mom teaches us, a lot more than going to that horrible school.”

Robert gulped. “What are you talking about? What do you mean? Mom is teaching you school? Why wasn't I told about this?”

“You hardly ever come here anymore, dad,” Sam said.

“They got really upset once when I said a simple thank you prayer over my morning snack,” Cindy responded. “And then they called Mom and told her that we couldn't be in their school if we ever mentioned the name of Jesus again.”

“They said that?”

“Yes. So Mom took us out of their stupid school, saving you a lot of money. Besides, she is teaching us a lot more than what we were learning there. And it's more Christian.”

Robert stood up from the bench that they were sitting on in the yard. “Perhaps, the school over-reacted a bit, but what kind of an educational resume are you going to have with Mom teaching you school? The whole idea is ridiculous. I am going to have to talk with your mother before I leave. When will she be home?”

“She went to pick Jody up.”

“Who is Jody?” Robert asked.

“She's a Jew,” Sam answered.

Robert stared blankly at his two children. Why was it so hard to just come and visit his kids. These things made him feel disturbed.

“So why is your mother picking up this woman, named Jody, who is a Jew? The government has listed Jews as possible terrorists—especially with what’s going on in Israel. Doesn’t she know this?”

“Jody’s a nice lady, dad. She’s friends with a Rabbi mom knows, and she needs a place to stay for a while. She is trying to get back to Israel.”

Robert’s left eye started blinking very fast. He felt like things were getting out of control. Melissa is friends, he thought, with a Rabbi?

“And this woman is staying here, at our home?”

“For awhile—I guess? But it’s not really your home anymore.” Cindy looked up at her dad—her round blue eyes showing no emotion.

Robert felt the stab, but said nothing. Sam turned away and ran through the back door of the patio, as he heard his mother drive up. He was obviously, Robert thought, wanting to warn her that dad was here. He looked through the living room window as the two women walked into the kitchen. His former wife was looking very pretty and chic, in a short red coat with a fur ruff, and trim fitting jeans. He kept his eyes on her for a minute. The woman that was with Melissa was about her age, and was also attractive, with dark, curly hair. She looked Jewish.

Melissa opened the patio door and walked out to greet him.

“Robert, I thought you had left the country? You didn’t tell me you were coming over.”

“Melissa, we seriously need to talk about some things.” He did not offer her the usual congenial smile. He was very up-set at the way she was handling their children’s lives, and he wanted her to know it from the beginning.

“I see they told you that I was homeschooling them?”

“Yes, they did. I can’t believe, Melissa, that you would do something like this without consulting me. The court gave us equal parental rights. I agreed for the kids to live with you. I understand that they need to be with you, and that with all the traveling I do it would be hard for them to live with me. But that does not mean I gave up

my right to be informed about important parental decisions. You just can't fly off the handle and do whatever you want, Melissa. And who is this woman that is staying in the house with you and my children?"

Melissa took a deep breath. The sigh was audible. "I tried to get hold of you Robert, but your dingy secretary just kept telling me that she would tell you that I called. I guess I don't rate high enough to call you on that secret James Bond coded thing you've got. Although I am sure your girlfriend has no such problem."

"How do you know about her?"

"Sam saw her the last time you took the kids out to eat. He said it was pretty funny the way you tried to make it look like you didn't know her." Melissa's lip curled into a tight smile.

Robert remembered that day. He really didn't think the kids had noticed his communication with Sylvia. He did not like hearing this.

"I took them out, Robert, because they were teaching our children terrible things in that school. Filth! When Sam told me what they were teaching them in Sex education I could hardly believe my ears. Robert, we are not talking about the birds and the bees, but explicit sexual acts and for gay sex too. I would like to believe, although I am not so sure anymore, that you would have done the same thing that I did. I will continue to home school them until I can find out if there are still any Christian schools available, but that might mean having to go with underground schooling.

"Do you have any idea, Robert, how evil it's gotten in this country for true Bible Christians, and for Jewish people too? It's like a runaway freight train coming down the tracks, and no one knows what to do, except to pray and believe for God's mercy."

"Do you know that Christian congregations that are not approved by the World Council of Religious Affairs are banned from coming together, and they now have to meet secretly?"

Robert grunted slightly and cleared his throat. "Well, I don't know about all of that, but the school that Sam and Cindy attended had an excellent rating and was highly preparatory for a good university." Robert tried to get back the edge. He could not afford to let Melissa win this argument. "So maybe one teacher over reacted, but that's no reason to go off the deep end. You are still living in the past, Melissa, and I imagine still going to Mac's boring church."

“No. Mac was forced to resign as our pastor, because he would not participate in a gay marriage. We still meet together as a group, but not openly. I can see, Robert, you are really out of touch with current reality. I guess living in that high fluting penthouse and your big corporation job, with all its benefits,” she tried not to glare, “has really blinded you.”

“Melissa! I am very concerned about your state of mind. You just can’t go around talking this crazy kind of Christian talk anymore. Religion has its proper place, but you are going over-board. The church is now moving into a one world family of religion; where we will finally have peace, and we can all worship together. And I am sure this will please God.” Robert cleared his throat, and offered a small, sympathetic smile.

“And do you know who is going to head this great world religion, Robert?”

“Oh, I don’t know....probably the new pope, or someone like that. He’s very charismatic, and seems genuine. But right now that’s not what is important. You know, Melissa, they have the power to take children away from parents that are not stable. My position with the corporation has probably kept that from happening. And what’s with this woman—this Jew that you have taken in?”

“She is a lovely lady, Robert—very well educated and a strong Messianic believer.”

“A what?”

“She is a Jew who has accepted Jesus as her Lord and Messiah. She is trying to get the right kind of papers that will help her to get to Israel, where some of her family lives. She needs a place to stay for a while. Rabbi Rosenberg told me about her, and after I met her, I said ‘sure.’” It’s not safe for her anymore in the neighborhood where she was living.”

“Rabbi Rosenberg? And where did you meet him?”

“That’s none of your business, Robert. I don’t have to screen all my friends through you.”

“No, you don’t. But my children are my business. I have a lot I have to do right now, Melissa. I have to get prepared for a very important business transaction, and I fly out of here to Pakistan in the morning. I don’t have time to deal with this now, but I will be back

in a few days, and then we will sit down and talk about this some more.

“I don’t want to have to bring the Court in on this. So start thinking now on how we can make changes that will be agreeable to both of us. Wow! I really didn’t need this right now.” Robert looked at his wife, and for just a brief second he wanted to hold her and kiss her good by, like he always used to do, but that moment passed.

The next morning Robert McLaren was on an airplane headed for Pakistan. He sipped on the latte that the stewardess had just brought him. It was not that good, but he needed it. The stew had also given him a short shot of whisky that he had poured into the coffee drink.

All the traveling had begun to wear on him, but it was part and parcel with the life he now lived. He planned on having a second drink before too long. He was hoping to avoid focusing on Melissa and the argument they had concerning Sam and Cindy. He settled into his wide, spacious, first class seat, and closed his eyes. He wanted to sleep, but his mind began to wander, and he started to worry about how things might go for him in Pakistan. He had read up on some of the country’s culture before leaving. It did not seem like the kind of place that he wanted to visit—even on a business trip. But he had been assured that he would be well taken care of, and would be out of there in just a couple of days.

His thoughts flittered to Sylvia and a warm, sunny, island get away. He needed a break. The last time he had tried to get away a bizarre spring snow storm had canceled all out-going flights. So he had gone home and watched some old movies...what a wasted week that was. He should have just gone back to work.

The weather was becoming a concern for everyone—all do, of course, to global warming. But some of the world leaders were finally getting serious on strategies to reduce pollution. As soon as the nation-communities were forced into compliance with stricter environmental codes, and heavy penalties for carbon emissions, then perhaps the people who truly understood this dilemma might still be able to bring the weather patterns back to normal. He remembered, for a moment, something Melissa had said about all the chaos being God’s hand of judgment on a wicked world. He snickered.

He couldn't remember her being so serious about God when they were first married. He wondered if their divorce had caused her to go off the deep end.

He pulled out of his briefcase the notes he had written on what he would be doing and the people he would encounter in Pakistan. He did not think there would be any surprises. At least he hoped not. His intentions were to go there and complete his business as quickly as he could. The young brunette flight attendant caught his eye. She was a little plump, but buxom and very pretty. He caught her attention and motioned for another drink. Since sleep was not coming, he picked up the business magazine that he had taken from the stew, and then enjoyed the slow drizzle of another Tennessee whiskey as it slid down his throat.

4 With God's Help

Hasan woke up from his dream. He was crying, as the icy tentacles of fear reached out to him, and once again tried to steal his sleep. "Yesu." He cried out to His God. "Help me." He felt his wife's small, tender hand soothing his forehead. "Hasan," she said, "I am here. Everything is okay. Go back to sleep. Soon it will be time to go."

But Hasan could not go back to sleep. He got up and walked to the door of their small, impoverished, one-room house, that he and his wife Sena and their two young boys had made into a home.

He opened the door and quickly looked outside. He listened to the night sounds and looked for any suspicious movements that were out of the ordinary. His neighbors were beginning to stir. A few of them would also be getting up, and preparing to ride their bicycles to the early church meeting on the outskirts of Karachi. It was the church they had belonged to before they moved. The small church that the Christian community had put up in the compound, where they now lived, had been burned down by a group of angry, raging Muslims, and the people had been afraid to rebuild it. But going to church was the most important part of their week. It was where they heard the Word of God, and it was where they prayed for others and were prayed for.

It was a frosty, cold morning. There was still some time before he would wake up his sons and gently awaken his wife. He covered his youngest son, Jabbar, with a small, thin blanket. He reached out and touched his plump little hand, and then he prayed, as he always did for his family's safety.

Soon they would leave the enclosed Christian compound for the world outside that so hated them for who they were. For a moment he looked over at his wife as she lay curled up, small and delicate, almost like a child. It was only by looking at his wife that he could remember the face of his beautiful, fourteen year old daughter, Madeeha. He had no pictures of her. How he now regretted that he had not been able to save enough money for a camera, by which he could have taken many family pictures. But feeding his children had always come first and that, in itself, was always a major struggle.

It had been two years since her murder, but his heart still wept every day for her. His only joy was when he remembered that she was safe with Yesu, and that one day they would be together again.

He remembered clearly that horrible day. They had all planned on going to bed early that night. The next day they would make a long trip to a town north of Karachi. There Hasan would put up his pushcart on the long beach, with hundreds of others, hoping to sell his wares. His wife's beautiful, patchwork quilts with their bold colors were his best selling items. He also would sell his vegetables, and some of his carvings. He would often stay awake, late into the night, to carve with detail an Indian prince or another aspect of the Pakistan culture. But there were many men selling their items, and it was only by the mercy of God that he could sell his things at all. And then, for a short time, he would have enough money to feed his family. He also had to be very careful that the Muslims around him would not get jealous or vindictive if he did sell something. To most Muslims the Christians were worse than dogs, and they called them 'chura,' which expressed their derogatory feelings towards them.

That night Sena had pulled the small swatch of black cloth over the hole in their door, as they were prepared for bed. That's when they first heard the sound of a motorcycle not far from their hut, and then a few minutes later someone knocked on their door. Hasan had not wanted to open the door. He knew it could be dangerous, but if he did not, they would have no problem in shoving the door down. He prayed before he opened the door. Two Muslim men in black vests and typical, baggy, Pakistani pants stood waiting for someone to open the door. At first they had asked Hasan if he could come and help them push one of the motorcycles out of a muddy pit. But during the time they talked they were carefully observing all that Hasan had in his small home.

They both smirked when they saw Hasan's beautiful daughter, Madeeha, standing in the corner of the house. Then they pushed past Hasan and his wife and grabbed their young daughter, dragging her out of the room, as she screamed and yelled. Hasan, who was not a big man, instinctively leaped on one of the assailants, beating him

with his fists. His wife had grabbed a large, wooden spoon and had begun to attack them and beat them on their heads and backs. One of them pulled out a dangerous looking knife. “Now, he had said, “you will stop and you will turn your backs or we will kill you all. It will be easy for us to kill you dogs.”

Hasan looked at the small faces of his little boys, knowing they would kill them. Their daughter had stopped screaming and had submitted to the kidnapping. As they dragged her out the door way the neighbors quickly rushed back into their homes. There was nothing they could or would do. To insult or attack a Muslim would bring great retribution on the whole village. Hasan had peered out the small window hole in his doorway and had watched as they disappeared with his daughter beyond the village wall.

Grief stricken he had used his neighbor’s phone to call the police, but no one would come. It was only a Christian family. They deserved whatever happened to them. One week later Madeeha’s body was dumped outside the wall of the village. She had refused to convert to Islam. They had beaten her and raped her, and then they had slit her throat and had dumped her at the entrance to Hasan’s village.

Two weeks later Hasan moved his family to a larger Christian community, ten miles away, where there would be more protection.

“It’s time,” Sena whispered to her husband, while he stood in the door way. Hasan turned and kissed his wife’s lovely cheek. “Yes,” he said. “We must hurry. We only have time to give the boys a little rice.” They moved quickly at what had now become a well rehearsed routine for preparing to go to church early in the morning. After they finished a small bowl of rice, Sena put warm coats on her sons. They were too big for the boys, but they were still grateful to have them.

With a son on each bicycle, Hasan and his wife Sena followed three others, as they road into the early morning darkness and down the hard, bumpy path that would take them to Debiji and to their Christian church and fellowship.

5 The Church Meeting

Hasan and his wife had stopped on the outskirts of Debiji, and parked their bicycles under a tree in back of Fazil's small farm. They covered them with a long branch, hoping they would not be seen, and then taking the boys by their hands they began to walk the one mile trek to the city of Debiji for their small home church meeting. The half moon could still be seen, and except for the twinkling lights that were beginning to come on in the approaching town, the frosty, clear sky was still dark. It would be another two and half hours before the sun began to rise over the hills. By that time they would be on their way back home. Hasan had gone over in his head many times what he would say if for any reason they were stopped by the police. They were simply going to visit their sick father in Debiji, and then would return home. If they found out he was a Christian they would beat him, but he prayed they would not hurt his wife and children. The Taliban were even worse. It was always a risk to make the trip, but it was a cost that they considered small, when compared to what Yesu had done for them on the cross. And he knew that sometimes God used the very bad experiences that his people suffered to save the heathen.

Hasan remembered the words his father had spoken to him many times. "This is not our home, Hasan, we are just traveling through. Our greater home with Yesu, is what we must always keep our eyes on." And then with a misshapen jaw, from never having been set properly after it was broken, and a mouth minus many teeth, he would smile at his youngest son and give him a hug. They came one day and took his father to prison. He died there—a toothless old man with a big smile.

His mother had also been taken to prison for sharing the Gospel and for blasphemy against the Muslim god. But she did not last long in the cold, dark pit where they put her. Yesu came and took her home. Hasan always smiled when he thought of his parents and his daughter, and even though there was pain in his heart, he was happy that they were now home!

There were four benches in the small, dimly lit room. Hasan and Sena nodded their heads to some of the people they knew. A tiny, inadequate, wood burning stove, that did not work well, sat in the corner of the room providing a little heat. Fluttering puffs of gray smoke rolled up and out of the chimney, welcoming the cold, weary, faithful flock.

Hasan nodded his head and smiled at the two women on the back bench. One of them he knew had a very influential job and was able to provide the Christian leaders with valuable information. She was also quite pretty. He had been told that she had been married for only a short time. Her name was Adeela Babar, a Punjabi tribal name.

Hasan had noticed that Adeela very seldom spoke at any of the meetings, but the woman who sat next to her, Rabia, would often times share a Bible scripture that she had memorized. It was rare for Christians in this part of Karachi to have their own Bibles. But Adeela had spent her own money to make sure that all of the members of her congregation had access to Bibles. She also provided the funds, in the cold months, for a large kettle of hot tea for everyone. Adeela was greatly appreciated.

A man came to the front of the room. He was in his late forties. He spoke with an accent that identified him as being from the northern part of the country. He brushed back from his face a strand of dark hair. He looked up from his feet and smiled at his Christian family who were seated in front of him. The congregation greeted him, and all nodded their heads in approval. His name was Omar Bahati. He was considered young to be a leader of great influence, but he had, nonetheless, suffered to be a pastor in Pakistan. He had spent five years in jail for the crime of blasphemy, and was well respected by his small flock of faithful ones.

“Khush aamdid...welcome! my brothers and sisters. We thank our good and faithful God that you were able to make it here once again in safety.” A few whispers of “thank you” floated around the room. He took out from under the wood podium where he stood a small, black Bible. “Awe...” He held it close to his heart for a moment.

“We will read from the Word of God and then we will pray. Please listen carefully as I read from the book of Timothy. ‘Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith.’ ”

Everyone leaned forward, so as not to miss a word of what was being spoken. Some awes and a few sighs were uttered, as some of the faithful tried to comprehend what had just come forth from the Pastor’s mouth. He continued. “Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils—speaking lies with hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”

“Ohhh,” a wail and then a groan came from one of the members of the congregation. “What does this mean?” he timidly asked.

“Do not be frightened, little flock.” The Pastor’s voice was low and gentle. “We are given here a word of exhortation. This means we must be awake to the evil doings not only in the world, but also as it has come into the Church. I am afraid that there are some in the House of God, even in the neighboring communities, who have departed from sound doctrine, and have followed the devilish fox into the woods. They fear being persecuted for their faith, and have joined with those who attack the faithful. But we must pray for those who have gone astray—and hope that they might come back and be able to repent.”

In the small room sounds of agreement floated across the cool, brisk air. They then began to sing a hymn. They sang a song of persecution and then a song of hiddenness. Then Rabia, Adeela’s maid in her other life, began to sing from a deep place of both pain and joy.

“I have gone to prepare a place for you, my bothers and sisters, but soon I will come for you. Be brave my little flock...”

The Pastor spoke into her song, “This world is not our home...”

Adeela looked up for a moment with a faint Madonna smile on her lips. As a woman of God, especially an attractive woman, she was not to meet the eyes of her Pastor or the other men in her congregation. This, of course, was not the life she lived in the business world.

She smiled as she remembered the scripture Rabia had so passionately put into a song, was one of Danial’s favorite verses from the Bible.

Even though Adeela had been raised by a Christian mother, she had not truly come to know the Lord until God had brought Danial into her life. As a teenager, and then a young adult, Adeela was more interested in using her gifting in finances, and her sharp mind for learning new things, than she was in deeper spiritual understandings.

When she was eighteen years old her parents had agreed with her father's family to let Adeela go to America to attend college. Because of her excellent SAT scores she had her choice of any of the finer universities on the east coast. Her grandparents lived in Connecticut, and her grandfather was a reknown college instructor in Asian history at a small college. And so Harvard became her first consideration.

It was there that she met and fell in love with her Danial. He too had been given a scholarship to finish a degree in business, and would then move on to study more on the higher graduate levels. At first they were drawn to each other because they were both from Pakistan and were able to help each other in their studies and in understanding the American culture. But it was not long before they came to know each other in a romantic and much deeper way.

Danial had grown up in a Muslim family, but he felt no connection to any particular faith, and like many of the bright, young intellects of his time, he considered religion to be a crutch for those who needed it. But when he understood that this religion was somewhat important to Adeela he had no problem in leaving the Muslim religion to become a Christian.

It was not only because of his love for Adeela, but also because it was more socially acceptable in America to attend a Christian church, of one denomination or another. They were both hoping to stay permanently in America, and these kinds of connections to a religion could prove to be helpful. They had both applied for citizenship. But in his second year of college, Danial was taken captive by a force stronger than his intellect.

One night he had been watching on TV as the military in Pakistan were brutally and violently plowing over and gunning down a group of common people and protesters. On that night, as he cried out for the people of his country, the Lord answered him in a most spectacular way. In the middle of the night Jesus came into his

dreams. He was alive and vibrant. He was filled with life, and when Jesus looked into his eyes Danial was undone. His life was changed forever, and so were all of his future plans.

When Danial left Harvard to return to Pakistan, Adeela wanted to follow him then, but her parents had insisted that she finish her last year of college.

Danial did not return to Pakistan as a young man who would enter into the field of business and become prosperous. He was now a registered Christian. He would work a menial job in a poor area. He would pastor and teach, and whenever he could he would distribute Bibles to the poor people of his country.

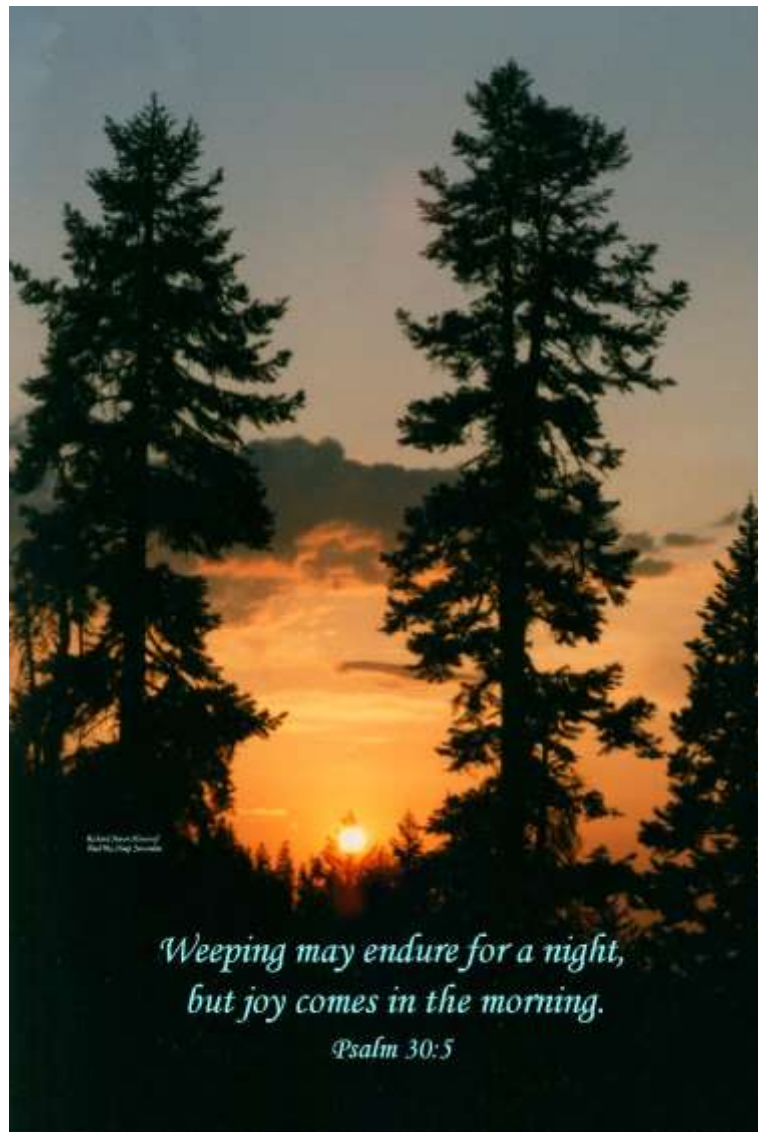
Adeela finished her studies in time to be at her father's bedside before he died. And one year later after her father passed away, her mother gave up on life and succumbed to sickness and disease.

Danial and Adeela arranged to be secretly married in a small home on the outskirts of Sadi Town, by a Christian pastor and friend of Danial's. For the time being Adeela's identity as a Christian would have to be kept secret. Adeela and Danial both understood the importance of her work at the Bureau of Political Consulting. It was a sacrifice that God had asked of them, and they had both said 'yes' to their King and Savior, but they had been assured by the Lord himself that a day would come when they would no longer be separated.

"And now," Pastor Omar broke into Adeela's thoughts, "we must pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters who have recently had their church burned and destroyed, and some have been taken to prison. They have been betrayed. We must pray for their faith to not grow weak, and that they will stand strong for Yesu. And we must not forget the persecution of our brothers and sisters in all the nations where they are standing up for the name of our Saving God, Yesu, the Christ."

After the final prayer was prayed Hasan took hold of his wife's hand, and then quickly ushered his young sons from the hidden church. The sun had not yet risen, but it would not be long before its rays would shine down upon the brown and barren hills, and deny them any secrecy. Hasan looked up at the sky as they walked on the path back to where he had hidden their bikes. The coming day felt like

it might bring clouds and a cold rain. This would be good. There would be fewer people to be seen by. They walked faster, hoping to beat the encroaching sun before it broke over the horizon.



*Weeping may endure for a night,
but joy comes in the morning.*

Psalms 30:5

6 Lasting Hope

Hasan stopped! He took hold of his wife's hand and scooted his two young sons behind a tall tree. "Be very quiet," he whispered to his sons. Sena crouched down next to her husband. On the other side of the path two black uniformed police were walking towards them. The tree with its wide trunk and the tall grass covered them. Hasan prayed fervently and quietly that the police had not seen his family before they hid from them. "Momma," Asad whispered, "I am going to sneeze."

Quickly, Sena put her hand over her son's mouth, and held it there till the security police had passed by. She removed her hand and looked at her son, to make sure he was okay. He smiled and lowered his head. "I am sorry, Momma...but I couldn't help it."

Hasan put his arm around his oldest son. "It's okay, Asad. But now we must go from here and walk very fast till we get to the bikes." Do you understand?"

"Yes, Papa," they both responded at the same time.

By the time they came close to the farm, where their bikes were hidden, the sun was already beginning to cast its light upon the path in front of them. They had no choice but to pray and hope that they would reach their home safely.

Hasan felt uneasy as they drew closer to the farm. Something did not feel right. He put out his arm and stopped his boys from going any further. He made a whispered hushing sound. His eyes darted to the left and the right.

A deep man's voice came from behind him and made him jump. He turned to face three strong looking Taliban, dressed in long black tunics and loose pants. They wore the traditional black and white headscarves around their heads, partially covering their faces. The largest man swung at Hasan with the butt end of his rifle, hitting him on the side of his head, causing a deep gouge and bringing forth spurts of bright red blood. Hasan fell to his knees. Sena groaned and fell at her husband's side. The little boys cried out in fear.

“Shut up,” the attacker yelled at the family, “or you will all die. You filthy dogs; we know what you are. So you think that we will believe your lies—that you are out for a nice walk, so early in the morning?”

“Tell us who your pastor is or we will kill you now.”

Hasan could see on the man’s face a long, black scar that went all the way down his cheek. His eyes were inflamed with hatred and evil. Hasan could not look at him. He wondered if he had been betrayed.

“Am I to die?” He whispered to himself.

The attacker grabbed Hasan’s wife by the back of her neck, pulling her up to her feet. He examined her face and body. “We will take her with us. She will make a good wife for the Taliban.” He grabbed her long hair and pulled her small face close to his. “Yes,” he yelled—maybe for me?”

“Momma!” Jabbar cried out, reaching up to his mother with his small hand.

“Shut up—you son of an illegitimate...” He kicked the boy in the legs, causing him to fall on his face. Jabbar wept.

The man kicked at Hasan. “So now, you Christian dog, you will tell us or we will kill you, and your family will soon beg us to kill them.” He laughed a sinister laugh.

“No, Hasan...do not betray our brother.”

The attacker slapped Sena hard across the mouth. She fell to the ground, covering her face.

Hasan cried into the earth. “Merciful, Yesu.”

“What do you cry out, heathen?” The Taliban terrorist smirked.

Sena lifted her face from the dirt—looking over at her husband and her children. “Dear God,” she whispered, “please help us.”

“What is going on out here?” A large man with his two adult sons came out of the Farm house next to the grove of trees. “What are you doing?”

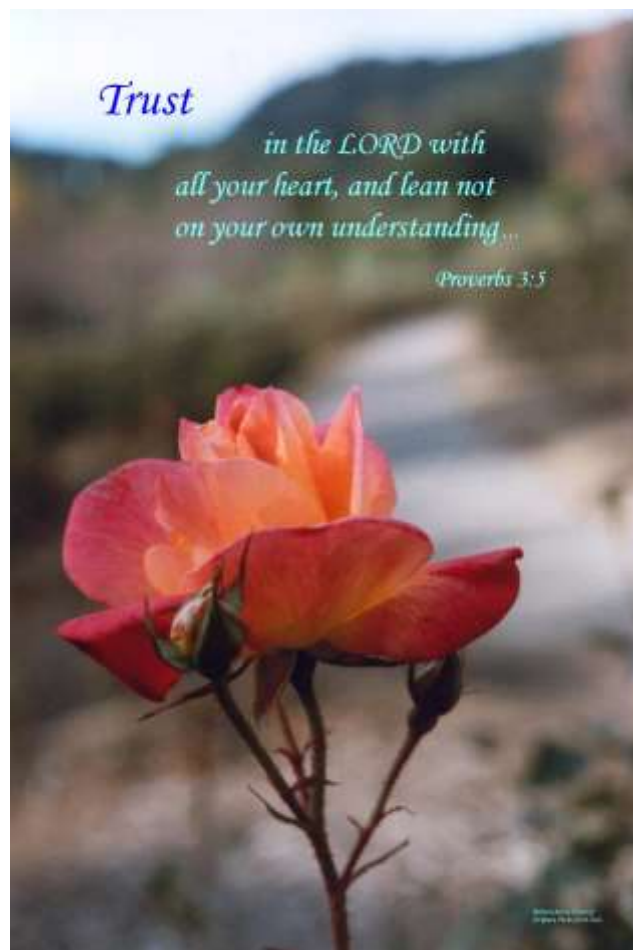
“They are blasphemous dogs. We have a right to kill them if we want.”

“Not here! You will not kill them on my property. My land will not be contaminated by their blood. Now, go or I will call the police.”

“The police will do nothing.” The attacker sneered and then doubled up his knuckles and hit Hasan in the face. They laughed, and then they turned and left. “Another time, and we will kill you.”

Sena helped her husband into their small house. She had torn off part of her skirt and had tied it around his head to stop the bleeding. Jabbar and Asad had not stopped crying till they were safely home. Jabbar was ashamed that he had wet his pants. The tired, shocked and frightened family rushed into their home and locked the door behind them. Some of their neighbors who had seen them coming down the path had immediately come over to offer them help.

“God is merciful, my children.” Hasan smiled at his wife and family. Your father is still alive and we are together. Once again, Yesu has been very good to us.”



7 Robert meets Adeela

Robert had been waiting for over an hour at the Jinnah International airport in Karachi, Pakistan, and no one in a baseball cap and sweat-shirt had showed up. His body was fighting jet-leg, and he was getting cranky. The plane had been held up in Hawaii and arrived in Karachi twelve hours later than planned. The hot, spicy food on the airplane had not been good for his digestion. He presumed it was the typical food fare in Pakistan. He remembered reading something about the food being hot and heavily spicy with curry.

Dozens of business men and women, and stressed, tired looking tourists, passed by, where he had found a place to sit. He wondered what he would do if no one showed up? He could always call on the bug, but he didn't want to have to deal with Tom. He would wait for a while and see what happened. A very strong, sweet smelling cologne oozed off the man sitting next to him, making Robert feel a little nauseated. He had just closed his eyes when he heard a voice speak to him.

"Mr. Bob?" The voice was high strung and artificial sounding. "I am so sorry to be late. There was a bad traffic accident." He laughed smugly, shaking his head, "Just my luck—huh? But come! I will soon have you at Miss Adeela's apartment. Ahhh," he smacked his lips, and rolled his eyes a little, "A lovely lady."

Robert looked up at the man who had come to fetch him. Tom was right. He looked more American than Pakistani. Robert did not respond to this baseball cap man's attempt at being American. He just wanted to get out of this crazy, maniac airport, and go someplace where he could have a drink and rest. He muttered a quiet prayer to someone, that the baseball cap man would not continue to talk as he drove.

The baseball cap man, who called himself Tex, wheeled Roberts's suitcase behind him. Robert held on to his briefcase, as they got into a rather small, black car. He was too tired to even notice what kind of car it was, nor did he care. As they proceeded onto the highway, the congested, dizzying traffic was almost too much for Robert's senses.

They had gone less than a mile when they came to a dead stop in

the middle of a terrible traffic snare. Dozens of taxis and mini buses honked their horns and yelled out the windows at each other.

“On your left,” Tex spoke like a tour director, “is the Lyari River. I guess you are wondering where I got my name?”

“No,” Robert said. He looked at the stream of yellow-green river that flowed next to the traffic. The smell was putrid and strong. Oh, God! He wished he was home.

“Well, of course, that’s not my Pakistani name, but it’s much more fun to use the name Tex!” He laughed at himself.

Robert was beginning to wonder if anyone had ever checked this guy out. He was getting mildly worried about his mental faculties.

“How long a drive is it to Adeela Babar’s?” He tried not to sound too stressed.

“Well, as you can see, it’s not the drive as much as the traffic. Just sit back and relax, Bob. I’ll get you there as fast as I can. So, you’re from America, Bob? I lived there for a few years. I guess you can tell by how good my English is.” He giggled a small sound. “Great place, America. I love to talk about it.”

Robert closed his eyes, hoping that Tex would think he was asleep. He glanced out the window for a second, as they drove by what looked like a large shopping mall. Twenty-five million people in Karachi, that’s what he had read; a city of great political intrigue and turmoil. He closed his eyes again. He wondered what his chances were of finding a Starbucks latte here.

Adeela walked behind Rabia, as they entered into the garden area, before they climbed the steps to her apartment. The early morning light was just beginning to cast a golden glow over the hills behind her apartment building. She presumed that Mr. Bob’s flight had been delayed for many hours since he had not arrived the night before. It was not unusual for this to happen with the department’s clients. She was hoping that she might be able to catch a short nap before she had to leave for work, and that he would not show up as soon as she got home.

She knew that Nasir would keep him occupied until she was safely home from the church meeting. Nasir, as a strong Christian brother, had helped her so many times—sometimes out of very difficult situations. She also knew that his heart was tender towards her, but she was not sure about her feelings for him. Danial still filled so much of her heart.

“Thank you, my dear sister.” Adeela looked around to make sure no one was there and then lightly hugged Rabia before unlocking the door to her apartment. It would be highly inappropriate for a dignified business woman, like Adeela, to show affection to a servant, and it could make for serious suspicion. “Your song, dear Rabia, was so very lovely and tender, and it so reminded me of my dear Danial.”

Rabia smiled at her good friend. They both understood their roles outside of their Christian lives, and Rabia was very grateful to have Adeela as both a friend and her employer. “I will lay out your clothes, and hopefully we will not be intruded upon for a while.”

Zakia held the old woman’s hand as she turned her head to the pillow and coughed up bloody looking sputum. The spasm continued for a few seconds. Zakia could see that her life was quickly leaving her body. Her skin was gray and thin, and her once beautiful eyes were now sunken into her head, and large, dark circles lay under them. But Zakia remembered his Laila when she had been a most beautiful woman.

Laila had grown up, like Zakia, in a very poor neighborhood of Karachi. Her father and mother, like Zakia’s parents, had been registered Christians. Laila’s father had eked out a living as a street cleaner—draining the open sewers out of the town into a large pit, and killing as many rats as he could every day.

They had nothing, in means of physical support, except to survive from one day to the next. But Laila’s father had shared the love of Jesus Christ with Zakia’s family—even though he knew it would mean imprisonment if Ali, Zakia’s father, had said anything to the wrong people about Laila’s father’s impassioned words that he spoke

from the Bible to them. But God had moved on his father's heart that night, and he had given his life to Yesu—Jesus. He and his whole family were soon baptized and received gladly their new lives as Christians—even though they knew it would mean persecution.

As a teenager Zakia had a very strong crush on Laila. She was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. He often thought that she must have come from the line of an Indian princess, with her silky, long black hair, perfect shaped face and large soft eyes. He had even told Abia Babar, Adeela's mother—who would often come from a better neighborhood in Karachi to visit her friend, Laila—that he wanted to marry Laila. But eventually Laila made it clear to Zakia that she was not interested in his love pursuit. She had her eyes on a very handsome young Christian man, who had inherited his father's farm, and did not have to struggle in the sewers of Pakistan to survive.

Eventually Laila did marry the man of her dreams, and Zakia also settled down with a good woman, and they had a large family.

After Laila's husband was killed by a raging mob of angry Muslims she began to direct her Christian life into the field of female education for the poor women of Pakistan. She became well known for her work. And even though she was a Christian the government of Pakistan had acknowledged her work as honorable.

Zakia and Laila remained friends, as did their families. But now their children were gone, and both of their marriage partners had gone to be with the Lord. They had both lived a long life and had shared the love of their God and Savior with many people.

Zakia lowered his head so that he could hear the soft whisper of his dying friend. Her eyes were alight with the glory of the Lord.

"Zakia, my good friend, tell Adeela that I go to be with Yesu. He is calling me. I leave you now, but soon we will be together again." Then she let go of her old friend's hand and closed her eyes.

Zakia sat quietly and wept over the thin body of his friend, Laila.

8 An Evening in Karachi

Tom was right. Adeela Babar was a very attractive woman. He scarcely remembered arriving at her apartment in the morning hours. But he had forced himself to get up in the afternoon, so that the jet lag would not get out of hand. Rabia, Adeela's maid, had escorted him to an enclosed veranda where Adeela was sitting.

The sun sprinkled down upon the trees in her back yard, and had cast a lovely, warm glow inside the glass veranda. Outside it looked much like an extended park. It was very lovely, with a small, very tropical looking pond.

Adeela was dressed casually, in black suede pants and a soft cashmere sweater. Her hair was pulled back in a smooth French knot on the back of her neck. She looked very pretty, but also dignified. She stood up from the comfortable white lounge chair to shake Robert's hand.

"Hello, Mr. Bob. I am so pleased to meet you. I am sorry that you were held up so long with a delayed flight. I hope you have rested comfortably."

"Yes." I did. Thank you." Her eyes seemed to be filled with mystery. He had a hard time looking away from her.

"I thought later this afternoon I would take you to a nice Pakistani restaurant. If you think you will be up to it? Do you like spicy food, Mr. Bob?"

"Sure." It was not hard to lie over the food thing. "Oh, by the way, I really do not go by the name Bob—not sure why the company made that mistake. My name is Robert, and I prefer to be called by my real name, Robert McLaren."

Adeela was already beginning to like this man more than she thought she would. "I will remember that." She smiled nicely.

"Actually, I feel fine, and your dinner idea sounds lovely." He smiled back at her.

Adeela parked her car in a small, private lot, not too far from where they would be walking. Robert watched as she waved at the attendant, not having to show him her ID that qualified her to park in such a privileged space. Robert was fighting waves of jet lag, but he found

that being with Adeela was an exhilarating experience. The weather had lost some of its cold grip, but it was still quite cool, and so he had put on a warm sweater, a brown leather jacket and a pair of jeans.

She seemed to know how to talk to him, as if they had been friends for a long time. He found it to be a very nice quality. After they had left the car they walked by shops and bazaars filled with bright colors and rich smelling spices. A few young children followed them down the street, hoping for a handout.

Robert stopped at one push-cart, where dumplings filled with a spicy meat and covered with a red sauce caught his attention. The owner eagerly tried to sell him the hot food.

“Better not to buy the sidewalk food, Robert. Some of it is okay, but some is not. My suggestion is that you let me or someone who knows the area tell you what is safe to eat.” She took him by the arm and they continued to walk down the busy sidewalk. He noticed how nice her cream colored cashmere sweater looked under her beige leather jacket. The silk scarf around her neck, in colors of turquoise, brown and red complimented her outfit very nicely.

As they came to the end of the street she motioned for him to turn the corner. Soon they came to the entrance of a restaurant, called Gafati’s Kebab House. A white and black painted tiger stood at the entrance. They went inside and were immediately seated in a private garden area.

“I can order for you, Robert—if you like? They have a special kebab here that is sweet and tender, but not too hot or spicy.”

Robert wondered how Adeela knew that he did not like hot, spicy foods. What an interesting lady, he thought. Even though very tired, he was beginning to enjoy his time in Pakistan.

The meal was delicious. A rich, lamb stew-like dish came first—sprinkled with brown cardamom and cinnamon, and then came tender beef kebobs served with a special yellow and red rice. It was the best meal Robert had eaten in a long time.

After they finished their dinner meals, Adeela ordered two Turkish coffees, served with a basmati milk rice dessert, garnished with cashew nuts and raisins.

“Thank you so much, Adeela, for bringing me here. This has really been wonderful. The food was just great.”

“I am so glad you have enjoyed the dinner, Robert. I was afraid you might be too tired to truly enjoy an evening out.”

“Well, honestly, I wasn’t sure myself. But I feel just fine.” He was feeling very good, and he knew that being with Adeela was a big part of it. He was also enjoying his after dinner sherry that had an exotic lemon and mango flavor.

“So tell me, Robert, do you have a family in America?”

“Divorced,” he responded. “I have a son and a daughter. They are really great kids. But, well....I am afraid they are under the wrong kind of influence from their mother right now.” Robert looked down for a second, mildly embarrassed. “I don’t know where that came from? Maybe I am suffering a bit of jet lag to the brain. I am sorry. Or perhaps I’ve had a little too much of this delicious sherry. I should not have said that. I don’t want to give you the wrong impression. My former wife is really a good person. It’s just that she’s gone a bit over-board lately in her faith thing.”

“Oh, that’s okay.” Adeela touched Robert lightly on his hand and smiled. “Almost everyone has some kind of family consideration. At least that’s been my observation. Feel free to talk about whatever you want.”

“Well, like I said. I think my wife is over reacting to a situation that happened at the school our children go to, so then she decided to home-school them.”

“And you don’t like that?”

“I don’t have any problem with her being a Christian and raising our children like that, but she refuses to go along with the direction the new Church is going.”

“Do you mind if I ask you, Robert, where you think the Church is headed? I spent some years in America so I am familiar with your culture, and I am also interested in what is going on socially in your country.”

“Well, I see a united world Church, Adeela. I see a place for every religion. God loves all people and makes room for everyone. Don’t you agree?”

Adeela looked at Robert as a teacher would a young student.

“You are not a Christian, then?”

Robert was taken back a bit and surprised at her question. Had he heard her correctly? “Well, actually, I do consider myself a Christian. But I guess you could say more of a modern, liberal Christian.” All of a sudden Robert wanted to change this discussion, and was really sorry that it had taken this direction. Up until now he had been enjoying Adeela. “I don’t consider myself to be one of those closed minds—that thinks everyone else is going to hell, and what about you, Adeela? Are you married?” He knew, of course, that she was not, but it’s what seemed right to say at the moment, in an attempt to change their on going conversation.

“I was married for a short time, Robert. My husband is deceased.” Short and quick, Robert thought. She had nothing more to say.

It was dark as they walked back to her car. They both were less talkative, and there was a mild tension. He wondered why?

Robert took some time to look around the bedroom where he would sleep. When he had first arrived he did nothing but crash on the bed, and had not looked at anything. The bed was solid and heavy, and had a silky, golden canopy that hung over it. It was very luxurious. The large, four-pane window had a lovely view of the garden below. The moon had cast a silvery light on the trees and it seemed almost magical. This was much nicer than he would have received at even the nicest hotel. He was enjoying the elegance, but he really needed a good night’s sleep, and so he eagerly crawled under the canopy and settled under a warm comforter.

Tomorrow would be the big day—when he would deliver the information to the general and then the electronic, wireless payment would be made, and all he would have to do is check his smart phone to make sure it was done as planned. He had already decided to catch a plane the day after and leave Pakistan. He focused for a minute on how nice it would be to escape with Sylvia for a few days. He knew their relationship lacked quality, but she was fun to be around and she liked to live on the crazy side of life. He chuckled to himself, remembering some of their adventures together. But the picture of Sylvia was replaced with a quick vision of Adeela. She was a most remarkably beautiful woman. But there was something about Adeela

that put her a notch above most other women. It was more than just her beauty. She had a deep and enigmatic quality about her.

He felt his eyelids grow heavy, and his thoughts became dream like. Before he closed his eyes a memory of Melissa came into his mind. She was sitting in one of their favorite places—a park in San Diego, where there was a beautiful blue pond and tall, green spruce trees. They had gone there once for a picnic. She looked so pretty in her jeans and blue and white checkered shirt. The sun sparkled on her long auburn hair, and her blue eyes were bright and full of life. He felt a stab in his heart.

His eyes opened wider for a second. He whispered her name and then turned over on his side, and went to sleep.



8 The Transaction

Adeela pulled the warm yellow blanket up to her neck. She looked up at the ceiling. Her first impression of Robert was beginning to quickly change. A part of her had really wanted to jump in his face, and tell him a thing or two about his one world religion. But she dared not say anything. Besides, he was just another company client. She spoke into the soft darkness—"Just another spoiled American."

It made no difference to her how he believed.

Right now her real concern was how she was going to get the money to Zakia in Sadi Town, for Laila's Christian burial. Of course she could not be seen with the other Christians at the small funeral, but it was urgent that she get the money to him, or Laila would be cremated and this was something she could not let happen. Why had she not left the money with him when she was there the last time? Perhaps, she sighed, she had not wanted to think of Laila's death right away—even though she did not mourn her dear friend's departure to be with Jesus.

She would decide tomorrow how she was going to do it. She closed her eyes, saying 'goodnight' to Jesus and Danial.

When Adeela walked into the dining room Rabia was pouring Robert a cup of coffee and had also given him a fresh berry muffin. Robert had just closed the lid to his i-pad. He looked up as Adeela walked into the room.

"Good morning Adeela. You look very chipper this fine day." He smiled politely.

Adeela sat down. Rabia had put a cup of coffee on the table for her. She had on a dark blue skirt, with a plain white blouse and a straight lined blue jacket. It was very business looking, but fit her slender frame nicely. Only the flower shaped, red earrings added a touch of femininity. "Thank you, Robert. I hope you slept well?"

"Yes! Fine, thank you."

"The general, Mr. Karrie, will be expecting us to be at his office in one hour. It will take us close to half an hour to fight through the traffic this morning to get there. So I am afraid we do not have much

time for a leisurely breakfast. I hope you don't mind. As soon as we are finished with business we will go someplace to eat."

"No problem." Robert stood up from his chair. He was dressed in a very expensive dark, gray suit. He could tell that Adeela was impressed. "I am ready to go whenever you are." He looked down for a second at the berry muffin—wondering if he should take it with him, but then declined.

Abdel Karrie's office was very nicely furnished. The stark black and white accents held authority. Robert smiled to himself. He did not think that it was as nice as his. The general greeted both Adeela and Robert. He reached out to shake Robert's hand and then Adeela's hand. He took more time and extended a warmer greeting to Adeela. Robert noticed, without surprise, that his eyes lingered on her for a couple of seconds.

"It's nice to meet you, Mr. McLaren. I guess we don't need to waste a lot of time in small talk. You are here for an important business purpose. His mouth moved into an almost dangerous smile.

Robert gulped, and then looked over at Adeela. She smiled nonchalantly at the general and then at Robert. He had made transactions like this a hundred times before—why was he feeling so jittery now?

Robert reached into his brief-case and pulled out a small, blue transistor, the size of a pen. On the inside of it was a detailed blue print for a new ballistic missile system. Without hesitation he handed it over to the general. Abdel smiled cautiously and nodded his head.

Adeela gently put her hand on Robert's shoulder, indicating it was time to leave. He followed her out of the general's office, without turning around.

Robert felt a little uneasy as he stood on the sidewalk—waiting for Adeela to return, as had been planned. The thought flashed through his mind of how easy it would be for Adeela to not return. "Sure..." he mumbled the word. The big general could easily pay off the police, and then just grab him and dump him someplace, and then tell Tom that he had never shown up. "Stop it," he said to himself.

The Corporation knew what they were doing, or they never would have sent him here. This was no different from any of the other times, when he had dealt with big and powerful people.

He could not understand why he was feeling so nervous. Maybe it was something in the atmosphere. He had once read that all countries carried either a spiritual nirvana or just the opposite... He wondered if that was somehow a Christian thought? Not that it really mattered.

He breathed a sigh of relief as Adeela opened the door of the general's building and stepped on to the sidewalk. He looked at her to see if he noticed anything different about her composure. She smiled nicely. His imagination had simply taken off—probably because of the threatening influence of the general. Everything was coming together exactly as had been planned.

"I need to have a few rupees put on my credit card. Do you mind, Adeela, if we walk up the block to the bank?"

"No problem. I will wait outside for you."

He went into the bank and was waited on almost immediately! He walked back out side, but Adeela was nowhere to be seen.

Hasan sat down at the small, wood table and took his wife's hands in his. "I must leave tonight for the meeting, but I must go alone. It is too dangerous to take my family. They have called us to come that we might pray for our Pastor. They found out where he lives and they have taken him away. His wife has not heard anything about him, and she is very afraid for his life."

"Oh, Hasan," Sena spoke passionately. "Please let me go with you? I can leave the boys with Deni and her children. She will not mind having them in her house for a while."

"My dear Sena. It is better for me to travel by myself. I will not put you in danger. We have talked about this before. Our sons must have one of us here to protect them. If they should come and arrest me, then my heart will be at peace because you are watching over our sons."

“But what if they come for me too? Our only protection is to trust in Yesu.” Sena spoke quickly—trying to persuade her husband.

“Sena, do not break my heart, and make this hard for me. I must ask you to stay home with our boys for this meeting.”

Sena looked down for a moment. Her lip trembled, and tears came into her eyes. “Yes, my husband. I will do as you ask me. But before you leave, please sit down and have some rice and vegetables with your family.”

Hasan rode as fast as he could. There was still a bit of twilight left, before the darkness of the night claimed the sky. He would have to find a new place to hide his bicycle, but he was not worried about that. He had decided that this time if the Taliban guerrillas came for him, he would be a witness for Yesu. He would not die with shame. He moved his right hand to his chest—just to feel his Bible under his coat. He always took it with him, if he could. He knew that if he was stopped there would be nothing he could do, but speak the truth. But he had prayed to not be afraid. He was tired of trying to save his life.

This was also the reason he did not want his family with him. Concern for their safety was too strong a battle for him. He slowed down and reached for the flask of water his wife had given him, and took a long drink. Soon he would be near the forest and would find a place to stow his bike. What would his father do, he thought, if he was in his son’s place? He smiled. He knew the answer to that question.

Seventeen years ago his mother had been allowed to bring Hasan and his sister to see his father while he was in prison. It was not done out of mercy, but to scare the family into submission—letting them see how bad things could get for them if they did not obey the law of the land. And of course the law of the land was very much against God. It was cold then too, and the darkness of night was quickly approaching as his mother hurried the two children along.

“We must get to the prison yard before it gets dark, or we will not see your father. Hurry! Go faster,” she kept saying. As they came near to the heavily enforced wire fence Hasan slowed down. He was scared at what might happen when they got to the prison. His mother was angry at him for going slow. She yelled at him, and told him to stay

where he was. She would go the rest of the way with just his sister.

Hasan did not stay where he was, but trailed behind his mother. When they got to the prison fence the guard went inside and brought his father out. Hasan had not seen his Baba in four years. He had been arrested five years before for the crime of blasphemy and for giving a Bible to his neighbor.

Hasan did not recognize his father. He was very thin, and his skin was rough and yellow from very poor and little food. When he saw his wife and children, huge tears began to roll down his dry, hard face. His mother also began to cry, and his sister too. But Hasan had not cried. His father had reached through the wire fence and had touched Hasan lightly on his cheek. But Hasan had continued to stand there with very large eyes—almost afraid of this man he did not know. His father had talked briefly to his wife and had told her to be true to Yesu. Then they came and took him away. He turned briefly before going through the prison door and waved to his family, but then the guard jerked him inside.

Three months later his mother had been told that her husband had died of some kind of sickness. His mother knew it was probably not the real reason he had died, but it did not seem so important to her. Hasan was surprised that his mother was not so sad. “Your Baba is now with Yesu in heaven, my children,” she had said through a sad, little smile.

Hasan rode his bicycle faster, the wind blowing against his tear stained face. One day he would hug his father again, and there would be no more pain, and no fear of prison ever again.

10 A Country Visit

“What now?” Robert muttered under his breath. This woman was starting to get on his nerves more than just a bit. He looked down the sidewalk as far as he could. Where had she gone? It made no sense to him. He could feel the twitch begin in his left eye, and his heart was beginning to beat a little too fast. He had only been in the bank for a few minutes. Adeela had been standing right here, when he went in, saying something about preferring not to go inside.

He checked again to make sure his coded phone was in his brief case. He could always call Tom if he had to. He looked across the street. There were masses of people everywhere. But this was not a poor section of Karachi, and most of the people were dressed in suits—hurrying from one place to another. He shivered when he realized how easy it would be to disappear in this city, or be kidnapped by someone wanting big American bucks, and never be found again. He tried to stop his mind from wandering again into strange fantasies of disappearance.

“Robert.” He turned around as Adeela came up behind him. “I hope you haven’t been worried. I walked back to get the car, and really thought I’d be here when you came out. You must have been waited on very quickly. She smiled energetically.

Robert stared for a second. He really was angry, but her defense left him without anything to say. He gulped. “Oh! No. I wasn’t worried at all. Ahhh...well, maybe just a tiny bit, but mostly about you. I was afraid something might have happened to you. I was really concerned for you, is all.” He smiled awkwardly—knowing that she had not believed a word he said.

“I know you are planning on leaving tomorrow, but we have some time today. How would you like to take a drive with me into the country? It’s really quite lovely outside of the city. And we can stop someplace nice to eat.” Adeela looped her arm through his. “I really am sorry to have caused you any concern.”

Robert gave in without any hesitation. He almost felt like a child who had been lost and then found by his mother. He resisted crying. What the heck was going on with him, anyway?

“That sounds great, Adeela. Sure! I would like to go with you.”

He laughed a little. “Just don’t leave me out in the boonies someplace.”

Adeela grinned.

The drive to Sadi Town took the usual hour and a half. They had stopped at a nice place along one of the more fresh running rivers and had some delicious spicy tea and some samosas—a flaky dough, stuffed with vegetables and mince. They were very good. They talked and really seemed to be enjoying each other’s company. Robert was even beginning to regret that he would have to leave so soon. They left the restaurant and continued to drive further into the country, past the desperate poor towns and villages of Pakistan. Robert did not say anything as they drove. He had sort of presumed that after they had finished their nice lunch they would go back to her apartment. Adeela seemed more intense, and was not in a conversational place, like she had been earlier. Robert felt a bit uncomfortable again. Being with Adeela was like riding a roller coaster.

Taking Robert out to see the country had provided Adeela with a great reason for going to Sadi Town. She would be able to meet Zakia and give him the money for Laila’s burial. As they drove into the back streets of the town, she glanced at Robert from the corner of her eye. He had grown quiet and was acting a bit nervous. She was sorry that she had to drag him into her other life, but there was nothing that could be done about it. Things had to be taken care of.

“Robert, I am going to pull over here and park for a short time. I have to meet someone for just a couple of minutes. You are welcome to walk with me, or you can stay here in the car. You will be perfectly safe.”

This time Robert spoke up. “So this was the reason for our little country jaunt—not really because you wanted to show me the sights?” He looked at her without smiling. For just a moment there was something about Adeela that reminded him of Melissa. He knew the real reason for his frustration was that his little romantic bubble had been busted.

“Well, I am sorry Robert if my coming here offends you. We did exactly what I said we would do. We had a nice lunch and I have

shown you some more of Pakistan. I will only be a few minutes and then I will take you back to the apartment.” She opened the car door and got out. Robert got out and followed her. They were not walking arm in arm. He did not know where they were, but it was old, and dirty. Beggars were everywhere, and the smells were not mysterious and exotic. Why would this elegant woman come to such a place?

They walked into a dark café. She motioned for Robert to stay by the door, and then she walked over to where an old man was sitting at a table. Robert could not hear what was being said, but he watched as she gave him an envelope. She then bent over and kissed him on the cheek and walked back to where Robert was standing.

“An old friend,” she said. “He needed some extra help. This was why I had to come here today.” Adeela did not glance up for a look of agreement from Robert, but she talked with him some more, as they walked back to her car. He was leaving in a few hours so there was no reason she could not share a few things. She felt by the Spirit that it was okay.

“I came here to Sadi Town with my mother when I was a little girl. My mother was born here, but adopted by American missionaries, and spent many years in America. But my grandmother still lived here and some of my mother’s old friends were also here. She would come to help them, when ever she could.”

“Your mother then was a Christian?”

“Yes, she was.”

Robert was interested in what Adeela had just said for only one reason. Did that mean Adeela was also a Christian? Robert hesitated. He did not want to say the wrong thing. This could be a delicate situation. “Well, that’s interesting,” he said.

Adeela looked up at Robert for a second. She knew that he wanted her to tell him more, but she had said all she was going to.

“So, tonight Rabia will fix us a nice meal, and then I must excuse myself in that I have some business to attend to. I should not be gone too long.” She smiled almost apologetically.

“Sure, I understand. Thank you, Adeela, for bringing me with you to Sadi Town. My eyes have been opened to more of the real Pakistan.” Impulsively he slipped his hand in hers as they came near to the car.

11 Into the Darkness

Robert wanted to take a short nap before dinner, but as he walked by Adeela's room he heard her talking with Rabia. He was caught off guard. She was talking about the meeting, evidently an emergency of some kind. He was surprised that Adeela would be talking like this to her maid. And it sounded like they were both planning on going. Did he hear the word pastor?

Rabia fixed a very nice fish dinner with yellow rice and fresh vegetables. They enjoyed a sweet Pakistani dessert after the meal. Adeela seemed mildly nervous. She was being very careful what she said, and he knew it.

"I know you will be leaving shortly, Adeela, and if you will excuse me I think I will take a short walk before I go to bed."

"Yes, of course, Robert. Have a nice outing and I will most likely see you in the morning." She smiled politely.

Robert needed to be alone. His coded phone was showing that Tom had tried to reach him while they were eating. He had felt the soft buzz, but had decided to let it take the message. He walked about one block from Adeela's apartment to the entrance of a nice park and then played back the message from Tom.

"Hey, Bob. Just want to check and see how things are going. Glad you have decided to leave tomorrow. It seems that our Miss Adeela is under some kind of suspicion. I don't have all the details, but I would suggest you lay low for the rest of the day." We don't want any problems with General Abdel Karrie. Okay? See you soon."

Robert turned the bug off. All the different things that Adeela had said to him earlier were beginning to play back in his mind, and the strange conversation she had with her maid? He started to walk back to the apartment. Inside he was feeling a fear for Adeela. Something was not right. He needed to let her know what was going on. It might concern the meeting she was planning on going to. But as he turned the corner he saw Adeela and Rabia get into a taxi. He could not risk waving to her, or causing any kind of commotion. He opened the door to the cab parked on the street next to him.

"Follow that taxi," he said, "but I don't want to be seen."

Hasan parked his bike under a tree and put another branch over it. It was getting dark, but he knew the way to the church meeting. He was only about half an hour from the small house. Still, he would have to walk fast. He prayed that he would just look like a normal man on his way home after work. There was always a danger, not only from the police authorities, who hated the Christians, but from the very dangerous Taliban, who hated them even more.

The light from one small bulb in the corner of the room directed the faithful ones to a bench. Pastor Omar's wife had called the people, and a handful had come to pray for their leader. She stood in front of the group.

"They came and dragged my husband from our home," she said, as tears poured down her face. "The authorities beat him. He was bleeding much. They have taken him to a jail in Islamabad and I fear the Muslims there will kill him. I hid our daughter under the bed to protect her from their evil hands. My little son, she pointed to a young boy sitting on a front bench, has been sick since they took his Baba away.

Three women and one man came and put their hands on the boy and prayed for him. In a few minutes he stood up in the midst of them. "Mamma," he said, "God has healed my mind. I am good now."

Sahar embraced her son, and they sat down. "God is faithful to us," she said, "no matter how much we suffer."

An older man with aged, wrinkled skin stood up to speak. "Yesu said we would suffer much and be hated, as he was, and that we would have much sorrow, but we will see him again, and our hearts will rejoice, and our joy no one will take from us."

Weeping and some groaning could be heard in the room, as the faithful shared in the prayers of the old man.

"Now we must do what we have come together for. We must pray for the strength and well-being of our good leader, and then we will also pray for the sick amongst us."

The small group prayed for about twenty minutes, until the old man told them it was time to leave the meeting.

“Now, we must go to our homes. The night feels dangerous, and...” The door flew open and a young boy came running into the group.

“The Taliban are coming. They are very close. We must leave quickly.”

The faithful ones began to scatter in different directions into the dark night. Hasan helped an older woman out the door, and then ran to the trees for covering. He had only gone a short distance when he heard the command to ‘stop.’ Hasan froze in his tracks. He could tell that three of the faithful were near him. They stood with their heads bowed. Hasan glanced up for a second. He saw three or four strong Taliban surrounding them. Their rifles were pointed at their heads.

“You are chura! And this meeting is against God. You blaspheme the name of Allah! You will die, or you will get on your knees and repent of this blasphemy and say you will never hold a meeting like this again, and perhaps we will show you mercy.”

Hasan did not look up when a voice repeated what they wanted to hear, but he was sorry in his heart that one of the faithful had been a traitor to Yesu. The police waited for the others to comply and deny Jesus Christ as their true Lord. But after the first man was told he could go, no one made a sound.

Hasan could feel the man’s breath on the back of his neck, as one of the Taliban brought his face close to him. “You are not only scum, but you are stupid. You will wish that you were dead when we have finished with you.”

Hasan braced for the beating that he knew would be coming.

They walked for two hours—being shoved and butted with the guns the Taliban carried. Finally, they came to a small compound. Hasan was separated from the other two believers and was shoved into a small cell by himself. He prayed for his two friends. He knew that to be put with those who were their enemies could easily mean their deaths. He had been accused of blasphemy, and there was no way to prove his innocence to anyone. He pulled a thin, smelly blanket over his shoulders. The pit he had been thrown into was

only 8 by 10 foot and had no windows. He curled up in a dark corner and he prayed for his wife and children.

“Dear merciful God and Savior, have pity upon this poor servant of yours, and please take care of my family, and give me the strong faith and courage to not deny your name.”



12 Follow that Taxi

Robert held on to the seat as the taxi swerved around the on-coming traffic, and then came to a sudden stop. He watched as Adeela and Rabia jumped out of the taxi that was a couple cars ahead of him. They were in front of a railway station. They walked a few feet to a teller window and bought a train ticket.

He got out of the taxi and followed them, then stopped and asked the ticket agent where the two women were going. He bought a ticket to the same place. He was really beginning to wonder what he was doing, and if he had lost his mind? But he had to let Adeela know that something was wrong. He was still separated a short distance from them, but he watched as they got onto the train.

A man helped her climb on board. Robert waited for just a minute and then he hopped on too. He watched as they disappeared into a private train room.

He wasn't sure exactly how to do this. Should he just knock on the door, walk in and say, "Oh, by the way, I got a call from someone, and I think you are in trouble?"

Maybe he should get off. Too late the train had already started down the tracks. Of course he had no idea where he was going. It was at times like this that he wished he still knew how to pray.

"Okay, I want you to walk real easy and open the door to that train compartment, when I tell you to."

Robert instantly recognized the voice of Tex. He turned and looked at him for a second. He was not wearing a baseball cap or a sweatshirt. He looked very Pakistani, and he was not the same actor he had been as he drove him to Adeela's apartment. Robert did as he was told to do. He opened the door and then sat down across from Adeela and Rabia. They both looked at him with very surprised expressions.

"Robert! What are you doing here?"

Nasir (alis Tex) squatted down next to Robert.

"I think you need to talk very fast, Mr. American!" We don't have a lot of time to play games with you."

Robert gulped. Right now he was not feeling like Robin Hood, and was really wishing he had not followed Adeela on to the train.

“Okay. I’ve been following you, Adeela,” he avoided looking at Tex, “because I am concerned for your safety. I have received information from my boss in America that you are being watched and you are under suspicion for something.”

Adeela’s eyes grew large. She looked at Rabia and then at Nasir. What could it mean?

“What exactly were you told, Robert? It’s very important to many people that I know everything that was shared with you.”

“I was not told much—just that I should plan on coming back to America shortly, and to stay clear of you.”

“Well, you have not exactly done that,” Adeela said, shaking her head slightly.

“Sometimes we just have to do what we need to do, and let the chips fall where they may. I could not just sit back and do nothing and let you walk into some kind of a trap. I don’t know what’s going on, but I would guess it has to do with you being a Christian. Is that right?”

“Yes, Robert, I am a Christian. And the work I have been involved with has been very important to our believing community and to many others.”

Nasir looked at Adeela and then at Robert. He could sense there was something going on between these two, and he felt a twinge of jealousy.

“Adeela.” He directed her thoughts away from Robert. “We are going to have to make some changes. It will be too dangerous to go to Pastor Omar’s house and pray with his wife. They have dragged him to Islamabad and have probably already tortured him, and there is a good chance that he was forced to reveal the names of his congregation. I know the kind of evil things these men are capable of doing. This is probably why they are now watching you. The others are not so important to them, but you are, as they say in America, ‘the big fish.’

“Adeela,” Robert interjected, “you have an American Passport. Why don’t you just leave here for awhile—till things quiet down?”

“You don’t understand, Robert. The work I am doing for God is too important for me to just run away. I will not desert my friends and those who have put their lives on the line every day to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the people of Pakistan.” She looked at Nasir. “I have to pray and think about what I am going to do?”

“Perhaps,” she looked at Robert, “the call you received was not exactly what we think. Maybe someone just wants you to leave Pakistan, and said some things to scare you? All I know is that for right now we must act very normal. I will go back to my apartment, and wait and see what the Lord will show me, but we will not go back there together. And you must continue to make plans to leave tomorrow for America.”

Robert looked across at these two very dedicated women who were so much more than he had imagined, and then he glanced down at Nasir. Why was he feeling like he did not want to leave them?

Hasan recognized him as the Taliban with the long scar down his cheek. “You have been charged,” he screamed at Hasan, “with the crime of blasphemy.” With angry venom he spit the words out at Hasan. This is a crime against god and punishable by death. Do you understand what I am telling you?” The Taliban looked cruelly into Hasan’s blood-shot and tired eyes. “You are a criminal to the people of Pakistan.”

“Hasan had decided that he would die as a courageous man. “If we teach the people about Yesu,” he said, “then they become good people. Yesu came to save all people from their sins, and give them a new life. He wants the Taliban to come to know his love too.”

“You chura! Who do you think you are talking to? Do you think I am going to bow my knee to your God?” He dragged Hasan out of the pit and tied him to a tree. Then he beat him with his fists and slashed him across his legs with his long knife. “Now we will see how long you last out here with the howling animals, when they smell your infidel blood. Perhaps your Yesu will come to save you?” He raised his sword into the air and cried out, “Allah Akba.”

13 I have Chosen You

Rauif Jafai turned in his sleep, restlessly, as he tried to put the thoughts out of his mind. The rage by which his father had attacked him, and the isolation from his family was hard to bear. And yet every time, when the pain became unbearable, he would feel the love of Yesu covering him and shielding him, and he was so blessed now to have his wife laying next to him.

It had all started one year ago, when his father, who was one of the leading Taliban in Pakistan, had insisted that his son, Rauif, complete the hajj—a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. At his father's insistence he had traveled with nine other Taliban, all desiring to make the holy journey. But Rauif could not hide his eyes from the hypocrisy that was all around him. This was supposed to be a holy place. He had been taught this since he was a little boy. And yet there were rich, glittering hotels for the more affluent pilgrims. He was confused with the contradictions of his faith. As he walked around the Kabba stone in the Grand Mosque, he was struck with a sense of futility. He had been deeply troubled about his religion, not just since coming here, but even before. But who could he talk to? He dared not share his thoughts with any of the others. They would tell his father and that would mean very bad trouble for him.

That night as Rauif slept he had a vision of a man in a gleaming, white gown. He was amazing to look at. In the vision the man was standing by a beautiful blue lake, and he was beckoning Rauif to come closer. As Rauif approached him he was overtaken by a sense of divine love coming from this man. He was overwhelmed.

“Who are you?” he said to this amazing man.

“My name, Rauif, is Jesus Christ. Your brothers and sisters call me Yesu. I want to tell you that I love you, and that I chose you before you were born, to be one who follows me. But you must know and understand that to follow me will be a very difficult path. You will loose much, and you must be willing to sacrifice all for me. If you do, then you will inherit eternal life, and no one will ever be able to snatch you out of my hand, or out of my Father's hand.

“What you do for me on this earth will result in great and meaningful treasures in heaven—your eternal home. I am hated, Rauif, by many people on this earth. They have chosen death and darkness, rather than life. But if you are obedient to the Holy Spirit who will live in you, and who will speak for Me and my Father, for we are One, then you will bear much fruit, and many will repent of their evil ways and will come into the Kingdom of God. And this is the true desire of my Father’s heart that none should perish, but that all would repent and be saved.”

Rauif was totally undone! He knew he was standing before a Holy God. He could hardly speak. “Yes, Yesu, I want to follow you.”

Jesus reached out and touched Rauif’s heart with his hand, and when he did a brilliant light entered Rauif, and in the dream he fell to the ground. When he opened his eyes Yesu was gone, but he felt completely different. He was a new man, a new “creature.” Somehow he knew that Yesu had taken his sins from him, and that he would never be the same. He burned in his heart to tell his family about Yesu.

When Rauif got home he went first to his mother. “I must tell you, Mother, something very wonderful has happened to me. Yesu has come to me, and has changed my life. I am going to live my life as a Christian from now on, and follow Yesu.” He smiled exuberantly.

His mother stood before him with fear and shock in her face. She reached out and slapped her son across the face. “You will never talk like that again in this house. If your father should hear you he will think you are crazy, and he will hurt you very bad. You must promise me that you will forget all this crazy talk. You must promise me!”

Rauif could see the great fear in his mother’s face. He now understood, even more than before, that to speak about Yesu would bring shame upon his mother and family, and could bring great trouble upon himself. But he had promised Jesus he would tell his people about him, and he truly desired to do so.

One day he shared with his younger brother how Yesu had come to him and had changed his life.

“Rabin,” he had said to his brother, “you too can know this great love, and that all of your sins have been forgiven, because Yesu is the

true God. All you have to do is ask him to be the Lord of your life. You will never regret this decision.”

Rabin looked at his brother as if he had lost his mind. “Are you now so foolish or crazy, Rauif, that you think I would turn from Allah, and bring shame to my family because you had a vision of a nice man? I will not tell Father, but you must promise to never say these words to me again.” He then quickly ran away from his brother, leaving him sitting by the tree. Rabin did not keep his word to Rauif. He told his father what Rauif had spoken to him about Jesus.

As soon as Rauif approached the family house, his father came running out the door. He was in an unbelievable rage. “You are not my son,” he said. “You are an infidel.” He then began to beat his son with his fists, and with a hard stick. Rauif crumpled onto the ground, pleading with his father to stop. He thought he would soon pass out, but he did not. He laid there without moving. Soon his father and two Taliban friends dragged him across a wooded field and threw him into a deep pit. It was cold and dark and there was no way to get out. Once a day he was given a small cup of water and a cup of rice.

Every couple of days they put ropes around him and yanked him up from the pit. They would ask him if he was now ready to repent and deny Yesu. Rauif would bow his head and say, “No, Father, I will never deny my Savior.” They would then beat him and throw him back into the cold, dark pit. Sometimes snakes would crawl into the pit, but when they bit him the poison had no effect on him.

Whenever they could, his mother, and then his sister, would come to the pit and would drop down a cup of food for Rauif. When they came near he would tell them about the love of Yesu.

A few times while he was in the pit, Yesu would come to Rauif and would read the Bible to him, and so Rauif grew in wisdom and knowledge. Although he was very weak, he became spiritually strong.

Two months after his father had thrown Rauif into the pit he released him and told him to leave their house and never return. He also forbid him to ever again talk about Jesus to anyone. Rauif was allowed to take a few of his clothes with him, and some of his mother’s food. When his father was not in the house his mother

whispered to him. "I have prayed to Yesu, and he has taken my sins!" She looked up at her son and smiled brightly. Rauif hugged his mother with great joy. She also quickly told him as he left the house, "Kalina waits for you at the edge of the trees." Kalina was the girl that he was going to marry, but he had presumed that she probably had been told that he was dead. He was very anxious to see her, but he must also tell her about Yesu. What would she do?

He saw her sitting by the trees. She looked even more beautiful than he remembered. He walked fast to join her. He knew he looked different to her now. He had lost much weight, and had not had time to cut his hair and trim his beard, that had grown long and wild while he was in the pit. Kalina waved to him, and smiled with tears in her eyes, as he came near.

"I thought you had been killed by a wild animal, and my heart was so grieved." Her voice trembled, as she held on to Rauif's hand. "And then your mother came and told me what had happened. I cried very hard, Rauif. My love for you is very deep."

"I love you too, Kalina. But you must know that I have given my life to Yesu. And if we are to be married then you must have the same love for him that I do, or we will never be happy."

Kalina looked up at Rauif with joy in her eyes. "Oh, Rauif. I am so excited to tell you this. For over one month Yesu has been coming to me in my dreams. He has been telling me to follow him. He is so wonderful, and I do love him." Rauif cried as he reached out and held Kalina in his arms. They both knew how very good God had been to bring them back together again.

It had been four days since they had tied Hasan to the tree and had waited to see if he would die. During the day a young boy sat on the ground and watched Hasan, to make sure no one came to his aid, but at night he was left alone.

He prayed for his wife and children, and believing that he was going to die, he had cried out for God to bring someone to help them. The Taliban would encircle him and beat him during the day. He would drift in and out of conscious. But sometimes the sweet comfort

of God's Spirit was so much greater than his suffering. At times he felt himself being lifted high above the human plane into a glorious atmosphere, where there was the most beautiful angelic singing. At another time he found himself at the feet of Jesus, and he wept over his nail-scarred feet. He asked the lord to please give him the grace to truly forgive his enemies.



14 A Change of Plans

Robert sat on the bed with his knees to his chest. Adeela and Rabia had gone to bed by the time he got to the apartment, and everything was quiet. He had been told to wait for one hour after they left him at the railway station. It was dark and it was late. He was exhausted, but still he found it hard to sleep. He had already decided that he was not going to leave in the morning. He would tell Tom that he was going to tour around for a bit, on his own. He would move out of Adeela's and into a hotel—which he hoped would satisfy Tom.

He was a little confused about his behavior lately, but he just couldn't bring himself to leave Pakistan until he knew that Adeela was going to be all right. Crazy, he thought! This was not like him at all. He turned over on his right side and fell asleep, but before the night was over he had some very disturbing dreams—two of them.

Adeela was the focus of the first dream. She was standing with a group of the faithful ones. Her head was bowed and her hands in the position of prayer. She was dressed very comely in a plain gray dress and white sweater. Her hair had been pulled to the back of her neck.

The people behind her looked very frightened. They had their hands up and were crying out to God for help. And then Robert saw in the dream why they were scared. Coming at them was a giant black spider, and it was consuming everything that got in its way. It was huge and there seemed to be no way of stopping its horrendous pursuit. In the last part of this dream Robert heard Adeela speak to the people. "Do not be afraid," she said. "Yesu will save us." She pointed at the monster with her Bible, and commanded it to stop. And then Robert woke up. "Wow," he said out loud, "what was that all about?" He snuggled back under the comforter—hoping that he would go back to sleep without any more disturbing dreams. Before he woke up he had one more clear and distinct dream.

In this dream he was in America, and for a moment he felt good about being back home. But then the dream took a very strange turn. Everyone was looking up at a very large hand in the sky, and it was pointing down at the earth. Somehow Robert knew it was the hand of God...specifically the hand of Jesus.

Everything was beginning to grow very dark, and he could feel a great shaking under him. In the dream he started looking around for Melissa and the kids. For just a minute he saw his former wife praying with a group of people, and then he saw them no more. The ground continued to shake, and everything seemed to just be falling apart. People were running and screaming—terrified at what was coming onto the earth. Before he woke up from this dream, he heard the words being spoken by God, “I will shake everything that can be shaken.”

When Robert woke up it was early in the morning and still dark. But this time he did not go back to sleep.

Rabia and Adeela were sitting at the table drinking a cup of coffee when Robert walked in. Adeela looked lovely in a smart navy blue suit, a long sleeved, creamy silk blouse and a beautiful string of pearls around her neck. She greeted Robert. He was dressed casually in a pair of slacks and a green pull-over sweater.

“What time does your plane leave today, Robert? We will miss you. But I imagine you will be glad to get back to America, especially after what you have been through.” Adeela smiled comfortably, almost as if the night before had not even happened.

Robert sat down next to Adeela and looked into her tired, but still lovely eyes. “I’ve decided, Adeela, as long as I am here to do a little sight seeing around Pakistan. I will see about getting a room at the International hotel for a few days. As you know, it’s just down the street from here.”

He looked at Rabia for a second, to make clear that he understood her true position was not that of a maid, and then he looked back at Adeela. “Last night for the first time in a very long while, I prayed to God. I have a lot I need to make right with Jesus, and with some people in my life. For some reason God has used my coming here to Pakistan to cause me to see just how far I’ve gone astray.”

Adeela looked at Robert with a somewhat startled expression, but then she reached over and put her hand over his.

“Robert, I am so very pleased to hear this. It truly makes my heart joyful. But I know why your are staying, and it’s not to see more of Pakistan. I am asking you to not get involved with what is currently

going on here. If my life was truly in danger then they would have been here by this morning. Believe me, I know how they work. We will be fine, and all of this big suspense will soon go away.” She smiled again with a carefree expression. “But you must go back to America, and see your children. I insist! We do not need you here.”

“I’ve already canceled my plane reservation, Adeela. So, if you will excuse me, I am going to take a cab down to the hotel, and see what they have available. I will have my suitcase with me, and I will ask the taxi to drive around for a bit, so that if anyone is watching me they will think I’ve gone back to America.”

He took Adeela’s hand in his. “It would be better, of course, for you not to call me on the number you have for my travel cell phone. They probably have that number and will be checking any phone calls, but you can call me at this number. I picked up a second cell phone when I was at the airport—not sure why? But I have never used this phone. He gave Adeela, on a slip of paper, the number of his other cell phone. “And let’s quit playing this silly game that everything is okay. We both know better! And I am not leaving Pakistan till I know that you are safe.” He then surprised her and bent down and kissed her on the cheek.

Rauif gently woke up his wife. The small Christian village where they now lived was a long ways from where his father and family lived. It was near the border with India, hidden in the mountains.

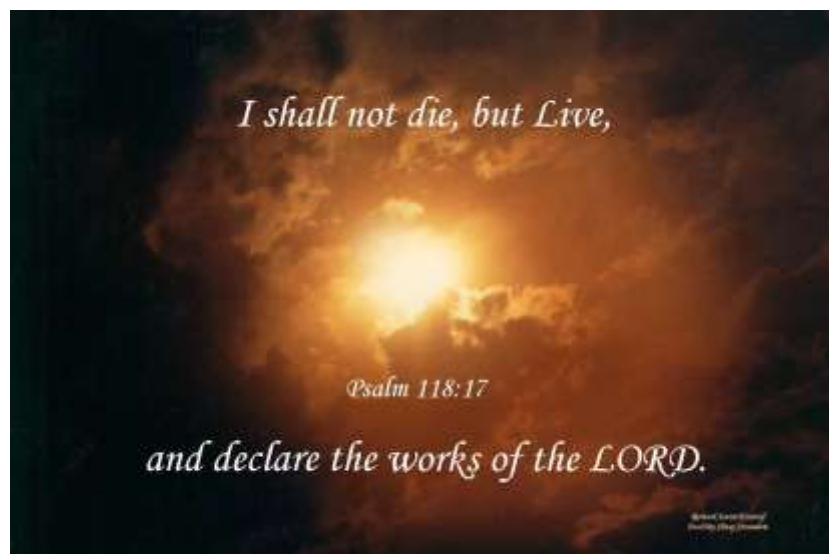
It was still very early, but Yesu’s dream to him was very clear, and now he must tell Kalina what he believed the Lord wanted him to do. The Lord had shown to him in a dream an area that he was familiar with. He knew that it was a Taliban stronghold, and had even been there once with his father. But what startled him was the image of a man tied to a tree who was slowly dying. If the Lord was telling him to go to where this man was being held and tortured, then he knew that God would show him how to rescue him. He continued to feel the confirmation of the Holy Spirit as God prepared him for the journey. It was at least a twelve mile walk, over rough country, to the Taliban

compound where they were keeping the prisoner. Rauif felt strongly in his heart that this man, whom he was being sent to rescue, was a Christian.

“Rauif.” His wife put her arms around him, not wanting to let him go. This will be very dangerous, and soon our new little baby will be born. Oh, please my husband. Do not do such a foolish thing.”

“My dear wife, whatever Yesu tells me to do I must obey him. I do not think he will take me from you and our child. But we must trust him. I can do nothing else.” Gently Rauif removed his wife’s arms, and got out of bed. He had a long journey to complete. If he walked fast, he should be back home later that night.

Hasan felt the life draining from him. It had been five days since he had been tied to the tree. With little food or water and with the cold, harsh conditions it was a miracle of God that he was still alive, and that he been given the strength to not die. But he knew he could not hold on much longer. The next time they came to beat him, he believed he would die.



Intermission: Heaven looks down

Saryl stood on the pearly, white beach that surrounded the crystal sea. Some of his angelic companions stood near-by. He never tired of gazing at the magnificent beauty that God had created for his human family—a beautiful paradise, prepared just for his sons and daughters.

His thoughts went back—ages before—when the God of all creation announced that he was going to create a family, made in his image. There had been such a wonderful celebration between the Father and the Word and the Holy Spirit. Saryl clearly remembered what a great party it had been for all of heaven. But he also remembered other things that had not brought God joy.

The angelic falling away, led by Lucifer himself, had brought much grief to the reigning God of heaven and earth. “Oh, son of the morning,” Saryl spoke the words, “how you have fallen—your pride was too much for you.”

Lucifer had been cast out of heaven, taking one third of the angelic beings with him. And with great vengeance he sought from that time on to kill, and destroy the one that God had made in His own image.

And many, from the very beginning, had been deceived by the great liar, and had fallen victim to his treacherous ways. But God had not left his children without any hope, and without his plan.

All of God’s heavenly host had held their breath as the darling of heaven, God’s ‘only begotten’ Son, had suffered and died on a dark and lonely cross. On that memorable day the Father had turned his face away from his beloved Son, as he bore the sins for the whole world. The price had been paid, and all who would repent and come to the foot of the cross would be forgiven and justified by God’s abundant grace and mercy.

But Saryl and the other angels suspected that there was still something very trembling that God was going to do. They knew he had waited, patiently, for all to come and repent, but was there a day at hand when the time of his grace would be ended?

Many times Saryl and the angels—even the great arch-angels, like Michael and Gabriel, had surrounded the King as he looked down

through a portal to the earth below and had observed the suffering and persecution of his faithful ones.

Saryl had been given the honor, for a few years, of being a guardian angel to Abriel—a very prophetic, and gifted little girl. The enemies of God had tried to kidnap her from her parents and make her one of their own. But her mother and father had been faithful to listen to what God told them to do. Eddie and Maria had taken Abriel and moved to New Zealand, where Eddie had found a good job. But even in the down under countries the devil had persevered to try and steal Abriel from her family. One day they had come to the rural home that Eddie had made for his wife and daughter.

Eddie had watched as they encircled his house and yard. He would not go down a coward, and would not let them take his daughter. In New Zealand he was still allowed to own guns. He shot it out with the demonic bound men who had come to steal, kill, and destroy his family. Eddie, Maria and Abriel were all killed and departed the earth; they were immediately taken into the presence of their faithful God and Savior.



Now, Saryl's angelic assignment was to watch over and protect a Godly minister in America, named Hamilton Graham. Saryl, as usual, took his assignments very seriously. Whenever Hamilton stood up to preach a word of warning to America, Saryl would be standing right behind him, invisible to everyone but a few. On this particular day Saryl watched as Hamilton stood on a wooden platform in a country area of North Carolina, and preached to a few hundred people, who had not been afraid to come to the illegal meeting.

He preached with fire and many repented and were saved, but at the end of the meeting a large contingency of storm troopers dragged him off of the platform and took him away, and also arrested as many as they could in the crowd. Saryl had been told to stand down. In all things God's ways were perfect for the ultimate salvation of many.

With pain in his eyes God had watched over the centuries, as his faithful ones refused to deny their faith in him—even little children, who would not deny his name, had had their heads decapitated by the demonic driven enemies of God. He watched his beautiful Godly daughters being abused, as their husbands were forced to watch what was being done to them. Again and again he watched what was being done to his faithful sons and daughters. In every generation, for every family, in every nation, their King had not forgotten one tear or one prayer. Sometimes the angels could feel his strong passion. They did not have to be told that a day of retribution and judgment had been reserved for every evil plan that had ever been executed against his people, and they knew that day was coming soon. There was a new intensity and excitement in the heavenly realms. Saryl could tell by observing God's saints that something was different. He had even overheard one of God's sons whisper to another: "Is today the day?"

The King knew that soon the day of his vengeance would be at hand,

"Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength?

"I who speak in Righteousness, mighty to save."

Why is your apparel red, and your garments like One who treads in the winepress?

"I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in my anger, and trampled them in my fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes.

For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come." (Isaiah 63:1-4)

15 The Rescue

Adela parked her small car in the lot and began to cross the street leading to the building where the Bureau of Political Consulting was located. She knew the general would be waiting for her. He was always anxious to hear if she had gathered any information about his clients. Sometimes there were other things he wanted from her. But she had not been afraid to let him know that she was not for hire. In a strange way he respected her for this commitment to purity.

Over the years that she worked for the Bureau her reputation as a ‘no touch Madonna’ was well established. But even still there were times when the general, after an early morning shot of vodka, had tried to buy her favor, by offering her an increase in salary. A couple of times he had even threatened her if she did not give in to his seducing tactics. But when she threatened to quit he would inevitably pull back, and then business would continue as usual.

As she walked down the sidewalk a clear feeling of fear and dread began to come upon her. She was even finding it difficult to breathe. Was the information that Robert received from America really valid? For some reason were they starting to become suspicious of her?

Had her dear pastor, Omar Bahati, actually broken down and revealed her name? She knew that if the general became mistrustful and skeptical of her, he would make things very difficult and humiliating for her. She shuddered at what that really meant.

As she came closer to the building she noticed two security guards who were not usually there in the morning. Her work had taught her to be suspicious of changes, but she was even more aware of what the Holy Spirit was showing her. Slowly, and without any abruptness, she turned around and began to walk the opposite way down the street from where she worked. She then stepped into the revolving door of a tall business building on the other side of the street. Only then did she turn around and look to see what was going on. The two security guards were looking for her. One was on his cell phone. She hoped they had not watched her go into the building.

Adeela walked quickly into the woman's rest-room. She called the number Robert had given her. "Robert. I am in trouble. I need your help or I need for you to call Nasir. They are after me."

"Adeela." Robert spoke with real concern. "Where are you now?"

"I am across the street and about four office buildings down from where I work. It's the tallest building on the block. Something is wrong this morning, and it does not feel good. A couple of the general's security people are already on my tail, and it won't take them long to start searching all the buildings on this street. I need to get away from here, and fast."

Robert hesitated for only a minute. He knew that God was showing him what to do. "Adeela, I want you to use the lighter in your purse. I noticed you had one the other day when I asked you if you minded if I smoked. Wad up and light a lot of paper in the trash can in the bathroom. It will make plenty of smoke. Then open the door and find a fire alarm to pull. As soon as it goes off and the smoke begins to circulate the people will quickly start flooding out of the building.

"Look for a janitor's closet, and possibly a maid's jacket to put on over your clothes, and tie a scarf over your head. Then duck down as best you can and flow out with the crowd. As soon as you get away from the building, and down the street, then grab a taxi to where we had dinner the other night. I will be waiting there for you. Is that all clear?"

"Yes," she responded. "It's clear. I sure hope this works?"

Adeela did exactly what Robert told her to do. She locked the bathroom door and then put some toilet paper in the trash can, and tore off part of her sweater, and wrapped it around the paper, so that the fire would burn more slowly. And then she lit it all on fire. Soon it was burning, and as the smoke began rising she ran out of the bathroom. She found a fire alarm in the hallway and pulled it. As soon as she did, the people started coming out of the rooms—looking confused and frightened. Adeela yelled, "There's a fire. Get out of the building."

The people started screaming and running. The building staff could do nothing to stop the panic. Before Adeela left the building she saw a

door, marked 'janitor service.' She opened the door and grabbed from the rack a maid's white jacket. She pulled the dark blue scarf off from around her neck, and covered her head with it. For a moment she had to laugh at her ridiculous image, but then quickly joined in with the group of people rushing out of the building. She could hear sirens from the approaching fire engines. She melded even deeper into the exiting crowd of people. Flagging down a cab, she quickly got in.

Adeela jumped out of the taxi and looked up and down the block. She saw nothing suspicious. She started to walk towards the restaurant, where Robert had suggested they meet. She had only waked a few feet when she felt a hand on her shoulder. She jumped.

Robert spoke fast and handed her a sack. "I paid a man to run and get me these clothes. They should fit you. I made sure he brought me a small size. He handed her a white scarf, and also a long blue embroidered jacket, with a matching long skirt. No one in the hotel will pay any attention as to who my visitors are. But it would be best to change clothes someplace where they don't know you. If the general is looking for you—and it sounds like he is—then he has already put the word out on you."

"Yes," Adeela said. There is a hotel across the street. I will go into the restroom there and change clothes. Thank you, Robert. You have been very brave to do this for me. I do not know what to say?"

"Don't say anything. Just go now and change. The sooner we are in my hotel room, the better it will be for both of us."

The Lord had showed Rauif the way to the Taliban compound. He had hid behind a small hill. From where he was outside of the village, he could see what looked like a man tied to a tree. The man appeared to be dead. Rauif wondered if he had gotten there too late. But he had left as soon as the Lord had given him the dream. The Holy Spirit had showed him exactly how to get to the compound. He thought about what he should do. It was late in the afternoon. He could do nothing until it grew dark, and then hopefully the boy who was sitting near by would go inside. He sat down behind a large rock, to make sure no

one could see him. He pulled his coat up over his shoulders and he prayed.

Surely God had not made a mistake? The man who was tied to the tree still did not move. He watched as two Taliban came over to him and kicked him in the legs. They laughed and walked away.

Rauif watched as the young boy left his place on the ground and went inside one of the huts. The sky had grown dark. Rauif prayed, and then slowly began to climb down the hill. The ground was hard and cold. The glint of a dull light in one of the huts had gone out, and it was quiet. As he came near to the tree he got down on his knees and listened, but there were no sounds coming from the man. He crept closer. As soon as he was close enough Rauif put his hands on the man's leg. His pants were torn and he could see large, red marks that were swollen and infected. His shirt was ripped open and on his chest were also deep, infected cuts. His face was bruised and puffy with death. Rauif crawled close to his head that was bent down. He listened for any sounds of life. The man was breathing. He was still alive, but just barely. Rauif took out a small, sharp knife from his pocket and cut him loose from the tree. Then he said to him, "I am a Christian friend. Yesu has sent me to help you get away. Please trust me and do not make any sounds."

Rauif saw that the man was trying to speak, but could not. He opened his eyes and moved his head slightly, up and down. Rauif picked up the emaciated, dying man and put him over his shoulders. He did not weigh very much. He was a light load. And then he began to move as quickly as he could over the hard ground.

Rauif sat down and laid Hasan down on the ground. The Lord had told him to bring his wife's coat. He wrapped it around Hasan's shoulders, and buttoned it as best as he could. He lifted Hasan's head from his chest and put a canteen of water to his lips.

"Don't drink too much, my friend. It will make you sick." Hasan looked up at Rauif with gratitude. He was breathing better now.

"We still have another two hours before we reach my house. I am sorry this is so hard on you. Pray for Yesu to strengthen you." Rauif then bent down to try and hear what the man was saying.

"My wife," Hasan said. And then he spoke her name, "Sena."

“My friend we must travel as fast as we can. And we must pray that the Taliban will not know you are gone. Please stay alive for God and and for me.”

Sena came to her knees and prayed again to Yesu. It had been six days since her husband had left for the prayer meeting. He had not come home. She had been told that the Taliban had come, and that some of the men had been taken captive. But Yesu had not told her that her husband was dead, and so she prayed, and when her sons were in bed she cried softly.

They both had prayed many times that if he were to die for Yesu that she would be strong and faithful for their sons. “This is not our home, Sena.” Hasan had repeated these words to her many times.

Of course she knew that it was not. But it made him feel good to reassure her of this truth. “One day we will all be together in our Father’s House, in heaven. And then there will be no more sadness, no more tears, and no more saying ‘good-by.’ Yes, my lovely little bird, you must stay strong and ask for big faith. We have much to be grateful for.”



16 The Grand Escape

Adeela pulled off the scarf that she had tucked her hair under. The hotel room was not large, but very nicely furnished. She sat on the edge of the bed. Robert sat in a chair across from her.

“I owe you much Robert. You have risked your life for me. The generals who control this country are not very nice! They are very unscrupulous and calculating. And if they find out that you are involved with me then your American Passport will not do you any good.”

Robert was silent. He too could not get over the fact that he had sunk himself so deep into whatever was going on. But then as he looked into Adeela’s round, dark eyes and her stoic but tired face, he knew that he would do it again. “So, can you tell me why the general is after you?”

Adeela hesitated for a moment. She knew she had no reason to hold anything back from this brave man, who had risked so much to help her.

“Robert, as you have discovered I am a secret Christian. I work for this powerful organization for one reason only. It gives me access to important information concerning police activity against the Christians. Many times I have been able to warn our people of a coming police terror attack. To be a Christian in your country, Robert, is not a problem—at least it did not use to be. Christians are free to do and say what they want. Isn’t this true?”

Robert stuttered. “Ahhh—sort of, but maybe not so much anymore, at least according to my former wife.”

Adeela answered Robert. “I know that one day true believers in Jesus will be persecuted in every nation. But here in Pakistan it has been our way of life for a very long time. To be a believer in Jesus in Pakistan means your life is always being monitored. You are given very minimal jobs, and basically treated worse than an animal. Our homes and churches and even our schools are attacked and destroyed, and we never know when it might happen. This is why my job has been so important to Jesus.”

“I really admire your dedication, Adeela. It’s not the kind of life I have ever lived—not even when I was a practicing Christian.”

“I owe it to you, Robert, to share a little of my history, but not everything. You know my mother was a Christian. My grandparents were very poor and could offer my mother only a very hard life in a poverty area of Pakistan. It is where we drove to the other day—to Sadi Town.

“But a very loving missionary couple adopted my mother and she spent several years in America before she came back to Pakistan with her husband—who also was from Pakistan, but was educated in America. His parents lived in America and my grandfather taught at a small college in Connecticut. You will see why I am telling you all of this family stuff. It leads to something.” Adeela smiled. “But I will not make it too long. I am very tired.”

Robert moved his chair closer and took hold of Adeela’s hands. “I know, and I am glad that you are willing to share with me.”

“I was not a dedicated Christian, Robert, in my teenage and young adult years. I was far more interested in what I could do with my brains. My parents agreed for me to go to college in America. I was accepted at Harvard, and that’s where I met my husband, Danial.” Adeela closed her eyes for a moment, and then continued to share her story.

“We became friends at Harvard, and then we fell very much in love. Danial became a Christian, at least in name, while at Harvard—partly for my sake, and partly for social standing. But one night Jesus came to him and revealed his great love and majesty to him. His life was changed forever. He went back to Pakistan and devoted his life to serving God in the poorest places in our country. I followed him as soon as I could, and we were secretly married. Before I left America the Lord showed both of us that I would serve the Lord by working for the Bureau of Political Consulting. Danial and I knew that it would be hard, but we did not think it would be for too long.

“You see, my job at the Bureau is not just taking the department’s clients around and then making sure they get to the general’s office. I have access to very privileged security information, involving the Christian community. I often know well in advance if the police are planning a particular raid on a church, or on near-by homes. Many lives have been saved because of my position with the Bureau.

There are other security matters that I have access to, but I will not discuss those things now. It would be better for you not to know everything.”

“What happened to Danial?” Robert asked.

“Danial was a pastor and a teacher. Because he had been educated in America he was able to teach many pastors and instruct them about the Bible. You see most of my people do not have study Bibles, like you have in America, and it’s easy for them to be misled, and deceived.

“So my Danial was a real blessing to many of my people. He also distributed Bibles whenever he could. Of course this is against the law in Pakistan. It’s considered blasphemy, and is punishable by death.”

“Wow! I didn’t realize that. I know that Pakistan is a Muslim country, but I thought they allowed freedom of religion here. That’s what my company told me. I guess I just presumed Pakistan was more progressive.”

“Most of the business people that come here from America have no idea how Christians are treated, and don’t really care anyway.

“Whenever possible I would go to Sadi Town—usually at night so I could be with my husband. But sometimes it was weeks before we could see each other. Of course our marriage had to be kept a tight secret.

“One of the Christian pastors in a town near Sadi did not like Danial because he was so popular with the people. He betrayed him to the police, and my husband was arrested and taken to Lahare prison in Islamabad—a very horrible place.

“If I had gone to see him my true identity would have been discovered, and I too would have been put in jail. The old man you saw me with in Sadi Town is a good friend, and he would frequently go to see my husband and take him messages from me. I wanted to be with my husband so much, but of course I could not. Even if I had quit my job, I would not have been able to see him, and Danial begged me not to try and come. The last time Zakia went to see Danial the guards told him that he had died in the night. They told Zakia that they had cremated his body.

“Although my heart was broken I was grateful that he was out of that horrible place. It has now been eight years, but everyday I still miss my Danial.

“When I was in the midst of my very worst grief, Yesu came to me in His glorious, lovely light, and He held me so very close to himself. I will never forget those moments. He took away from me any fear of death. I yearn to be with him. I yearn for his coming.” Soft tears fell on to Adeela’s cheeks.

Robert sat stunned. His reality about Jesus had never been this real or alive. He knew that in his heart he greatly envied Adeela’s faith.

“Have you ever thought about just going back to America, Adeela, and becoming part of the Christian community there?”

“Why? From what I have read, and been told, it will not be long before Christians are really persecuted there, and put in prisons for their faith. My people are here. If they arrest me and put me in jail, then I pray that my faith will be strong and that I will not be afraid to suffer for my Yesu. One day he will come and take me home. Until then, Robert, I will do what he tells me, and follow the way he shows me.

“The Bible tells us that a day will come when a very evil ruler, the antichrist, will have authority for a time, over all Christians. So why try and run to a safer place? If you believe in Jesus then persecutions will come to wherever you are. But our Lord tells us that when those days are upon us, that we should look up and rejoice, for our redemption draws near. He is always with us, and will never leave us alone. Do you believe that, Robert?”

Robert sat very still. It was hard for him to talk. “I am sick of the way I have lived my life, Adeela. Melissa tried to tell me about what is really going on, but I thought she’d gone off the deep end. I have been living in a huge delusion—a delusion of my own choosing.”

Robert braced himself for a justified rebuke as he told Adeela more about the cowardly and worthless life he had been living. But she said nothing.

“Melissa was your wife?”

“Yes,” Robert answered.

“Do you still love her?”

“I’ve never stopped loving her, but I have hurt her badly and brought shame on my family, and now her heart is hardened to me.”

“But that was because you have blocked the truth of God from your life, Robert. He will help you, but you must trust and believe this.”

“Yes, I know...well, at least I am beginning to understand.”

Robert reached for his coded company cell phone, as it buzzed in his pocket. “Excuse me, Adeela.”

“I am here, Tom. What is it?”

“What the hell is going on, Robert? You were supposed to be on a plane to America yesterday?”

“I dropped you a message,” Robert said. “Didn’t you get it? I decided to take a couple of days and do some sight seeing.”

“Yes, I got the bug message, but I thought you had flipped out or something. Maybe I wasn’t perfectly clear with what I told you before. This Miss Adeela Babar is now being sought by the police. It’s a serious thing, Robert. I hope you are no longer associated with her. I am going to arrange for a ticket for you to fly home tonight. You know we have a lot riding on this whole thing...millions of dollars. Are we clear?”

“Yes, Tom...I got ya. Over and out.”

“What was that all about?” Adeela looked at Robert with concern.

“That was my boss—telling me what we already know. He’s a little panicked; not for the value of my life, but he’s afraid his business transaction with the general could be interfered with. So he’s telling me to fly out tonight. He’s angry, and he means it.”

“You should get out of here, Robert. I hope you will get on that plane, before they find out that you are still here.”

“Hey, what about that great sermon I just heard—something about not trying to save your own life?”

“Adeela was quiet. She looked at Robert with admiration in her eyes.

Robert’s travel cell phone rang. “Robert, this is Nasir...you remember, Tex. I need to speak to Adeela. I hope she is with you. If she is not, then she’s in big trouble, and I need to try and find her right away.”

“She’s right here.”

Adeela took the cell phone from Robert. “What is it, Nasir? You shouldn’t be calling me.”

“I don’t think they are on to me, and it’s a risk I have to take. You need to get out of Zamzama right away. Tonight! I will tell you everything when I see you. By the way, why is Robert still hanging around?”

“He is planning on leaving tonight. He risked his life to bring me to a place of safety at the hotel where he’s staying.”

“Well, then I owe him a lot. A friend of mine is going to meet you in back of that hotel. You will recognize him when you see him. He’s a faithful one. He will bring you to my car. Be there in ten minutes!”

17 Sadi Town

“What’s going on, Adeela?” Robert was beginning to feel anxious. He hoped he would not panic. His left eye was beginning to twitch.

“Nasir knows something. I have to get out of here now. He has sent a friend to take me to his car, and then I imagine we will drive to a place we know of in Sadi Town, and we will pray about what we are going to do next. I was always afraid that one day this would happen, and now it has.” Adeela prayed quietly under her breath. “Yesu! We need your help!”

“Stay here in the hotel, Robert, and do not go anywhere till you take a cab to the airport. You should be safe.”

While Adeela was talking the room phone rang. They both looked at each other with surprise. “Well,” Robert said, “we seem to be very popular tonight.” He picked up the phone. The voice was gravely and husky sounding. “Get out of your room now. Security police are on their way up. I sent them to a different floor...but you must leave now. There is no time.” Click. Robert looked at Adeela with astonishment. “I have no idea who that was, but he said the police are on their way up to my room and that I need to leave now.”

Adeela answered Robert. “The Lord has his people everywhere. They risk their lives every day to warn the faithful. This means that they know you have not left Pakistan. You have no choice, Robert. You must come with me. If they get hold of you they will force you to talk. They are evil and cruel people. Grab anything of value and let’s go right now!”

Robert and Adeela walked as fast as they could down the five flights of stairs to the exit door. They stepped out into the alleyway. It was dark, and they could see very little. Adeela prayed out loud. It would not take the police long to begin searching the streets and alley ways. She knew they had only a few minutes at best. Where was that man?

“Adeela. It’s me, Benito.”

“Oh, Benito. Thank God you are here.” Adeela could not hold back the grateful and fearful tears. She grabbed hold of Robert’s hand.

“He is a faithful one, and a trusted friend. Now, we must go quickly to Nasir’s car.”

Very quietly they made their way down the alley to the street. Suddenly a screeching bat flew out of the night sky right in front of them. Adeela yelled. A dim light in the house next to them went on. They were almost at the street. Benito pointed them to Nasir's car.

As they came out of the alley Adeela saw some security police at the end of the block.

"Go!" Benito yelled at them. "I will stall the police." For a second both Robert and Adeela stood frozen in place.

"Now!" Benito commanded again.

Nasir had now driven his car up to where they were. They jumped into the car and drove off. Adeela pressed her face into the window to see if she could see Benito and what was happening. But Nasir had spun the car around and was driving like a wild man. He careened around the corner, racing down the street. Out of the back window Robert caught a glimpse of a police car with a red and blue flashing light a few blocks back, as it tried to catch up with them.

"Pray hard!" Nasir yelled. He drove the car with its lights off onto a small, dark road that trailed behind some buildings, and then he turned and drove down by the river. And there he stopped the car. We will wait a few minutes here, but not for long. We must make our escape before they find out where we are, and who we are."

"You mean, Benito?" Robert asked.

"Yes. I am sorry to sound heartless, but he made the decision to lay down his life for his friends, and we must honor that. They will either kill him or make him talk."

Robert took a deep breath. He wanted to be brave, but now he really wished he was any place but here."

Rauif could see the light in his small house. He stumbled over a rock as he hurried to his home. He fell onto his knees. He was very tired. He heard the man on his back groan with pain. "Oh, Yesu, help us. Only a few more feet," he whispered to his friend, "and then we will be home, and safe." He breathed out his wife's name as he came closer to the door of his house. "Kalina, come quickly."

Rauif's wife opened the door and let out a loud sigh. "Oh, my husband you are home." Tears flooded down her face as she ran to meet him. Then She stopped when she saw that he was carrying a man. "Oh, my husband, you look so tired. And this is the man you rescued for Yesu?" Kalina bent down and looked at the man that Rauif laid on the floor of their small room.

"Yes. He told me his name is Hasan. We must take care of him, Kalina, until he is better. Tonight we will give him a little food and water. But he is very weak—near death. So we must treat him with care, and be careful who we tell about him. If it gets back to the Taliban that he is here, they will destroy many lives in our village."

"Yes, my husband. I will do anything for Yesu, now that he has brought you home." She smiled enthusiastically at Rauif.

Nasir spoke to Adeela and Robert. They had all been praying for God to make a way for them to escape the terrible clutches of the general's private police force.

"We will leave the car here. It belongs to the general's office and it will be too easy to spot. We will walk for a ways, and then perhaps we can find a taxi to take us to Sadi Town."

Adeela put her hand on Nasir's shoulder. "You have been a good and trusted friend, Nasir. I owe you so much." Adeela turned her head and looked at Robert. "And you too, my friend. God has been merciful to bring such honorable men into my life at this time."

"Adeela and Robert followed Nasir as he crept carefully down the alleyways. They watched for any police. He led them out of the neighborhood—crossing different streets and going a way that very few people knew about. Before they came to the busy highway he flagged down a taxi, and they rode the rest of the way to Sadi Town.

When they got out of the taxi it was cold and dark. Robert only had on a light sweater. He shivered in the cold. "How far is it to where we are going?"

"It is only about an hour's walk. But you, my friend, stand out like a neon sign—dressed in those American clothes. I know someone

a short distance from here. His name is Jimel. He has a small vegetable farm. We will stop there and see if he can give you something more Pakistani to wear. So what do you think, Robert, of our great adventure for the Lord?" Nasir laughed a little smugly. "Perhaps in America Christians are not so willing to lay down their lives for Yesu?"

Adeela interrupted. "Robert has done a very brave thing tonight, Nasir—as brave as any Christian I know."

"Yes," Nasir answered somewhat embarrassed, "he has."

When they reached Zakia's small house there were several people there—praying for their safe arrival. Robert was dressed like a typical Pakistani—only his blue eyes and American stature gave him away.

Rabia came over and gave Adeela a long hug. "Oh, my friend, we have been so worried about you. I am so thankful that you escaped and have arrived safely."

Rabia looked in Nasir's direction. "Thank you my friend." And then she looked over at Robert and giggled a little. "And you, Robert, make a very nice looking Christian Pakistani."

"Well, thank you, Rabia. I feel very comfortable in these clothes." He was glad to see that Rabia was safe. He had wondered what might have happened to her. He looked around at the small group of people. They all had smiling faces. A dim lamp in the corner of the house cast a grayish light over the room. Most of the people had sat down on the floor or on a bench. Robert could not take his eyes off of one particular woman. She was literally aglow. He knew it was the glory of God on her, but he found it hard to believe. In this very poor and partially furnished house there was more of the presence of God than at any of the big, fancy churches he had been to in America. He found himself hungry for this kind of experience.

It was evident that this was where this group met for their church meetings. Robert turned and asked Adeela if it was a church service so late at night?

"Whenever we come together we take time to pray and to worship. It is what we commonly do."

Robert looked away, slightly embarrassed.

A nice looking man, older than Robert, came to the front of the

room, and began to speak to the group. “We are very thankful to our saving and merciful God that he has brought our family out of danger, and away from the devil’s capture. Our good friend, Adeela, and Rabia, and of course Nasir, have been a blessing to us many times. We are honored to help care for one another, and of course to help the American Christian who has come with them.”

Pastor Faisal smiled in Adeela’s direction, and then for a moment looked down at his feet. Robert could see tears in his eyes. “We must pray for our dear brother, Benito. The word has come to us that they have taken him to that filthy, rat infested pit for questioning. We must pray that his faith will be strong, and that he will bring glory to Yesu.”

The small congregation all looked down and prayed. Sounds of crying could be heard, and some uttered words of sadness, mixed with hopeful prayer.

“I am sorry, but I have some more bad news for our family.” Again Pastor Faisal looked down for a second. “Our friend and loyal servant, Pastor Omar Bahati, has been killed while in Prison.”

Adeela and Rabia both let out a cry, and bowed their heads.

“We must pray for his wife and children,” the pastor continued. They are very grieved. But we must always remember that we do not grieve or mourn as those without hope. Our dear friends have simply gone ahead of us, and many have been received into God’s great army of martyrs. And one day soon we will be reunited in God’s glorious heaven. Let us now read from the book of Revelation:

“And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son, but the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The pastor put down his Bible. The people who were in front of him looked with wide and startled eyes. Many of them knew that they had once been these things.

Robert bowed his head with the rest of the people. The tears came easily. He could not seem to stop crying, but he didn't care. Adeela reached over and took hold of his hand. He cried even more.



18 What Now?

“Wake up, Kalina. God has visited me, like he did Joseph. I must take Hasan from here before the early morning light.”

“But, Rauif, our friend is not yet ready to walk anyplace, and you cannot carry him again. It is too much for you. Perhaps you just had a bad dream?”

Rauif looked tenderly at his wife who would soon give birth to their first child. They had cared for Hasan now for two weeks. Some of their Christian neighbors had come over and had brought what they could to help this brother, whom God had saved and was still healing.

Hasan was able to sit up now, and could take a few steps. The wounds in his legs and chest were healing well. He told Rauif and Kalina about his wife and children. He wanted desperately to let her know that he was not dead. Rauif had told him that as soon as he was well enough to travel he would take him to his village. Hasan was so grateful to Rauif. He prayed for him every day, and assured him that his reward in heaven would be great.

“No, my wife,” Rauif answered her. “I was told to take him and leave quickly. The angel told me that the Taliban will come. They will be looking for someone else, but if some of those ruthless men see Hasan, they might recognize him. The story has been circulated that a wild animal attacked Hasan and ate his body. This way they do not have shame on their faces for his escape. I must wake him now and tell him what we will do. His village is only a few hours from here.”

The early morning light was starting to break over the barren, brown hills. Rauif and Hasan sat down under a small tree. Hasan had only been able to walk for a short while. His legs were still too weak to carry him for a long distance. Rauif had turned his ankle and it was now almost impossible for him to carry his friend. They both prayed. What would they now do?

While they were praying and pondering their difficult situation a large man climbed over a near-by ridge and was walking towards them. They both froze. This man was very big and strong. He looked Pakistani, but as he drew near they both sensed that he was not going to do them harm. In fact, as he drew closer they felt that he had come

to help them. He was exceptional to look at—very tall and strong and also very handsome. His dark hair glistened in the early sunlight and his eyes were full of a very unusual beauty.

The angel came over and picked up Hasan from the ground, and set him on his feet. He then put his large arm around his back and picked him up off the ground and began walking away with him. He was moving very fast. Hasan had only a moment to look back and wave good-bye to Rauif.

Rauif could hardly believe what had just happened. He began to limp home as fast as he could. Wait until he told his wife Kalina what had happened. She was not going to believe it.

Robert and Adeela had been in Sadi Town now for over three weeks. Robert had stayed pretty low key. He only went out of Zakia's house at night, and when he did he would cover his head and face with a scarf. The general's security police were still looking for Adeela and Robert in many of the provinces of Pakistan, and Robert, with his American looks was a dead give away.

They had prayed about what they would do next, and where they were to go, but they had not received clear direction from the Lord. A sheet had been hung up on a rope across part of the living room area, giving Adeela a small amount of privacy. She now wore a simple gray dress and sweater. She did not wear any makeup, but it did not take away from her natural beauty. She had a simple and pure look about her, like a young girl.

While they waited on the Lord, Robert had found a new delight in reading the Bible. The scriptures now came alive to him, like he had never experienced in America. He really wanted to be able to share this with Melissa, but he dared not make any calls that could jeopardize in anyway their hidden position.

He had not minded curling up on a cot every night. He had slept good while at Zakia's. He woke up feeling fresh and alive. He realized that he didn't even want his nice silk suits anymore. They meant nothing to him. He laughed.

Nasir had gone to stay at a friend's house, not too far away. They needed the extra room in Zakia's small house. But before he left he shared with Robert his testimony. It was a very amazing story.

As a young man Nasir had done an admirable job in the Pakistani Military, and as a reward for his excellent work he would be given an honorable job. But before he began his new career, working for the general, God had interrupted his life.

For years, as a young man, he had grown restless, and had begun to search for greater purpose and meaning in his life. He had read the Quran from page to page. He noticed that the prophet Jesus was mentioned in several places in the Muslim scriptures, and he wanted to know more about him. For some reason he found himself transfixed by this man. He knew that one of his father's servants was a Christian and he had followed him once to a Christian meeting. He did not go in, but stood outside by the door. He could hear the sweet songs they sang, and heard the words that the pastor spoke from the Bible. He was very aware the persecutions that came to those who called themselves Christians, but he desperately wanted to read the Bible. So he asked Badar, his father's servant, to bring him this book.

He could not stop from reading the Bible. Of course he had to keep this activity very secret. He could be found guilty under the blasphemy law and imprisoned for such a crime. But he found such peace, especially when reading the words of Jesus, that he stayed awake late into the night to read and re-read this wonderful book. He had not found this peace when reading the Quran. But he did have questions about some of the scriptures, and what exactly they meant.

He had heard of a Pakistani Christian Pastor in Sadi Town, named Danial. He had been told by Badar that this man could help him with his questions. And he did.

As often as he could get away Nasir would go to Sadi Town to meet with Danial. He had even gone with a Christian friend one time to share the Gospel in another village. After six months of seeking and coming to believe in the Christian life, Nasir was baptized. He knew that in the Muslim faith this was the line by which you would forever be branded as an infidel, even by your own family.

But Nasir was not ready to declare his conversion to Christianity. God had called him to go to work for the general. This was where he developed his “Tex” routine—that he used on the different people who were doing business with his boss. The more relaxed they felt with him, the more they would talk, and the more he would learn about certain things that the general’s office was planning, often having to do with Christians.

It was during this time, while he worked for the general, that he met Adeela and came to know about her secret life as a Christian. It gave him comfort to know that he was not the only person who worked for the general that had a secret identity. After Danial died Nasir and Adeela continued to be friends. She often needed his help, and it was not long before he knew that he was very much in love with her.

Robert thanked Nasir for sharing his testimony with him. He also knew that Nasir wanted Robert to know, without any doubt, that he was keeping an eye on Robert’s relationship with Adeela.

Robert noticed that before Nasir left Zakia’s house he had sat down on the floor and had taken hold of Adeela’s hands. They said nothing to each other, but then Adeela reached over and kissed him tenderly on the cheek. Nasir drew her gently to himself, putting his arms around her and holding her for just a moment. They seemed to not be embarrassed that others were watching, including Robert.

Pastor Omar lay on a small flat bed of dirty, putrid hay. He had been drifting in and out of consciousness for two days. But he remembered when they came and dragged his half dead cell mate out of the pit.

They had put Ali, a raging crazy man, in with him, believing that he would soon kill Omar. And for the first few days he had threatened him and beat him with his fists. But Omar only responded with love—even giving him the last few sips of water that he had. Soon, this angry and hateful man who had never known this kind of love began to cry like a little boy. The young Muslim man had received Jesus with a smile on his face. But when the guards found out what he

had done, they came into the cell and beat the new Christian almost to death. Pastor Omar held his bleeding brother in his arms and told him more about Yesu. “Don’t be afraid Ali,” Omar had whispered to him. “You will soon pass from pain and sorrow into Yesu’s arms, and you will be free.”

Ali looked up and smiled very faintly and then closed his eyes.

Omar prayed for his wife and children as best he could. The life in his broken and hurting body was quickly leaving him. He had little strength left. But he had not given them the information they wanted. They had tried to force him to sign a confession, and reveal to them the names of Christian pastors and their flocks, and also, of course, to deny Yesu as Lord.

“Confess your crimes against the state,” they yelled again and again, “and then perhaps you will be forgiven.”

Omar remembered taking the pen from the dark faced security officer. He could barely see to write. He scribbled on the note pad, and then gave it back to the grinning police commander. The head police officer looked at the note and became red in the face—flushing with rage. He read the scribbled writing: “Yesu is King.”

This is what you dare to write me? He spit with anger as he reached in back and picked up something heavy from behind his desk.

All Omar remembered was the led pipe coming against his head, and then waking up again in a dirty, stinking cell. He knew that the end was near. But now instead of the cold, icy fingers of death around his neck, and the cruel reality of a world that hated Jesus, Omar could see and feel a soft golden light beginning to envelope him. He whispered the word “freedom,” and then lifted his broken hand to the One who was lifting him up out of his pain.

19 Great Faith

“Are you in love with Nasir?” Robert asked Adeela, while they sat in the late afternoon sun in Zakia’s small back yard.

Adeela looked up at Robert slightly surprised. “We go back a long ways, Robert. I have only truly loved one man in this world. A man and woman kind of love, that is, not the love of a child and father.”

“Yes, I understand.”

“My husband, Danial, and I were only married for less than one year. And it was a pretty difficult year. We knew that when we got married that I would continue with my job, because it was very important to Jesus. But there were times when I would have quit my job, so that I could be closer to Danial. But my husband would not let me quit. He knew that one day that I would regret it. And I am sure he was right.”

“That must have been so very hard for you, Adeela?”

“It was hard for both of us, Robert, but it’s during those very difficult times in your life that you come to know just how great your strength is in the Lord. When they arrested my Danial I did not think I could bear it. I wanted so desperately to be with him. Of course I was never allowed to see him before he died, but I know that Yesu has taken him to his beautiful, heavenly home, and one day I will join him. Yes, one day we will all be together in heaven—where Yesu has gone to prepare a place for us.

“My sister in the faith, Rabia, has also suffered greatly. Her first husband was a Muslim and he treated Rabia with much disgrace. This was why Rabia began to search for the truth. She knew it was not in the religion she had grown up with. When her husband and his family found out that Rabia was secretly reading the Bible and had attended a Christian gathering, they took her young daughter from her, and then beat Rabia, and kicked her out of her home into the streets.

And later when her twelve year old daughter ran away and tried to find her mother, then they married her off to a brutal, old man—who lives far away in another part of the country.

Rabia prays for her daughter, Farah, every day. She had read the Bible with her mother and received Yesu as her Lord, and so one day Rabia knows she will see her daughter again in God’s Kingdom.

And in God's heaven no one will ever be able to steal our children from us again, or cause us any pain. There will be no more tears, and no more heartache. Do you believe this, Robert?" Adeela smiled at her friend. Robert was beginning to look more like a Pakistani every day. His dark, curly hair had grown longer, and he was now showing forth a black beard, touched with gray and silver. He looked almost oriental.

"Yes, Adeela, I do believe that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for his beloved family, and I believe what the Bible says that He is coming back again—maybe sooner than we think. I have spent much of my life seeking the things of the world, but if I ever get back home I am going to try and make this up to my family. But that's going to take a lot of prayer and the grace of God. I sure don't deserve it."

Adeela put her hand on Robert's shoulder. But look what He has done so far? There is nothing our God cannot or will not do, when our heart is right before him. You are a good man, Robert. You just needed some major Holy Spirit intervention in your life." She laughed softly.

"You can say that again!"

"Come! Let's go see what Zakia's wife has cooked in her pot for dinner."

Sena watched with wide eyes as the large angel brought her husband, Hasan, to the door of their little house. Tears rolled down her cheeks, as she began to thank her God. Jabbar and Asad, her two sons, ran out the door to greet and hug their Baba.

The angel gently laid Hasan down on the small bed in the house and then smiled at Sena and said, "Take good care of your husband. He is considered a great man in heaven." He smiled at the two little boys and then walked out the door, but when the children rushed to follow him, he had simply disappeared.

Hasan sat up and embraced his wife and sons. "My father and grandfather were both imprisoned and killed by the evil men who stole me from my family. But our merciful God has been faithful to this unworthy servant and has made a way for him to come home

to his loved ones. I will praise him, all the days of my life—my great and loving Father and Savior.”

“Robert.” Adeela greeted him as he came in from reading his Bible outside. “The people who come for our church meeting would like to hear the American Christian share the Word of God with them. They are convinced that you are a respected pastor in America.

“Did you tell them I am not?”

“Well, I tried, but they would not listen. Pastor Faisal also tried to talk to them, but they think for some reason we are just trying to protect you. They think because you are always reading the Bible and spend much time alone, that you must be a pastor. This is my suggestion, Robert. Tonight at the church service just spend a small amount of time and read from the Bible. They will be so grateful to have received the Word of God from you. Believe me, it will not take much to please them.

“I don’t know, Adeela. I’ve never shared the Bible with anyone, not even my own family.”

“You are a lot more qualified than you think. Besides, it’s the Bible that does all the work. All you have to do is to read from it. Now, you have a couple of hours to think about it. When Pastor Faisal looks in your direction you can either get up, or shake your head ‘no.’ He will understand. Now, I have to put my scarf on my head and go down to the market to shop. I know you will make the right decision.” Adeela squeezed Robert’s hand and then left the room where they were sitting.

“Wait, Adeela.” Robert wanted to go after her, and get this settled, but he knew her well enough to know that she had made up her mind. He picked up the Bible and turned to the book of John. He could feel a slight twitch in his eye.

The small group that came to Zakia’s house a couple times a week had become family to him, and he had grown very fond of them and looked forward to being with them, whenever they would come.

He had considered, more than once, how strange this would seem to Melissa. Her jet-setting-x-husband, who had little patience for her

Christian friends, was now sitting on a wooden bench in one of the poorest places in the world, reading the Bible and enjoying church like he never had before.

Two older men, in typical Pakistani work clothes, came over to shake Robert's hand. They smiled broadly at him—not the least bit embarrassed that most of their teeth were missing. The small lamp in the center of the room gave some dim light for the faithful group to shake hands and hug each other. So different, Robert thought, from the artificial shakes and brief hugs he had learned to do in the church at home. These people really meant it. They hugged each other with tears, as if they might never see one another again. A few men sat down on the bench next to Robert and they all squeezed together. The women, on the other side of the room, smiled briefly in his direction.

Pastor Faisal came to the front of the room, and greeted his Christian family. Then they began to sing a song that was really a scripture in the Bible. Adeela had told Robert that this way they could all sing the same song. They had no song sheets.

“We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One
who is and who was and who is to come, because you
have taken your great power and reigned.”

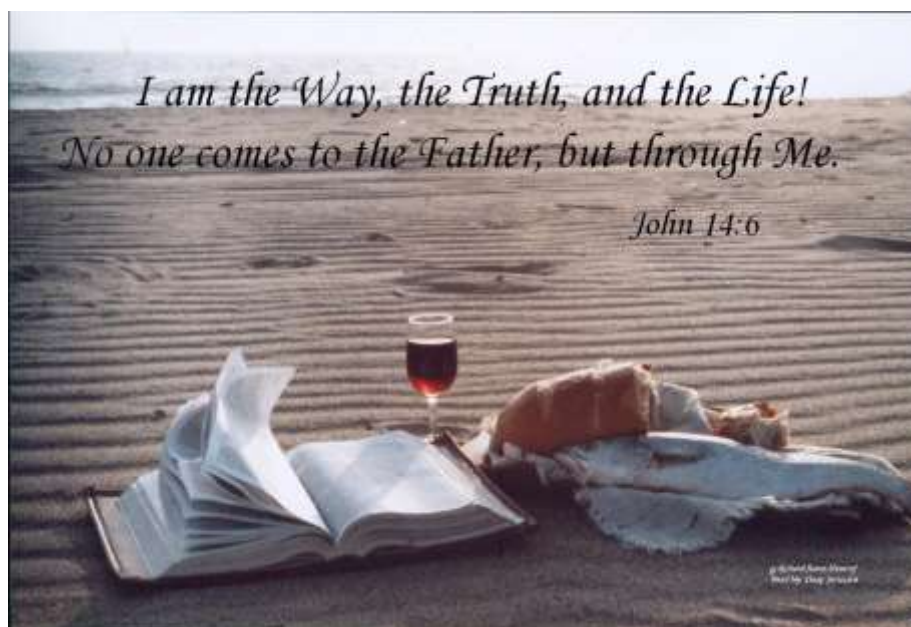
Robert thought the melody was very catchy. The main verse was repeated several times, and other story words were fitted in. He had really gotten into the swing of these little songs. Again, it was so different from what he had experienced before. After the worship songs were finished Pastor Faisal looked at Robert, waiting for his response. Robert picked up the small Bible from his lap and walked to the front of the room. He could hear affirming sounds coming from the people around him. Pastor Faisal greeted him and shook his hand vigorously.

All the people smiled enthusiastically when Robert began to read from the book of John. Adeela stood next to him and translated the message. “Now, I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to you. Holy Father, keep through your name these whom you have given me, that they may be one as we are one...”

Robert's voice was strong and vital. The group sat mesmerized with the reading of the Word from the Bible. He had planned on reading just a few scriptures and then giving the podium back to the pastor, but the people seemed to be drawing more from him. He read a good part of the book of John before he quit. When he stopped he could tell the faithful ones were disappointed. "Perhaps," he said, "our dear pastor will let me read to you again, but for now I feel Yesu would have me stop, so that we can pray."

"Yes," Pastor Faisal said. "We will be honored to have this great man of God read to us again."

Robert had felt a new anointing come upon him as he read the Word, but now he looked down, a little embarrassed with all the fanfare. He looked over at Adeela. She smiled back at him and nodded her head in agreement with the Pastor.



20 Brave Hearts

Robert walked outside and sat under a small tree. The sky was clear and bright with stars. It had felt so good to be used by God to encourage his Pakistani friends. But now as he looked up at the stars he realized that by experiencing the love of these people he had also opened up his heart to feel the pain that he had been blocking for so many years. It was not explosive, but slowly, tears began to drop onto his cheeks, and he hung his head down feeling the shame of what he had put his family through. He did not feel worthy to be used by God for anything. He prayed quietly.

Once again he felt the buzz of his coded company phone in his pocket. Tom had been leaving messages for the last few days. But Robert had not answered the calls. He dared not put his Pakistani friends in harm's way, and the more he thought about it the more he realized how corrupt the work he had been doing for Tom really was.

And he knew they had ways of finding things out. Having the secret coded device on him could possibly provide a way to track him, and of course they would give the information to the general—at the general's request.

But so far they had not yet done that. He took the phone and with a stick began to dig a good sized hole in the moist ground, and then he buried it—hoping the wet earth would help to at least deactivate it.

He actually felt a great relief to not have this memento of his lost life on him anymore. He realized that his previous admiration for the corporation, even for Tom, had now become a sick disdain for the way that he had once lived.

How could he have sunk so low? He tried to look back to see where it started. He began to remember that certain ideas had been planted in his mind, even at the Jesuit University which he attended. What these Jesuit trained leaders of the world stood for and what they produced did not have anything to do with God's plan for his family on earth, but was inextricably linked to profit and gain. The end game was all that mattered, and how you got there was not a consideration.

He now realized that the people he thought were so exciting may have been beautiful on the outside, but on the inside they were empty and pitiful. He felt a sick emptiness when he thought about how pure and faithful his wife had been to him, and how much in love they had once been. He hoped one day to get back to America just to be able to ask his wife and kids to forgive him.

When he walked back inside the little house Adeela's lamp was turned off. He curled up on his cot and pulled the blanket over him. He fell asleep and then he dreamed.

In the dream he saw Adeela standing at the end of a path, and she was teaching some people about Jesus. She was the beautiful Godly woman he had truly come to know, and not the general's powerful aid, that he had first perceived her to be. In the dream she looked at Robert and smiled. It was a sweet, almost innocent smile. He stood on this path for a few minutes and listened to her teach the truths of God to her people.

He then began to walk down a path that went past this small group of people and came to a defined fork in the road. One way led into a dark, but lovely forest. There were some very sophisticated people standing near the entrance, and they were beckoning him to join them. One of the women in this group was incredibly beautiful. The lure on her face was also very provocative. Robert found himself studying every part of her, and the more he did the more he was aware of a tugging to join them—especially her. For a second he thought he saw Tom's laughing face.

"Come, Robert." The thoughts seemed to float through the air towards him. He forced himself to look in the other direction, and when he did, for an instant, he saw his former wife and his children. Melissa briefly glanced his way, and then began to walk away with a group of friends.

Robert was surprised that it took a determined strength to turn away from the party crowd and the dark forest, and begin to walk the other way—where his family had been. When he began to walk on that path he briefly looked over his shoulder at the others. He was shocked! Instead of powerful, beautiful people he saw something that reminded

Him of a horror movie he had once watched. They had all become dark, demonic looking skeletons—pitiful and defiled. They were in fact very dead. He knew in his heart that he must pray for Tom and for all the others. He felt a grave trembling, knowing that this was where he had been for the last part of his life. He walked faster down the other path.

Soon a very nice looking man in a white tunic, who was bathed in a heavenly peace, began to walk with him. When he looked up at his face he knew instantly that it was Jesus. Immediately tears came to Robert's eyes. He looked away from Jesus—remembering the impulse that he had just been feeling when looking at that attractive woman. Jesus smiled at Robert, and put his arm around his son.

A great unexpected peace entered Robert's heart. Tears from God's grace and mercy fell from his eyes onto his face. And Robert knew for the first time in his life that he was truly loved with an eternal love.

“My Father and I have wonderful plans for your life, Robert. You belong to us, now. The price has been paid. But you must hold on to me very tight. You still live in a flesh body, and the devil will always try to snare you back into the old life. The temptations will not just disappear because now you have chosen to walk with me. But when you turn from evil and call on my name, the Holy Spirit, now living in you, will always give you the strength to overcome any temptation.

You have seen with your own eyes what is behind the rich and glamorous life on this earth—never forget it! You have been called and chosen, Robert, to be a brave heart.” Jesus smiled—his dark, brown eyes sparkled. “My brave hearts live in every nation of this world. They have made the hard but glorious decision to follow me, and to lay down their lives for one another. They are, Robert, my true and faithful, called and chosen ones.

“This journey is not meant to always be easy or pleasant, but you will experience times of great joy and peace, and you will never want any part of your old life back again. This path always requires the ability to surrender all things to me and to your Father in heaven. The Father and I are One. The most important lesson a child of mine must learn is to trust me with all his heart. Will you let me raise you up, Robert, to be one of my brave hearts?”

When Robert looked up at Jesus he knew that he had been asked a very serious question. But he knew now there was nothing he would not do for Jesus. He was ready to fully surrender his life to his God and Savior.



21 The Beginning Journey

The words ‘deeply loved’ resonated through Robert, as he opened his eyes from the dream. He laid very still on the cot. It was cool in the small room. The others were not yet awake! He could feel the peace of the Holy Spirit in his heart. A new language began to bubble up out of him that he did not understand. It was like a river of glory.

The words “to Him be the glory” formed on his lips. What joy and what peace! He felt he could stay where he was forever.

“Hey.” Adeela stepped out from behind the curtain. “What happened to you last night? I was a little worried, until I saw you sitting outside. Did you get ambushed by God? By the way! You look like you’ve just had a burning bush experience.”

Robert sat up and smiled at Adeela. He remembered how pure and beautiful she had been in the dream. “Yes, I’ve had quite a visit with the Lord. I will share what I can a little later. I am not quite ready to talk yet.”

“Must have really been something. You are making me jealous.” She laughed softly. “Let’s go have a little rice and then maybe you can share some of what happened last night?”

Nasir walked into the room, as they were getting ready to leave. He looked upset. “Adeela and Robert,” he said, “I need to talk with you now, and I need for Pastor Faisal to hear what I have to say.”

Nasir looked at Robert and Adeela with concern. “We have a big problem, and I am afraid there is little time now to make plans. Someone from Karachi came to the village this morning. He was dressed like a poor man, who was looking for some kind of work, but my neighbor was suspicious by the way that he talked. He did not, as you say in America, Robert, fit the bill. And then he started asking my neighbor if he knew of an American man living in our community.

“Obad told him ‘no.’ But then a child came over, after hearing the conversation, and told him that ‘yes’ there was an American living here, and then the child pointed to this house. The child of course was hoping for a handout. Since he did not come to my house then we must be strongly suspicious that he phoned to Karachi to get extra help. This means that we must leave here now.”

“You must all leave quickly,” Pastor Faisal said to them. “I have no doubt that the general and his military will soon be here.”

Nasir spoke again to Robert and Adeela. “We will head northeast, about a five day walk towards Basdin. It is not far from the border with India, and I have a friend there who will introduce us to the Christian community where he lives.

“Robert, the other day I saw you had a compass in your hand.”

“Yes, I brought it from America. Since I’ve been doing so much traveling, the last few years, I thought it was a good idea just to have one in my luggage—in case of an emergency.”

“Well, it looks like that emergency has happened. The compass will serve us well. And Pastor Faisal, whatever food you can spare will be greatly appreciated.”

“Yes, my wife has a pot of rice already cooked. We will put some in pouches for you, and some bread. And we will give you some Yak blankets to take with you. They will keep you warm in these very cold nights.”

“Thank you. Now we must hurry.”

“Baba.” Pastor Faisal’s ten year old son came running into the room. “We just got a call that there are some soldiers coming in trucks. Asid said they are about fifteen kilometers away from the village, and that a general is with them.”

“Come!” Nasir put his hand on Adeela’s arm. “We must now move very fast. We are about two hours from the valley of Sevet. We can hide there in one of the caves.”

“Here!” Pastor Faisal spoke hurriedly to them. “Take these blankets and here is some food my wife put in a sack for you. Now you must go, and do not worry about us. I will tell the people to run and hide in the trees until they are gone. We know all too well the retribution that they can bring against Christians.

Nasir motioned for Robert and Adeela to move faster. They had been walking briskly down the dirt road for about one hour. Nasir had been watching for the bus to come. He desperately wanted to get off of the small road, and into a more secure, hidden place.

“Look.” Adeela pointed to a bus coming in their direction.

“This is surely the goodness of God,” Nasir said.

As Robert climbed up the steps to get on the bus, he turned and looked over his shoulder towards the village they had left.

“Oh, no!” he said with fear and panic. “There is a lot of smoke coming from the village.”

“Oh, Yesu!” Adeela spoke his name, under her breath, as she stepped onto the bus. “They are burning the village. We must pray that Pastor Faisal and the others made a safe escape.” She continued to pray quietly as they took their seats on the bus.

Nasir pointed beyond to a small town that lay near the foothills of a mountainous area. “I had the bus stop before we came into the town of Sevet. I once came to this town, some years ago—a short time before I began to work for the general. I had made a friend in Sadi Town, who felt a real desire to come here and share the Gospel, even though it is known to be a radical Muslim stronghold. My old friend was very courageous—more than me.

“I have not seen him for a few years. Our adventure into Sevet did not last for very long. I was not so brave then and waited for my friend outside the town. And when I saw a raging crowd of people coming after him with sticks, telling him to leave, I ran for the hills, and we escaped to one of the caves.

“I do not think anyone would remember me, but just to make sure I decided it would be safer to walk from here to the cave. But I see up head what looks like a small tea house. We will stop and see if it might be safe to rest for a few minutes.”

“That would be wonderful,” Adeela responded, smiling at Robert and Nasir.

The small tea house was called ‘The House of Mazeem.’ Nasir stopped and looked at the name with curiosity. Inside there was only one table, but a small fireplace kept the house warm, and they were glad to sit down and rest. A woman dressed in a long blue skirt and blouse came over to greet them. She was very pleasant.

“Is your husband’s name Mazeem?” Nasir asked her.

“Yes,” the woman answered, somewhat cautiously.

“I am not sure, but perhaps I know him. If he is home would you tell him that Nasir is here?”

Soon a large man, with a black and gray beard came into the room and immediately went over and gave Nasir a big hug. “Ahh, my friend! It has been too long since I last saw you. You must tell me what is new in your life, and why you are here?”

Nasir introduced Robert and Adeela to Mazeem. “This is my friend that I told you about—the crazy man, who was determined to share Yesu in this village.” Nasir joined with Mazeem in his laughter.

“Yes, but you only know part of the story. Perhaps I will share with you the rest of what happened. But first you must tell me what you are doing out here?”

“We are running from the police, Mazeem. It is a very long story, and a dangerous one. We were on our way up to the cave, to spend the night, when we saw this little tea house. Although it seemed like a strange place for a teahouse, out here on this road.

“Well, you will not spend the night in the cave. You will stay here in our home, and enjoy a good meal. Then you can tell me some more about where you are going.”

22 On the Run

The meal was very tasty and plentiful. Robert's head was a little fuzzy from the strong wine that Mazeem's wife gave him, and from the excitement of the day. Mazeem had presumed that Robert was a minister from America. Robert had avoided talking about his own life and had encouraged Mazeem to share more of what Nasir had told them about their adventure together.

"After Yesu saved me and my family from eternal death, and from my sinful past, I spent much time in prayer. I was so very grateful. But after a couple of years I began to feel convicted. Although I was saved there were so many lost sheep in the near-by villages that would go to hell, unless someone told them about Yesu.

"So one day I told my friend, Nasir, who did not live too far from me at that time, that we must go to the village of Sevet and share the Gospel. I think, perhaps, Nasir thought I was a little crazy in the head." He laughed. "But after he prayed, he too thought it was what God wanted us to do.

"When we came to the village I handed out some Gospel tracts. Nasir decided to wait for me a short distance outside the town." He looked over and smiled at Nasir.

"I then began to share the story of Yesu with a particular family. Some of the people in the village found out what I was doing, and began to chase me and beat me with sticks—telling me to leave and never come back. I ran out of the town and Nasir and I then found a cave where we could hide for the night."

"But how, my friend, did you come back here and open up a tea house?" Nasir asked him.

"After we left this area I went home and told my wife what had happened. She was so grateful that I had not been killed. And you, Nasir, then moved to a place near Karachi, and began to work for the general—your secret assignment from the Lord. But now this is the interesting part. About two months later I was walking down a small road in our town and this very dignified and handsome man came near and began to walk with me. He seemed to know much about me. And then he asked me if I had prayed to the Lord about going back to Sevet? Now this astounded me! And it also made me think about the

fact that I had never thought about going back to Sevet. I believed that if I had gone back there they would surely have killed me. In fact I had even wondered if I had misunderstood God's will, the first time."

"I will make this story a little short, because it growing late, and I know you are tired. This man of God, who calls himself Simon, said he would go with me, and that the people would receive Yesu, and so we went back to Sevet.

Simon knew exactly what house we were to go to. When we walked into their house we could see that there was much grieving and sadness. A little girl lay on a bed, and you could tell she was close to death. Simon prayed over her, in the name of Yesu, and she opened her eyes and was well. The news soon spread to every home in Sevet and then we began to pray for many people, and they were all healed, and soon many of them received Yesu as their Lord. It was a glorious day. Almost all of the people in the village of Sevet are now believers in Yesu, but they are quiet about it. They still fear the Muslim radicals and have not yet come to the place where they are ready to lay down their lives for him.

"They asked me to stay, and they put up this little tea house for us. They have a great hunger to be taught the words of the Bible.

"I had to spend some time to convince my wife that this was where God wanted us to move, but we came and have been here now for almost four years. I teach the people here, for they are not literate and there are few Bibles. Sometimes I go to other villages to share the Gospel. I have grown more skillful in how to do this, and stronger in the Holy Spirit, since I spend much time with the Lord in prayer."

"Did this man ever talk more with you about his life, or has he ever come to visit you here?" Adeela asked him.

"Sometimes, Adeela, he will stop here for a cup of tea, and he will share with us what he has been doing. He has a very warm and loving way about him, and always gives glory and praise to Yesu. He has many amazing stories to share how God has worked in his life. But he has never shared with me about his past, or where he comes from. I have always found that a little strange, but then he is a man different from most.

“You should not have any problems, Nasir, in this town of Sevet.

“But now it is getting late, and I can tell that you need to rest. So we will say goodnight and perhaps we can enjoy a morning meal together.”

Robert stepped out onto the wood porch. The moon was a large, orange ball in the sky. He felt strangely alone. Adeela had been a good friend, but now he missed his family more than ever. He walked back into the house and stretched out on the cot that Mazeem’s wife had given him. Nasir was already asleep and snoring. Robert pulled a blanket over his shoulders and prayed for Melissa and his son and daughter.

He was glad that he had left some extra money with Melissa before he left for Pakistan. He had no doubt that the corporation had stopped putting any payments into his account, and might have even put a freeze on it. He knew there was little they would not do to protect their interests. But a couple of months earlier, for some reason, he had felt compelled to open up a second account, in Melissa’s name. And he had deposited a fair amount of money into that account. A time would come when having money in a bank would be of no use to true Christians, but for now it was something he could use to help his family. He sighed, and he thanked God for how merciful and good God had been to him for bringing him out of the depths of hell that he had sunk so deep into. He closed his eyes, and prayed for the journey that would now take them on the last leg of their trip to safety.

23 Meanwhile Back At Home

Melissa brought a cup of tea to her mouth. The hot liquid felt good on her throat. She had been fighting against some kind of a cold and flu for a few days. She needed to take better care of her health, and that meant more sleep and good healthy food. Ever since the authorities had come to her house and threatened to take Sam and Cindy from her, unless she put them back in school, she had struggled with getting enough sleep at night.

They had told her that the courts would determine her to be an unfit mother, and that she would then lose her children permanently. She knew she had no choice but to agree for Samuel and Cindy to go back to the community school—which she had taken them out of one month earlier.

Homeschooling had now been banned, and it was either flee or put them back in that horrible school. The Collective-Community schools had now, basically, taken complete custody of all the children. Parents had no say in what their children were taught or told to do, and where they were told to go. This even included long after-school programs that sometimes went into the night hours. Melissa always had to make sure she was there to pick them up, or they would be sent someplace else for the night.

What happened to the children during the school and after school hours had brought great concern to many Christian parents, but they dared not say anything to anyone, for fear that they would be put on a list to have their kids taken from them. Everything now was done by computerized lists—they had lists for every aspect of what they called ‘community life.’

Children and families were already categorized on one of three different lists. If you were Jewish you were put on the red list. If you were a Bible believing Christian you were put on a blue list, and if you declared no religious affinity then your name went on the more beneficial green list. But it was the many child abuse stories that she continued to hear about that really scared Melissa, and she prayed over her children day and night. The long hours of indoctrination into the collective one-world-program had brought doubt and a

blurring of values to Sam and Cindy. Changes in their attitudes and behavior were becoming more obvious. They were confused and frightened. Day after day they were being told that all their Biblical upbringing was not the truth, and this had brought tumult into their young lives. Melissa had tried to reassure them that things would not be like this forever. But more and more they would not listen to their mother, and would sometimes even speak to her in a mocking and disrespectful way.

She was getting little sleep. The tears came easily. She closed her eyes. It was during these moments that she really wished that Robert had not changed, and was still with her. But she knew now that God was her only hope.

She also knew that some of her neighbors were undergoing the same kind of trauma, but they dared not make contact with each other. Everyone was being watched—big brother's eyes were everywhere. America was now one of ten regions in the world, being governed by a tyrannical system, and now directed exclusively by a religious and political leader and his group in Rome.

Even at home they were watched in so many different ways. She had long since gotten rid of her television, knowing that while they had it on, there was a security 'eye' looking back at them. But she was determined to not let this make her paranoid. She knew where her strength came from, and one day—soon—this Orwellian nightmare would be over with, and God's Kingdom would be established on the earth. She knew from God's unbreakable word that it was true!

Jody was still living with them. The kids had promised not to say anything to their friends or their teachers. They loved Jody, and they knew it was important for her safety to be quiet about her living in their home. The kids did not quite understand why Jody had to stay hidden, but they had been taught at school that being either Jewish or Christian was not good for the collective community. Jews, in particular, were seen as a different race, and the gradual, but on-going propaganda for the last few years had now reached a point of outright discrimination. The dictatorial, beast government had even passed a version of the Enabling Act of 1933, which now prevented Jewish people from being hired in almost every sector of public employment.

And much of the non-Jewish population had now been convinced that people who still clung to ancient religious ideas of a Biblical God were a real obstacle for the new world they envisioned. And of course Christians, who also insisted on a Biblical view point, were equally targeted in the new vilification program. Conservative Christians and religious Jews were a problem that must be dealt with.

Public synagogues and Bible based churches no longer existed. Melissa had watched over the last couple of years as many of the denominational churches had agreed to go along with the new anti-God and anti-Bible community programs. These churches had agreed to accept the new world bible—which had removed any offensive language to any particular groupings, and had also removed anything that related to any kind of super natural experiences that had once been found in the Old and New Testament.

Jesus was simply represented as a nice man, who wanted to help the poor. To preach anything else was now considered blasphemy and listed under the hate laws. And these anti-Bible laws were enforced vigorously. But Melissa was also aware that for a long time many of these more liberal churches had been preaching a different Gospel, so for them the anti-God transformation was less difficult.

The true Church in America had gone underground. They would meet secretly where they could declare the truth of God's Word from the Bible, and were free to pray for each other. But they had to be very careful how and where they met. Every neighborhood was monitored and everyone was watched closely—any activity, or people who were viewed as different, were reported to the authorities.

“Be aware,” it had been repeated day and night by the news media, “of people who do not belong in your community.” And then they gave a particular phone number for people to call if they saw anything strange, or someone who did not belong in their neighborhood.

After the economic crash, and destruction which had wiped out a good part of the east coast, the dollar had been reduced by thirty three percent. There was hardly enough of anything to make ends meet, and true Christians were at the bottom of the line, and for Jews it was even worse. Melissa and her kids were still managing to eat fairly well, but Melissa was not sure how long that would last. She

had not received anything from Robert in a month. She had even tried calling him on his coded phone, but the number no longer worked. She was really beginning to worry if something had happened to him in Pakistan. She wrung her hands, and then pushed a strand of auburn hair back from her eyes. And then she prayed.

Jody had gotten antsy and had gone for a walk in the woods. It was of course against the law to hide or provide a place of safety for the Jewish people, and Jody had stayed hidden away in a downstairs room for almost two months. The stress was beginning to show on both of them, even though they loved and respected each other a lot.

Melissa had been concerned when Jody decided to go outside. She knew that everyone, including most of her neighbors, would report anyone who seemed different. But Jody had gone out the back door, which led from a path in the yard to a small forest. The only one who could have seen her leave the house would be Jack, her next door neighbor. And he already knew all about Jody. He was a good man and not easily taken into the mind poisoning that was going on in so many places.

There was a part of Melissa that wanted to see and talk to Robert. But it was a feeling that went back to a different time, when she could still count on her husband. That had all changed, and now he was a different man. The only thing that gave her some hope was the underground home group that she belonged to. She knew that there were many other small, hidden, Christian groups that would come together as often as they could. But they never acknowledged one another in public.

Being with true Christian friends and hearing the Word of God spoken out loud, along with regularly praying in the Holy Spirit and singing worship songs, was what gave her the strength to keep going.

She looked up with tears in her eye, and prayed what she always prayed. "Come Lord Jesus...please, come soon."

24 Escape to India

Robert had just sat down at the small table with Nasir and Adeela, ready to enjoy a nice breakfast, when Mazeem's wife came into the room with a worried look on her face. "Mazeem." She looked at her husband and then at Nasir. "One of our friends from the village came over here to tell us that the police are searching the village for some escaped Christians. I think he just wanted to warn us, in case anyone was staying with us."

"This is not good," Mazeem answered his wife. "You will need to leave quickly, Nasir. I think you must go up toward the caves and from there you can go around the mountain to the other side. It will take you a day longer to reach Badin, but I think it is the only safe route now for you to take." Mazeem stood up and motioned for his wife to come and put some extra food in Nasir's bag.

"Come Robert and Adeela. Grab your coats! We must run before they come this way."

Robert and Adeela sat down next to a wall in the large cave. They could see where a small fire pit had been dug out and often used.

"These caves," Nasir said, "are used by traveling Bedouins and I am sure by many others who are escaping from the police. We dare not stay here for long. The authorities know about these caves too."

"Come and look." Adeela and Robert walked to where Nasir was standing—on a ledge that over looked the valley. They could see the village of Sevet not too far away. "Take these binoculars and look near the road that goes to Mazeem's house. You can see some of the military trucks driving on that road and they are coming in this direction."

Robert and Adeela both looked at what Nasir was pointing to.

"This is why we need to get on the other side of this mountain as soon as we can," Nasir said. "I don't think they will keep looking for us when we reach the border lands. At least I hope not. I am sorry that we cannot rest longer." Nasir then reached into the sack that Mazeem's wife had handed him when they left, and gave them both a piece of meat and a chunk of bread. They ate the food as they

quickly followed Nasir out of the cave and down a winding path.

Nasir warned his friends, "Watch your steps." It was dark when they came to a small cluster of trees, near a pond. The moon was bright, and they had easily been able to follow a dirt path from the bottom of the mountain to the oasis. They had now been walking for over eight hours, and they were all exhausted.

"I am sure," Nasir said, "by tomorrow we will be able to make it to Badin before nightfall. Adeela sat down under one of the palm trees, and pulled the warm Yak blanket over her. She knew it would be cold during the night, but they would stay warm under the animal blankets. They were all too tired to start a fire. They had eaten most of the food that Mazeem's wife had given them, but still had some water left.

They had all said 'goodnight' to each other when Nasir jumped up from his blanket. "What was that?" he said in a startled voice.

"Please do not be afraid?" A voice in the dark spoke to him.

"Who is there?" he shouted.

"We are just a husband and wife. We will be bedding down for the night near these trees." He pointed to some trees not far from where Nasir was standing. "We have traveled a long distance, and are very weary. My wife is pregnant and we must rest. Please! We will not be of any bother to you."

Adeela and Robert had also stood up. "What are your names?" Adeela gently asked them.

"My wife is Merriam and I am called Adam. We have come from Afghanistan. We have moved many times. We are going towards India. I heard you praying, and so I know you are Christian, or I would not have approached you." The young man smiled at Adeela, as he put his arm around his wife.

"We welcome you, my friends." Nasir smiled at them. "Do you have something warm to cover yourselves with for the cold night?"

"We had friends in Afghanistan who gave us a small tent, and yes, we do have a blanket. We will be fine. Thank you very much. It is so very nice to find faithful ones here. We are wonderfully surprised."

"Can we give you something to eat?"

"We would be very grateful. We have not had any food all day.

“Here!” Robert took the rest of his meat and bread and gave it to the visitors. The husband and wife looked at each other, and smiled.

“Thank you very much. Our Yesu is so very good to his children. Now we are very tired and so we will go and put up our tent. I hope we see you in the morning before you leave?”

The next morning Nasir had started a small fire and had boiled some water, and they all had a cup of strong coffee. Pastor Faisal’s wife had put it in the sack she had given them before they left Sadi Town. They shared together two small tin cups. Adam and Merriam sat around the fire pit with them, and told them about some of their long journey, and their need to soon find a safe place to rest.

“My wife and I have been on the run ever since our family in Afghanistan found out that we had converted to the Christian faith.

“My Yesu,” Adam continued, “saved me and has given me life from death, and my bride also.” He smiled at his wife and took her hand.

“My dear mother gave us what money she had saved, before we left our village. We have tried to find a place where we can settle and work, but as soon as we register as refugees the local Muslims find out who we are and refuse to accept us. We have endured much hardship and persecution for Yesu...but he is worth so much more than our own personal suffering for him.”

“My wife was beaten very bad by her father, and the doctor told her that her baby would die in the womb or be born with many defects. But I have prayed for my wife, as God asked me to do. And we are believing that our child is not dead, even though there has not been any movement in a few days. We are trusting for a miracle from God. But please pray that Yesu will soon find us a place to rest, because our child will be born soon.”

“You will follow us, Adam.” Nasir spoke to them. “There is a Christian village near the border with India, and I think you will be safe there. They are very good people who will help you and your wife. But now we must all begin to walk. We should be there before the sun goes down.”

Rauif sat on his porch near the entrance to the village and watched as the weary travelers came near. He immediately recognized his friend, Nasir, and also Adeela. He ran to greet them.

“My friends, it is so good to see you, but I can see that you have come a long ways. You must be very tired. Come and we will find you a place where you can rest. We are very fortunate in this village. We have had much prayer, and the man of God often times comes to help us when we are in need.”

“Ahhh,” Nasir spoke. “Once again I hear about this man of God. Perhaps it is the same man that Mazeem was telling us about—this man called Simon. I hope to meet him while we are here? But now, Rauif, let me tell you something that is also important. We met these Christians,” he pointed to Merriam and Adam, “at the oasis, yesterday. She is in need of a place to rest, because soon her baby will be born. And we must pray for the child that she carries, that God will not only keep the baby alive, but that her child will be born a normal and healthy baby.”

“Oh, yes!” Rauif answered him. “I will tell my wife Kalina. Hasan and his wife Sena and their two sons have also moved to our village. Do you remember them?”

“Yes, Rauif. I remember him well—a very dedicated soldier for the Lord.”

“I cannot wait to tell you the most amazing experience we had, and the mighty angel that helped us.”

Robert and Adeela turned and looked at Rauif when he mentioned the angel.

“I am sure it is a great story, my friend, but now we must get this woman to where she can lay down. Her pains are beginning.”

“Yes, we will pray to Yesu, and he will help us.”

25 A child is Born

Rauif and Kalina took Merriam into their small home and helped her to lay down on a thin mattress.

“I am afraid.” Merriam spoke breathlessly. “I do not feel the life of my baby. Please pray!”

Rauif closed his eyes and quietly prayed for Yesu to bring life to Marriam’s baby. He also asked Yesu to send for the man of God to help her, and to lay his anointed, healing hands on her baby. Many people in their village had been healed when he would come and pray for Yesu to make them well.

Adam paced outside the house, calling upon God for his wife and child. Adeela and Robert had gone to the house next to Rauif’s to lay down and rest for a few minutes. They were warmly welcomed. Neither of them slept, but they rested, and had some hot tea.

When they went back to Rauif’s house, Adeela saw a man bending over Merriam and he was praying for her. She did not recognize him, but wondered if he was the man of God that both Nasir and Rauif had talked about. He was deep in prayer and did not even notice when they walked into the room. Simon was speaking quietly to Merriam.

Adeela was transfixed as she watched Simon pray for the pregnant woman. As he prayed a soft, golden light seemed to encircle her. Robert quickly walked out side to get Adam. He wanted him to see the miracle that was taking place.

“Ohhh,” Merriam cried out. “I just felt my baby move.” Tears began to fill her eyes. Adam knelt down next to her and took her hand.

“The child will soon be born in a few minutes,” Simon then told the others. “And everything will be fine. Our God is very loving and merciful.”

“This is the man of God I was telling you about,” Rauif said, smiling a large smile.

“Yes, I sensed right away that it was him.” Nasir then stood up and with tears in his eyes walked over and hugged Simon. “God has done some mighty miracles this day.”

Rauif spook to Robert. The morning sun was just starting to break over the hills that surrounded the village. There are some believers, on the other side of the border, Robert. They can help you get back to America. I will show you the way there soon. It is less than one day's walk from here."

"Thank you, Rauif. This has been a most amazing journey and I am so glad that God has allowed me to meet you and be a part of your wonderful and amazing Christian family here in Pakistan. You have all been a part of God's plan to change my life so radically. I will always be grateful to my friends in Pakistan." He laughed softly.

"My coming here has turned out much different from what I had expected. But now, I must go and say good-bye to my good friends, Adeela and Nasir.

Rauif walked back with Robert into his small house. Nasir and Adeela and the young parents, Adam and Merriam, were sitting and talking with each other. Merriam had covered herself with a blanket, while she nursed her new born baby. She smiled a big smile when Robert and Rauif came in.

"I am so happy for you, Merriam and Adam. You have a very beautiful little boy. And I know he will be raised with much love and will be taught the ways of God from the Bible—the next generation to help change Pakistan into a Christian nation." Robert then looked at Adeela, who was sitting next to Nasir. He walked over to where she was and put his hand on her shoulder, and then sat down next to her.

"Well, my dear friends," he glanced at Nasir. "I owe you so much, but now I must be leaving. My place is back in America. I need to find my family and I hope they can forgive me, and then the Lord will show me what he has planned for me there. But now I am on the right side—the side serving God.

"If Melissa is correct, and I am sure she is, then that will mean trouble and probably even persecution. I have no respect, nor do I value the people I used to work for. I can already feel the fire coming at me from my former boss." He looked up, shrugged his shoulders, and smiled. "But you have taught me well, my friends, how to be strong in the Lord."

“What are you going to do now, Adeela. You surely cannot go back to Sadi Town—even if there is anything left of it?”

“No, Robert. I will stay here in Basdin with Nasir, until the Lord shows us the next step” She looked over at Nasir and put her hand on his. “I have told Nasir that I will marry him. He is in need of a good wife, and it is also the Lord’s desire for us.” She looked up and smiled at Nasir.

“That’s wonderful. I am so happy for both of you,” Robert said.

Nasir put his arm around Adeela. “We will serve the Lord together, and finish the work he has given us to do, and we will keep you in our prayers, dear friend. One day we will be together in our Father’s house. Yesu has gone ahead to prepare a place for all of us—a beautiful new world. And in our new homes there will be no more pain or suffering. Until then, let us pray for his grace that we will be found faithful and true.”

“Amen!” Robert said, with tears in his eyes.



Part Two: 26 Going Home

Jody looked out the kitchen window at the nice yard and neighborhood where Melissa lived. She had been living here, with Melissa and her children, for almost two months. The neighborhood where she had lived for the last six years of her life had now become a dangerous place for Jews. She remembered the morning she had woken up and had found a swastika painted on her front lawn. Some of the people she had known and been friends with for years walked by her house and just turned their heads the other way—not wanting to acknowledge what had been done to Jody’s yard. There had also been threats made against her life, and she knew they were to be taken seriously.

The great and horrific calamities that had struck America in the last few years had become for many people a swirling vortex of anger, resentment and rage. The collapse of the economy had also demanded a scapegoat. And the elite governing forces, had made sure that the propaganda for America’s downfall was directed at Jewish wealth and the Jewish banking system. Terrible lies and indoctrination, just like during the time of the holocaust, under Hitler, were spread viciously over the media and even in the new children’s books. The public schools had become a hatching nest for virulent anti-Semitism, and it had all happened so fast.

Jody still could hardly believe it had really happened. Jews were now considered—by the new totalitarian, dictatorial government that America now lived under—to be enemies of the new super world order. The devil had made sure that a big part of this new world order was the reigniting of a very ancient hatred towards the Jewish people.

For a few years Europe had been leading the race of this fast rising anti-Semitic agenda, but in the last year the United North American Continent had begun to take the lead. Tens of thousands of Jewish people in the last couple of years had made aliyah, fleeing to Israel. It was the one place in the world where Jews were still welcomed, even though the hateful reality of anti-Semitism, through the beast world system, was bearing down upon them also. But at least they still remained a Jewish nation.

But millions of Jews, like Jody, had not paid attention to the ever increasing anti-Semitic signs that in the last couple of years had become so evident. And they were now even finding it more difficult to get out of America, and go back to Israel—almost impossible. Punitive emigration laws had been established, making it very challenging for those who did not have a lot of money to leave America. And a law was now being considered that would revoke citizenship for Jews and move these Jewish American citizens into segregated areas. The ghetto was once again becoming a popular idea.

A program had been established where a Jewish family could leave America if they transferred all of their wealth and holdings over to the government. Some did this, but others held on, hoping for a better solution, not yet realizing that soon a new law would go into effect that would allow the government to seize all Jewish bank accounts.

Raging times of anti-Semitism had flourished before. Jody vividly remembered the stories her grandfather Shimon had told her about life in Nazi Europe. But most of her Jewish generation no longer heard the terrifying, hateful stories. And like before, the incitement of hatred against Jews had come in incremental stages.

In the beginning many Jews, as well as others, were only mildly irritated when the beast government took over the banking system and the health industry. It was seen by some as progressive—just a matter of adjusting to the new changes. Where the Jewish people lived also had a great effect on what they believed and what they saw happening around them. Jewish communities in the rural, out-laying areas more quickly became victims of economic pressure, isolation, and even violence, more so than did the city dwellers. But that too was beginning to change. The streets and communities in Europe and America had become hunting grounds for Jews. Mass numbers had fled to Israel or other countries, where they thought they would be safer. But some, especially the elderly, who were afraid to leave their homeland for a different country, began to retreat behind high walls and barbed wire fences. The atmosphere had changed so radically and so fast. The Jewish communities in Europe and America now greatly feared for their future.

Some Jews, like many members of Jody's family, immediately saw the foreboding signs and left America to go to Israel. But judgments were clouded. Mixed signals were frequently given out by government sources—that actually condemned anti-Semitism, and sympathy from the non-Jewish population was not uncommon. Many Jewish people had also been watching how certain kinds of Christians were being mocked and isolated, and so the tendency to believe that it was just a bad time for the many, but would get better when the economy fully recovered, was a welcomed idea. And Jody, like many others, had just not believed that it would ever get as bad as it had.

If only she had really listened to her grandpa Shimon and her father, Samuel. Grandpa Shimon knew it was coming—he had lived through it once before. She had loved her grandpa, but had frequently turned away from his words. She did not want to have to think about such terrible things.

Everything had so rapidly begun to take on extraordinary and bizarre dimensions. Jewish communities were still allowed to exist in different areas, but they were becoming very closed in and restricted; and it seemed that new laws were being passed every day—enforcing the way that Jewish and Bible believing Christians would have to live.

When a law was passed enforcing Jewish registration, she knew it was time to do something, and that was when Benjamin introduced her to Melissa. She was so thankful for her good friend, Melissa, and for all the other dedicated Christians who wanted to help her and Rabbi Benjamin get out of the country. But she also remembered how foolish she had been, at times, acting very hastily, and not considering the danger she had put Melissa and the children in—like on that day when she had decided to break free and go for a walk in the woods.

“Please forgive me,” she had said to Melissa. “You have been so kind to take me into your house for these last couple of months, and I have acted so foolish.” Melissa had been quick to forgive her.

Jody looked at her watch. Rabbi Benjamin Rosenberg was coming over tonight, and he had some important things to discuss with her about an escape plan that would take them back to Israel. She smiled to herself, when she thought about Benjamin. They were becoming

very important to each other. They both knew that love was beginning to blossom for both of them, although neither of them had said much about their somewhat romantic relationship.

Melissa walked into the kitchen. “Jody, is Benjamin still coming over tonight? From what you told me it sounds like he has some exciting things to share with you. Does he really think he has a way to get you out of America? I enjoy listening to what the Rabbi has to share. Although I will have to pick the children up late from school tonight, and I can’t risk being even a few minutes late.”

“Well, I am going to talk with him some more tonight,” Jody responded. “He is so busy trying to find more families to take in the Jewish children, so he doesn’t have time for much else. The propaganda put out by our anti-Semitic government continues to paint terrible lies about how the Jewish people mistreat their own children. And I guess you know that circumcision is now a crime against all children. The Jews seem to be their first target, but the true Christians are not far behind.”

Melissa shuddered. “How well I know. Sam and Cindy will not be home till after eight o’clock tonight, and then I will have to spend an hour trying to deprogram them from what they were most likely being taught. I wish there was someplace we could escape to.”

“Maybe there is?”

“What do you mean?”

“I don’t know? I don’t even know why I said that?” The words seemed to just fall out of my mouth.” She laughed a little.

“Benjamin has taken a job as a janitor at the Transit Center, of course under a secret identity. He told me that they are taking many of the Jewish children to that Center—to await transportation to more permanent camps, where some will be re-educated...It’s all so horrible. Who would have believed that it would happen again.

He is smuggling some of the little ones out in laundry bags and even in potato sacks. I fear for the children’s safety, and for his too.”

“I am so sorry, Jody. How has this all happened? Even a good part of the Evangelical Christian Church has agreed with the government to fight against a Jewish take-over of our nation, or what is now referred to as region #10. And if you don’t want to get in trouble

with the Community Religious Counsel—which is the only authority that can grant a permit for a religious meeting of any kind—then you have to go along with what they are propagating.”

“But I must admit,” Melissa continued, “that I am surprised at how many Americans, even in the church, are not really objecting to the increase in the persecution of the Jewish community, and are even pretty silent at what is happening to Christians who dare to speak out. It’s so hard to understand how in just a matter of a few years people have become so fearful and brain-washed into accepting such terrible lies about the Jews, and also about Bible believing Christians, too.”

“Well, that’s what I thought too, Melissa. But these vile seeds of anti-Jewish, and anti-Israel hatred have been there all the time, but just hiding under the covering of a tolerant, educated society. All that was needed was the right kind of evil leader, and the anti-Semitic poison to feed this insane hatred, and in a very short time we have what happened in Nazi Europe, all over again.

“And we both know that what happened in Israel a couple of years ago certainly added fuel to the simmering coals. Even though it was God who won that war of Gog and Magog for Israel, the explosion of anti-Semitism has spread now into so many places of the world.

“I can remember my dad telling me that grandpa Shimon had once told him that when it comes down to protecting yourself and your own family, that many will end up siding with the enemy. He watched it happen in so many communities in Europe, when Hitler took over. The centuries of religious prejudice had made it too easy to look the other way.

“What has been happening, Melissa, in the Jewish communities all over the world, has really gotten ugly. And the Bible believing Christians, who love Israel, are being singled out for persecution as traitors, for the unified good.

“If we do not agree with the dominant thought that all faiths are the same, and that there should be no religious services on Shabbat—at least what God calls Shabbat—then our children can be taken from us, and we are watched all the time, and that’s not the worst of it.”

“God is our only help and strength. We can’t loose faith,” Melissa said. She then looked past Jody for a moment, lost in her thought.

“What are you thinking about, Melissa?”

“Oh, just a foolish thought. I was thinking back to the days when Robert and I really loved each other, and believed the same things.”

“You still love him?”

“I had to let go of Robert a long time ago, and I did.”

“What about your sixteen year old daughter, Jody? Do you feel okay about her living with her dad?”

“No. I really don’t. I had no choice but to send her up to live with him in San Francisco. You know he’s now gay?”

“Yes, you had told me.”

“Rebecca is strong in her Bible believing faith. So I have had to truly put her in God’s hands. I call her on her cell phone and pray with her, whenever I can. But we have to be careful. I don’t want her father to find out. I am not sure what he would do. So we have arranged certain times, when she knows he won’t be home. He’s not Jewish, and has even let his daughter know his disdain for Jewish things. It’s very hard on her. I got involved with him when I was running from God—a really bad mistake. But I do pray for him, and hope somehow he can be saved.”



27 The Rabbi

“If only I had gone with my family to Israel, a couple of years ago. They have come through some hard times, like the war that was recently fought over there, but they really love it in Israel. The revival that took place in Jerusalem, after the war, was a mighty work of God, and many were saved and healed. The temple has gone up, but from what I’ve been told, there has also been a very great increase in persecutions against believers who live in the land. Even in Israel everything has also come under a one world, religious system.

“But my brother, Michael, has told me that the great revival that came to Israel is still very much alive in the small home meetings—many of them underground, in secret locations, and that people are still being saved, with many miracle healings still going on.”

“Yes, Jody...those were terrific days and I know you were saved in the revival that came to California. God in his great mercy poured out his Spirit in Jerusalem but then later also in the nations. For many of us it came like a desperately needed rain. Sometimes, when I am really feeling bad, I think about those days, and how wonderful it was.

“So many people came into the Kingdom of God, and gave their lives to the Lord, and were truly changed. But it seems now that some have gone in the other direction, and have forgotten what the Lord did for them. It must break God’s heart. But then, as you know, God is still doing amazing things in the underground church in America—and so here too, the revival continues.”

“In God’s abundant mercy,” Jody responded, “I found my way to the revival that God poured out here in California, and for the first time in my life I knew that I was truly loved by God. Isn’t it amazing how God comes to the most wretched sinners, and pulls us out of the filthy mud we were living in, forgives our sins, and then tells us how much He loves us?” Jody’s eyes filled with tears, as she smiled at Melissa. And then her cell phone rang. She looked at the number of the person who was calling her. It was Benjamin.

Melissa looked across the room at Rabbi Benjamin Rosenberg. He had a nice face, not overly handsome, but large, sensitive brown eyes, that smiled a lot. She could tell that he had tender feelings for

Jody. He was dressed like a plumber, so as not to draw attention when he arrived at Melissa's house. Jody had told Melissa that his wife had died a few years ago from a sickness, and that he had no children. He worked as a computer specialist now, but used to work part time with a near-by Messianic Ministry. It was there that Jody had first met him.

They were listening with excitement to the things that Benjamin had been telling them about what was happening now in Jerusalem.

"Have you been listening, at all, to the two witnesses—who are now proclaiming a warning, not only to Jerusalem, but to the whole world? They speak with the anointing and the fire of God, that the day of God's final judgment draws very near. They are also sharing what the Torah, the Jewish Bible, has to say about Messiah. They are truly showing God's Jewish people that it can be no one else but Yeshua.

"They are on almost every news outlet. I am sure the FCC would like to get rid of them, but they can't seem to stop them from appearing, whenever they choose to. It's so amazing! And no one can touch them—at least till their assignments are finished with.

"The Temple has been in operation for almost two years. And then recently they just appeared on the outer courts. Some are saying they are Moses and Elijah. But I have some friends who live there, and they are not exactly sure. They have not made a public announcement as to who they really are. I am not sure what to think. All I know is we are living in scary, but exciting days." The rabbi's brown eyes smiled with joy. "But the reason I came here, Jody, is to share with you some important information. "We have prayed many times about getting back to Israel. Right now the borders in this country are not completely sealed shut. But they could be at any time. The devil does not want the Jewish people to escape—that demonic fiend wants them dead, just like before. He thinks he can still subvert the Messiah's return to Jerusalem, but we must never forget that Satan is just a tool in God's hands to test the hearts of people, and to bring forth His wonderful plan for those who choose him."

"But what is so frightening, Benjamin, is how closely this all parallels to what happened to the Jews and true Christians during the holocaust," Melissa said. "My children are being taught at school that Jews should be viewed as a different race. Their teacher even made a

young boy, that everyone knows is Jewish—come to the front of the class. Then she began to point out to the children things about him that made him different from everyone else. Sam said it didn't make any sense, because the boy, he said, did not look any different from anyone else. But the teacher made it sound very convincing.

Of course all of the Jewish teachers have been dismissed from their jobs, under the new version of the Enabling Act. And very few Jewish children now attend the Community schools."

"Well," Benjamin said, "education has always been the most important tool for dictatorial regimes—which is what we are now living under. They don't care much about trying to re-educate oldies like us, but they want to get to the young minds, while they are still moldable.

"Jody, I want to share with you why I came over. It's important. I want to tell you about the plans I've been making for us to try and escape and go back to Israel.

"We will travel from here by Amtrak to a place on the east coast. The location is still not being revealed for security reasons. And then there is a rogue airline pilot who is flying Jews, undercover, to France. And from there it will be about a three day trip to Israel. Of course you will have no trouble getting into Israel, with your family living there.

"As you know, we have some great people helping us in the underground church, who are really dedicated and very talented, and are helping to get the Jews out of America. I would like to secure for you a different set of false ID papers, from that which you obtained a couple of months ago. I think it would be good if you traveled as my wife...if that would be okay with you? It might look more authentic...if you know what I mean?"

Jody could feel a slight blush come to her cheeks. "Yes, Benjamin, but first I need to hear a little bit more about this escape plan."

"The papers will be meticulously done, and a new picture will be taken of you and attached to the document. But I would suggest, Jody, that you need to change your hair color. We need for you to look as non Jewish as possible. I am sorry. I know that sounds terrible, and ugly. Your hair is so beautiful! I hate to ask you to do this." He smiled. "But you will still be beautiful, even with blond hair."

“Well, changing my hair color is not such a big deal, but I need to pray some more on this, Benjamin. I have a daughter who is living with her father in northern California. And I will most likely have to leave her behind.”

“Not necessarily. We could have some papers created for her too.”

“If her father ever found out that she had left to go anywhere with me, let alone Israel, he would be in a huge rage, and could make a lot of problems for everyone. So I will have to pray. I would love for her to be with me, but I can’t endanger so many people. I may have to leave without her—at least for now.”

“It’s hard to believe, isn’t it,” Benjamin said, “that things have really gotten this bad in the good ole USA?”

“I was told by both my father and grandfather,” Jody said, “that this was where Europe was headed, and that it would not be long before America would come under the same anti-Semitic anger and hatred.

“My father, Samuel, and my brother Michael and his family were smart. They left for Israel a couple of years ago, when the signs starting becoming more evident. But I was influenced by my mother. Even though she was Jewish, she wanted nothing to do with her husband’s Messianic faith—or anything Jewish, for that matter. They were divorced before my dad left the country. She died a year ago, after a bad car accident.

“I grew up hearing the different stories my grandpa Shimon would tell—about how he and my grandma Ruth had escaped Nazi Czechoslovakia. Wow! What’s happening today reminds me of what he talked about. I loved my grandpa; he was a good man. I never got to know my grandmother. She died when I was young. And as I got older I just sort of drifted off by myself, not wanting to hear anything more about my Jewish heritage.”

“Well, Jody, you are not alone. I have watched many young Jewish people, in the last few years, on the campuses in America, who really no longer want to be Jewish. I tried to share with as many as I could that they have a proud and wonderful history, and need to stand up for who they are.”

“Yes. I remember,” Jody said, “some hard experiences at UCLA and the last thing I wanted was for a professor to know that I was

Jewish.” She laughed a little. “But I guess I am kind of a dead-give-away, huh?”

“A beautiful, and talented Jewish daughter of God...that’s who you are,” Benjamin radiated a big smile.

Melissa tucked her children into bed and prayed with them before she turned the light out. They seemed even more quiet and withdrawn than before. There were times when she had thought of just putting them in her car, and just disappearing. But she knew if the authorities found her they would take her son and daughter away permanently.

She glanced out the bedroom window and looked one more time at the car that had been parked across from the house. She could see two people in the front seat. Who were they? And what were they doing? Did they know that she was keeping a Jewish woman in her house? She shuddered with a slight tremble. She came to her knees and prayed for her family, and for America. She also lifted up Robert for God’s protection over his life. It was not like him to be out of communication for so long. She knew something was very wrong.



28 Home To America

Robert handed his passport to the control agent. The man looked at the card, and then looked up at Robert. “What were you doing in Pakistan, Mr. McLaren? You look a little different from this picture.” He grinned cynically.

Robert knew his appearance had changed quite a bit. Instead of a business man in an expensive Madison Avenue suit, he was dressed in jeans and a plain gray t-shirt. His hair had grown longer, but since it was naturally curly it did not look so bad over his ears. He was also several pounds thinner.

“I’ve been on a business trip to Pakistan. And I just thought I’d relax coming home. Is there a problem?”

“We would like for you to step into this room with us, for a minute, Mr. McLaren. We just have a few questions to ask you.”

Robert sat in the small room for twenty minutes. He wondered if they had forgotten they put him there. He was tired and hoped this little security check would not take long.

He had spent over three weeks in India and had developed a wonderful relationship with an on-fire believing community there. And thanks to some of his Christian friends in India, who made the connections for him, he had flown out of the Mumbai airport twenty hours earlier. His airline flight back to America was a little different than the one he had flown to Pakistan on. On this flight there was no first class comfortable reclining chair, or drinks on the house. He sat squeezed between a large man and a mother with her baby. When he took out his Bible from his briefcase the man next to him looked at him with a strange expression, as if he was a dangerous man.

He was quickly coming to understand that what Melissa had been trying to tell him for the last year or so was very true. Evidently, to express yourself as a Bible believing Christian in America was not a very safe thing to do anymore.

“Sir,” the woman next to him said. “If the agent sees you reading that Bible he will ask you to put it away—just telling you.”

Robert could not help himself. “Is it okay if I look at a Playboy magazine?”

“Well, sure” she answered. “It’s just, you know...the Bible thing has become very offensive.”

Robert put it away. He didn’t need his name being taken down and reported to the officials, before he even landed in Los Angeles.

“I am sorry to have kept you waiting, Mr. McLaren. We just needed to check a few things.” The TSA agent was tall and thin. He had a brisk and efficient manner, and he was not in a smiling mood.

“Evidently you caused a small disturbance on the airliner?” He paused, waiting for Robert’s response.

Robert was somewhat speechless. “No,” he said. “Are you sure you have the right person?”

The agent narrowed his eyes—they became like tiny, black darts firing back at him. “The man sitting next to you reported you to the security agent as causing him offense. But evidently you complied with the airline’s rules, and so the security agent did not have to say anything to you. Does that ring a bell, Mr. McLaren?”

“If you are referring to the fact that I took out a Bible to read, then yes, I understood that it was a problem, so I put it away.”

“When did you become a Christian, Robert?”

The agent’s abrupt change in names caught Robert off guard for a second. “Is that the issue—my religion?” He knew he had to keep his cool and watch what he said, or he might not even make it out of the airport. He found it hard to believe this was happening. He was beginning to feel a little fearful. Without moving his mouth he began to pray in the spirit.

“Well, it seems you have had quite a few people, in your company, worried about what might have happened to you in Pakistan. Evidently, they believed that you might have become involved with a suspected terrorist over there. And now you show up here, in Los Angeles, California, and so you can understand our caution.”

Wow! Robert thought to himself. This was not going to be easy. “No. I did not become involved with any terrorist, while in Pakistan. I told my boss, Tom Whiteman, that I had decided to stay awhile longer just to see some of the exotic sights. If you know what I mean?” He smiled and then grinned shyly.

The agent looked surprised. “I thought you said you were a Christian?”

“No. You said I was a Christian. I told you that I had taken out a Bible to look at it—a missionary gave it to me before I left India, so I decided to take a look at it. We should have an understanding about these kinds of books, in order to refute them...correct?”

“Well...aah, yes.” The agent stuttered. “You have a very good record, Mr. McLaren...in fact an exemplary one. So I am going to take your word that you did not stay in Pakistan for the wrong reasons, and that you are not taking part in some kind of a counterfeit and dangerous religion. You know we take these things very serious now in America. We have discovered that the terrorists in our nation almost always have strong, biblical beliefs.” He smiled at Robert in a strange manner.

“Did you get any pictures?”

“I am sorry—pictures of what?”

“You know...the exotic sites in Pakistan?”

“Oh,” he laughed with the agent. “No, they wouldn’t let me take any pics...but sometime maybe we can meet and have a beer and I’ll tell you some amazing things about what they allow in these countries.”

“Yeah.” The agent’s eyes took on a glossy look, as he handed Robert his phone number. “Give me a call—the sooner the better.” He then escorted Robert out of the office, patting him on the shoulder, as if they were the best of friends.

Robert wiped the perspiration off of his brow as he exited the airport with his one suitcase. He felt a little nauseous. He wadded up the phone number and threw it in a trash can—where it belonged.

He wanted to get away from there as quickly as he could. He stopped at an ATM machine to check the balance on his two bank accounts. As he suspected the one he had when he worked for the company had been frozen—no info was given. But the other account had not been tampered with. He took out a few hundred dollars.

He was going to hail a taxi, but then decided to go down to the parking garage and see if his car was still there, or if someone had

hailed it away. He was surprised to see his BMW where he had parked it, almost two months ago. He sighed. It seemed like at least a year had gone by. Things had happened so fast. Before he got into his car he removed a tracking device that he knew the corporation had put under one hub cap a long time ago. When he had first discovered the small device his thought was that they had done it for his safety and protection—so they could know where he was. But now he knew that his safety was not the reason they kept a close eye on him.

When he got to his apartment in Santa Monica he saw a scribbled note that had been taped to his door. The manager of the apartment building briefly explained that his apartment had been broken into and would he please give him a call, as soon as he returned. Robert knew, of course, that a normal burglary could never take place in this building, unless the manager, or a close associate, had agreed to it.

He was surprised that the lock had not been changed. He was startled when he walked in to see just how thorough a break in it had been. His apartment looked like a tornado had swept through it. He was also a little surprised at how unimportant it was to him. He looked around the rooms as he put in another suitcase some of the pictures and things that he wanted. He considered just crashing on the bed, but immediately sensed a nudge from the Holy Spirit to leave.

He wasn't sure how long it would be before the corporation knew that he was back in the country, but he knew it would not take long. They had ways of finding out things. He had even considered going to see Tom, and acting very casual—like nothing had happened. And then he would just tell him he was going to resign for family reasons, sign the 'no tell oath,' and depart.

To leave the corporation required signing an agreement that all of his past doings and associations with the company would be erased from his memory—so to speak. And Robert knew a lot. He was also aware that by now they probably had a lot of the information about his relationship with Adeela and the others, and also his escape from the authorities in Pakistan. This information could really put him on their black list—especially if it had caused problems with the general. He did not want to be looking over his shoulder all the time to see if

someone was trailing him. He was still not sure what he would do, but he would not make any decisions on his own. He would spend time in prayer, seeking God's wisdom and direction.

He decided to leave his car parked below in the garage. Even though he had removed the tracking device he knew they would have the police looking for his car, and for him. In a few days he would pick up a second hand truck. One of the things he had learned how to do, while working for the corporation, was how to change his identity. All he needed was a computer, and the obituaries. It was not hard. Anything he purchased from now on would be done under a John Doe identity. But for tonight he would get a motel room and pray! And hopefully get a good night's sleep.

Robert pulled down the shade in his motel room. He had thought of calling Melissa, but had decided to wait till the morning.

29 Where is My Family

Robert had the taxi stop in front of the house. It seemed very quiet. Where were the children? It was Saturday, but they were not playing outside. He asked the cab driver to wait. He prayed quietly as he walked up to the door of the house. He knocked a few times, but no one answered. He looked through the living room window but could not see Melissa or either one of the children. He felt a chill. Perhaps they had just gone someplace for the morning. The car was not in the garage. He felt a little better. They had just gone shopping for a while—nothing unusual about that.

“The police came for em.”

Robert turned around. A young boy, maybe eight years old, was standing near the edge of the yard. He was sucking on a piece of candy, and then spit it out of his mouth. “They were hiding one of them Jews, and so the police came and took em all away.” He then began to walk down the street—sucking on another candy.

“Wait. Don’t go. I need to know where they took them.”

The boy kept walking and did not turn around. Someone across the street quickly pulled the blinds down when Robert looked that way. Robert went into the back yard and sat down on a patio chair. What in the world was going on? Maybe the boy was just making up a story? If someone had come for his family why would Melissa’s car be gone? He tried to pray but could only pace back and forth. He decided to tell the taxi driver to leave, and he would wait at the house for a while longer.

He looked through the back window. Everything looked neat and in order—no sign of anything unusual taking place. He sat and looked across the yard—remembering the times he had played ball with the kids. He felt a sickness in his heart.

It was close to six o’clock. He knew something was wrong, and by the Spirit he knew his wife and children would not be coming home. He took out a key that he still had to the back door. It worked. He went inside and walked around the house. Everything looked like a house that had been made ready for someone leaving on a trip—too neat and orderly. He also noticed that one of Melissa’s suitcases was

missing from the closet where she kept it. He walked into the dining room. The shades were pulled down. It was beginning to get dark, but he did not want to turn on any lights, and cause suspicion that someone was in the house. He saw a written note on the table. He picked it up and went into the bathroom, shut the door and turned on the light. The note was to Melissa from Jody. It read:

Melissa, I can't wait for you to come home—not sure where you are? I told Benjamin that I would meet him near the Amtrak station. My daughter has run away from her dad's and will go with us. Everything is moving very fast. Sorry, I have to go, and cannot give you a hug good-by, but as you know plans have been made. Say 'hi' to the kids for me...and a big kiss....love you. I will be in contact when I can. Love, Jody.

The first thing that Robert noticed was that the date on the note was written yesterday—which meant that Melissa had been gone for the better part of two days. Where was she? Was the little boy right? Had the police come and taken his family away? His heart was beginning to race, and he felt a little light headed. He walked back into the dining room and put the note back on the table. He thought about calling a taxi from the house, but then felt not to use the phone.

He walked out the back door and locked it. He looked around and then decided to walk through the woods to the other side of the housing complex. All of a sudden he felt very uneasy, even being in the yard. Had that little boy watched him go into the house and then told someone? He looked around. The evening twilight was quickly turning dark. He walked across the yard and opened the gate.

“Hey.” Robert turned as their neighbor, Jack, touched him lightly on the shoulder. “Do you remember me, Robert? I live next door.

“Sure,” Robert responded. “I remember you.”

“Here!” He put a note in Robert's hand. “I don't have time to talk. It's not safe. You'd best be leaving quickly. Things have gotten pretty weird lately. Not safe to hang around.” He turned from Robert and walked back to his house. “But wait!” Robert called to him. “Do you know where my wife and kids are?”

Jack turned very briefly but kept walking. “Read the note...”

Robert sat down on the bed in the motel room as he re-read the note that Jack had handed him. The only thing written on it was an address and a time, ‘Tuesday at 7 o’clock...come if you can...no cars.’

Robert was somewhat familiar with the name of the street. It was about two miles east, and in a pretty rural area. Was that where his family was? Why couldn’t Jack just tell him what he needed to know?

He was tired and frustrated. Even in the couple months he’d been gone, so much had changed. But he had little time to think about things. He felt from the Lord that he was to go to the address on the note, and he would not go back to the house—too many eyes in the neighborhood watching what he was doing. He would need to obtain a new ID. But now things were different, and to do it by himself would be more difficult—everything was being so tightly watched. He prayed that God would send someone who could help him.

The street he was on came to a dead end. There was a fork in the road. On one side he could see what looked like an older house. He was almost positive it was the right address. He stopped and looked at the address above the door, and then walked through the gate to the house. It had been raining and it was getting cold. As he walked closer to the house he was greeted by the sounds of two barking dogs. He was really hoping that he would find his family here.

“Hush...” An older woman’s voice yelled at the dogs that were barking. “Don’t let them fool ya,” she spoke to Robert as he came up the path to the house. “They’re a couple of old noisy critters, but they won’t hurt you. Come on in. It’s a lot warmer inside.” She greeted Robert warmly, but quickly looked around to make sure no one had followed him. “You must be Robert?”

“Yes, I am.” Robert was not sure what he was getting into, but he felt by the spirit that he could trust this woman. Inside the house it was warm and comfortable. A small group had gathered in the living room, maybe about 20 people. He stood for awhile as people came up and greeted him. His neighbor Jack was also there. Robert was disappointed because his wife was not in the group of people, but he sat down. There was an anointing that he had not felt since he had left Pakistan. For a moment he smiled. The group sang some familiar

Christian hymns. Robert felt more relaxed. Bill Cahn, an assistant pastor from a church that Melissa and he had once attended, stood up and began to read some scriptures from the Bible

“And when these things begin to happen, look up for your Redeemer draws near... let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid...”

He continued. “We have a new friend with us this evening. I know Robert McLaren from a few years back. We are glad to have you with us, Robert. Since the last time I talked to you there had been a few changes in your life—concerning your Christian beliefs.”

Robert said little. He was not here to persuade people that he had suddenly had a great re-awakening, like the Apostle Paul. And he had never been good friends with Bill Cahn, but he understood their concern.

“I can honestly tell you that I have repented for my former life and like a true, prodigal son, have come back home.”

A small applause followed and a couple of people came over to shake his hand, in an effort to let him know that he was accepted by them.

His neighbor Jack got up to speak. “I hardly recognized you, Robert, when I saw you in the back yard. I figured you were probably wondering what had happened to your family. I wasn’t sure what to do. But then the Lord whispered to me that you were a ‘new man,’ and that’s when I came over and gave you the note. Your former wife, Melissa, has been a part of our group for sometime. I knew the police were watching her house for a couple of days, and one night I heard them pounding on the door, and then forcing their way in. But I never did see Melissa or the kids come out of the house. But with all the Gestapo agents charging around, I couldn’t see everything. I am really sorry I can’t tell you anything else.”

Robert sat a little stunned. He had hoped that coming here would at least give him more information about his family. “Do you know where the police would take them?” he asked Jack.

Bill spoke into the conversation. “Usually, Robert, if our people are arrested for any reason they end up being shipped off to a camp. There is a separate one for the children. But since Jack didn’t see

your wife or kids hauled off, I suspect something else is going on.

“But what?” All of a sudden Robert felt a huge wave of exhaustion coming over him. He closed his eyes and didn’t say anything else.

“Almost three years ago,” Bill said, “we had a great Awakening in this nation of ours—a true revival, and many people came into the Kingdom of God. But now, like our brothers and sisters in the martyred nations, in order to survive as Christians we have been forced to go underground. But the revival has not stopped. God continues to do amazing things for His faithful ones.” He smiled. “And we will continue to pray and stand until the Lord comes for us.”

“Amen!” came a response from one of the people.

“We are more than just a church group, Robert, we are an underground resistance movement. We are helping our Jewish brothers and sisters get out of America, and also providing very good forged papers for many Christian families who want to try and go someplace else. Some of us are looking at heading up towards Canada or Alaska—where there are more places to hide out. But we must hear the Lord’s command as to where he would have us go. The night cometh quickly, my friend, when no man can work.”

“We’ve got guns and rifles, but we don’t keep them here, and most of us have them to hunt with, especially if we go up north. But if we have to defend our families we will. We all know that just one step out of this ole world and we will be forever in the presence of our God and Savior.”

“Amen!” A few responses came from the people.

“The sons of God may be underground, for now, but we are still the Army of the Lord, and He is doing some mighty things in our midst. Do we have any testimonies tonight?”

“As you know,” a pretty young woman spoke up, “God has translated me across the borders with him, a few different times. Last night I went with him to what I think is a place in Russia. There were hundreds of people in a place in the woods. Some of them had been wounded badly—hurt from the beast police forces in their country. Jesus walked up and touched a young boy whose legs had been blown off, and they immediately grew back. It was such a miracle. And then he asked me to pray for a little girl who was very

sick and near death from hunger and deprivation. These people had all been suffering greatly. I began to weep and pray for this child and she was completely healed and renewed. We prayed for everyone. It was so wonderful. The Holy Spirit is doing amazing miracle works in so many places. Praise God!" She cried out. "And I am so honored that sometimes he has let me go with him. He will be coming for us before long." The young lady smiled exuberantly and sat down.

"Wherever he calls us to go, the works and fire of God will be made manifest," Bill said. "This may mean Fema camps for some of us. And if we get taken there, then we'll bring revival with us and have a party!" He laughed. "Wherever he calls us, he will be glorified. The day draws to an end, and his Kingdom comes."

Robert stood up. "I have just returned from two months in Pakistan, and our brothers and sisters in that country have been experiencing man's evil works for a long time. They are precious saints of God, and like you folks they are not afraid to die for the Lord. But I came here because I was so hoping to see my family again. My heart is so desperately burdened. It's extremely important that I find them."

"You are welcome, brother, to come and join us whenever you can, and we will keep your family in prayer. We all love and appreciate Melissa." Bill then turned his attention away from Robert, and looked at the small group in front of him. "Now, we will pray for one another and then say good-night for now. Hopefully we will all meet again next week." Bill then spoke to two people in the group, and told them that their papers were ready.

30 Jody's Escape

Jody sat down next to a large man. The seats on the Grayhound bus were crowded, and it was noisy. A security agent was speaking to parents and telling them that they must quiet their children or they would be put off the bus. She looked across at Rebecca, her daughter, and smiled. Jody could see fear in the way her daughter smiled back. She had called her father and told him that she was going on a short trip with her mom. For the time being this was not a problem for him, in that he had a new boyfriend, and his daughter being gone for a few days fit in conveniently with his plans.

Rebecca had spent the last hour memorizing everything on her fake ID and her forged papers. Jody had quickly gone over with her what she was to say if the security people asked her any questions about where she was going, and where she would be staying. Jody was glad to have her daughter with her. It brought some joy into her saddened heart.

The plan had been to meet Benjamin at the Amtrak station. He had made sure, ahead of time, that she also had her daughter's forged identity papers—that she would need for Rebecca to travel across the country with her. Jody looked at the picture that was on hers. She hardly recognized herself. Her hair was a golden blond and clipped short around her face. She also had on a pair of round glasses—no resemblance to the Jody Cohen she once knew.

When she arrived at the train station, a man she had met at the Messianic Congregation, named Ryan, greeted them warmly. He whispered to her as he took the travel bag from her hands.

"Don't look surprised to see me. Just smile and give me a big hug—like you are glad to see me, and then follow me out of the station. We are taking a short drive over to the Gray hound bus terminal. The plans have been changed." He then looped his arms around Jody, and her daughter.

Jody did what he asked her, even though she was confused. As they drove away from the terminal, Ryan explained to Jody what had happened.

"Rabbi Rosenberg has been arrested," he told her. "He knew they were coming for him, so before they came to his door he called me."

He did not want them to trace a call to your cell phone. He talked in code but I knew he was telling me to come here and tell you to not ride the train, but to take a bus instead, and to keep going. There's no turning back now."

When they reached the greyhound bus station Ryan made it look like Jody was his wife. He kissed her on the mouth, and then he walked them to the bus they would travel on. They got on and waved good by to him. Jody felt numb and overwhelmed when she sat down in her seat.

Jody watched as the lean and hard looking female security agent came down the isle, checking once again their identification cards.

"Oh, Lord," she spoke quietly, "help me get through all of this."

The agent took Jody's ID. She looked at it carefully and then scrutinized Jody's face. "Ellen Johnson, is that correct?"

"Yes," Jody answered her.

"And why are you going to New York, Ms. Johnson?"

"I am going to visit some family."

The security person continued to ask her some ordinary questions. But Jody had memorized all the information in case she was asked anything. The agent gave her one more doubting look, as if to say "I know who you really are," and then proceeded to the interrogation of the next person. She had walked right past her daughter and had not checked her ID—almost as if she was invisible.

Jody sighed and put her head back. Her thoughts drifted to when she had first met Benjamin at the Messianic Congregation called 'Israel Hope.' Their friendship had flourished almost from the beginning. If only he could be with her now.

When Jody had first received Yeshua as her Jewish Messiah, she really did not understand much about her Jewish heritage, nor did she truly understand the Jewish Biblical Feast days. Her father, Samuel, had tried to teach her when she had gone a few times to the Messianic Congregation, called Beth Israel. But in her younger years she had been rebellious and had resisted her father's encouragement and help.

She remembered how sweet and patient Benjamin had been, as he took time to slowly explain so many things to her. Over the weeks and months their relationship had blossomed into a deep mutual

friendship. There was more there—they both knew it, but except for holding her hand and a light kiss good night, they had kept their relationship very kosher. She missed him, and she prayed for God to cover and protect him—wherever they had taken him.

She looked out the window and watched as they rode past the brown and barren farm land that had once been California's most productive areas. For the last several years the land had been hit with terrible drought, and the little water that was available was strictly controlled by the one world government. Small farms and farmers were no longer a part of the American landscape. Everything was now controlled by the elite bureaucracy.

Jody closed her eyes for a moment, hoping again to try and sleep, but knowing that she would not. She had no trouble remembering when things had gone from bad to very bad in America.

Three years ago a big disaster had struck America. A meteor, big enough to weather its fiery descent towards earth, had hit the Atlantic Ocean and then devastated the east coast with major destruction, and the whole country had gone into chaos and lawlessness.

This meteor had exploded near the Canary Islands, crashing a huge part of the island into the ocean and generating a powerful mega tidal wave westward, crossing the Atlantic Ocean. By the time it hit the east coast, the powerful three hundred foot wave had destroyed a good part of the infrastructure in some of the large, coastal cities and surrounding areas.

Evacuation had become a real nightmare, as panicked people tried to escape, only to be locked up in tight, impossible traffic jams. Huge waves came crashing down upon the cities and highways. The terrible flooding surge had traveled ten to fifteen miles inland, destroying everything in its path.

Hundreds of thousands of lives had been lost, and millions of people had been left homeless, and in great shock and despair. The country had become paralyzed with fear at what might happen next—especially when so many nations were experiencing record setting earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunamis. The economy, which was already terribly weak, had come crashing down. The one-world

leaders immediately issued a new financial system—a shared basket of currencies, and the dollar was devalued by almost thirty three percent of its value.

The US government offices were mainly hidden underground in carefully planned miniature cities. The elites and their family members, and many others considered important to the new order, were well protected from the initial rioting and mayhem that took place, as all of America was torn apart, in one way or another.

But after the terrible destruction, when all seemed hopeless, God had mercifully poured out his Spirit in different places, in a dark and lawless America. It was for many a desperately needed rain and downpour of God's love and mercy. In deep travail of soul, God's now humbled and broken Church had cried out for his presence, and God had heard the earnest prayers of his people. It was not a revival organized in any way by man. No sectarian doctrine, no creed or dogma could find its place in this revival. People were saved and healed, and hearts were restored in this great end-time event.

But eventually man began to take control of what God was doing. Large buildings were put up by church councils, where people were directed how to worship and pray. And pretty soon long sermons replaced the anointing and the miracles of God. The true Church went underground; while many of those who had witnessed the miracles and revival fire of God began to slowly go along with the controlled one-world church.

FEMA, the primary operation now in authority of all US citizens, had changed the status and outlay of America from 50 states to ten regional areas. Individual states and state's rights no longer existed. A total domination control grid had now replaced individual rights. There were no more elections of any kind, and America had come under complete dictatorial control.

Jody continued to watch as they swiftly rode past bleak and empty acres of unused land. But one area caught her attention, as they whizzed by it. Near the base of a range of foothills she could see what looked like large buildings, all surrounded by heavy fences and topped with barbed wirer. She knew what she was looking at. The FEMA camps were no longer kept secret. Pictures of them were

now posted in many places—letting the people know what awaited them if they said or did anything to go against the new order.

The bleak and desolate lands reminded her of what had happened in the lives of so many American citizens. After one year of hard, draconian measures, and six months of Martial Law, the people were so glad to have some kind of normalcy return that they were ready to do whatever they were told by the dictatorial government.

Even the brainwashing and takeover in the schools had been unhappily accepted by many as the way things were going to be. It was a country, and more and more a world system, where the Judeo-Christian values were no longer accepted, and were considered by many now to be a threat to society. To speak even basic truth was thought to be an act of rebellion.

Jody tried to stretch out. It was almost a three day trip to New York, and then she would have to take another bus down to Orlando, where she would meet her contact. She was glad to be on the bus, but her heart was grieved. Quietly she continued to pray.

The sun was beginning to slide down over the desert lands of Albuquerque, covering the sandy hills with an orange, golden glow. She looked over at her daughter who had leaned back against her seat and had her eyes closed. She felt alone. She prayed for strength, and she prayed for Benjamin and for America.

31 Welcome to FEMA Camp # 32

Rabbi Benjamin Rosenberg sat against the wall—there was little room to move around on the concrete floor in FEMA camp # 32. Three hundred men had been squeezed into the windowless, damp room—that was meant to hold a little less than one hundred people.

And more were coming. A train system had been built to accommodate the FEMA camps. The trains would pull up right in front of the entrance to the camps and then the people would be pushed and shoved off their hard seats, and those had been forced to sit on the dirty floor were the first to be thrust out. As soon as they were out of the trains the men were immediately separated from the women, and taken into a dark building.

They had been ordered to sit wherever they could. Benjamin had sat down, and had tried to help an older man stand up, so that he could walk to the lavatory. They had been given some water when they first arrived, but that was six hours ago. To use the outdoor latrine meant a long wait in line—watched over by a security guard with a long stick. There was nothing to do but sit and wait to see what would happen next. He tried to reassure as many as he could. In a quiet voice he spoke several of the psalms that he had memorized, and some of the people began to drift off into a restless, but needed sleep.

The deportation of Jews and Bible believing Christians had taken on a new urgency—those who had refused to join and go along with the new ecumenical religious system were considered a blight to the new order.

At first the camps had not been revealed to the public, and the truth of their actual existence was denied. The government needed to prevent as much as possible any large scale riots that would make the round up of people more difficult. But pretty soon, the all too frequent scenes in neighborhoods of people being forced onto guarded buses, was becoming for some a concern, and questions were being asked. But for the controllers it was a manageable problem.

Pictures of nice, respectable, retirement homes were soon shown on the news programs. But they were now called retirement villages for the elderly and for people who had been left homeless after the great

disaster, and for all the continuing earthquakes and geographical catastrophes that never seemed to stop. And most people were willing to believe what they were told, as long as it did not concern their own families.

The people were often shown being given free sandwiches and drinks before boarding the trains. Actors would smile and wave to each other—while the fear and dread on the real victims was never aired. And the putting up of transit centers had made it much easier to bring people to the relocation centers. Sometimes the children would be hauled in large trucks to more friendly camps where they would be re-educated and brainwashed into believing that the one-world collective mind-set was good for everyone. The small children were prepared for something even worse. They were taught to not be offended when a stranger touched them and handled them inappropriately. The pedophile industry was a big part of this Godless, demonic beast system.

Benjamin could hear the continual sounds of black hawk helicopters as they flew over the many different camps in the desert region of the southwest. He closed his eyes and prayed for Jody, hoping that she had taken the bus across the country, and that she and her daughter had made the right connections for going back to Israel.

He knew that it was not perfect in Israel either, but he figured that if you were going to die for believing in the one true God, that it was better to be in Israel. He had also heard that God was protecting his people there in amazing ways. He was a Jew, and it was where he belonged, but he had waited too long. His mind floated back to what his Italian Jewish mother used to tell him, even as a little boy.

“One day, Benny,” she would say, “you will have the opportunity that I have not had. You will be able to go home to Israel—to the land God has called us back to. But your Poppa would never be strong enough to make the trip. So I will pray and believe that you and your sister will go there one day.”

His dear, precious mother, who cooked such wonderful meals for him, and who would sing songs to God as she worked around their small house, had made his heart happy. His mother had once traveled on a nightmare train ride to Auschwitz, from a small, northern village

in Italy, called Veneto. It was in Auschwitz that she met her husband. They both survived the horrible conditions. Benjamin's father, Avi, had also survived one of those hellish, long death walks near the end of the war. But from this torturous event he had never fully recovered physically, and his wife had cared for him at home and in the hospital for several years.

Benjamin was glad that his mother and father had not lived to see what had now happened to America, the country they loved so much. His mother had once told him that after they had come to America she had a very important decision to make. She could live the rest of her life filled with hate and unforgiveness or she could live another way.

One day she simply decided to love everyone and anyone she ever met—even if that meant forgiving the people who had tried so hard to kill her and her husband. She had met many people in the Jewish community where they lived, whose lives were consumed with anger and hatred. But Benjamin never remembered hearing his mother curse or revile anyone. She had learned the lesson of love.

After a few days the men in camp # 32 had been given bunks to sleep on—two men for each bunk, and they had been assigned to certain jobs. For Benjamin this was a relief. Days without anything to do, but sit and contemplate the situation he was in, were the hardest to bear. The work was hard. He shoveled and dug trenches, having no idea what they would be used for, but the hard work caused him to sleep better at night.

He had made friends with some of the men, and had shared the Gospel with as many as he could. Many were anxious to hear the words of hope, telling them about an eternal Kingdom, where there would be no more suffering or pain. Some cried—some wailed at the thought that this could be true. And many of the men who had come to this camp with fear and anger now had peace—the peace that passes understanding.

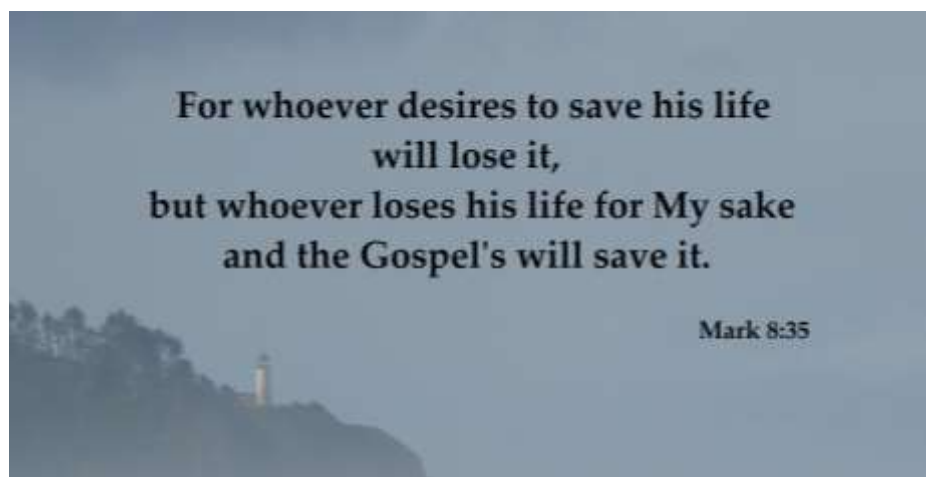
Benjamin had also spent time in the interrogation room at camp # 32. They had not tortured him, and he was glad for that, but they had tried to convince him, from a reasonable point of view, that he was a very intelligent man and that there was a place for him in this new

world they were going to create.

“Most are not in your fortunate position,” they had calmly told him. “And our new world order has no place for people who cannot benefit us.” But they had also made it very clear to him that he did not have a lot of time to make the right decision. “Confess the new order as your God, and make the right adjustments, or you, Benjamin, will be disposed of—without any hesitation.”

Benjamin did not fear death—in fact he welcomed being able to step out of this demonic world, and go home to be with his beloved Lord, his wife and all the family of God. He had no children to leave behind. His only recent emotional connection had been, for a short while, with Jody, but that had never come to be. Jody, he hoped, was now on her way to Israel.

He would spend whatever days he had left sharing the Gospel with as many of these men as he could. He had noticed that some of the men had begun to back away from him a little—afraid that their association with Benjamin would bring them more trouble, and make it harder for them to leave the camp. God knew those who belonged to Him. The faithful would have to make the same decision he had; Save your life and join this new world club, or be ready to lay your life down and forever be with the Lord. For Benjamin there was no decision to make.



32 Fear and Trembling

Robert had considered hiding out in Melissa's house for a few days—that way he would not miss them if they showed up. But when Jack, his neighbor, suggested that it would be better for him to stay at his house, he gladly agreed to the invitation. They sat in the kitchen, with the shades pulled down. Jack was some years older than Robert, and he walked with a limp. He had once told Melissa and Robert his story of how he had bailed out of a burning fighter jet in Vietnam. He had survived the jump, but hit a tree going down and tore up his right leg pretty bad. He spent three years in a Vietnam prison camp, and by the time he got out of there, his leg was permanently damaged. But Robert had always admired Jack's determined ability to always share something good about life and the world around him.

"Most of the people in this neighborhood, Robert, are still good guys. They don't like what's going on, but they don't know what to do about it, so they just keep low. But some of them, if you remember, were at the meeting the other evening. Yes, some of my Christian neighbors are taking a stand the best they know how.

"Nobody wants to go back to living under Martial Law again. Six months of living under those kinds of conditions was enough for anyone—if you know what I mean? We still, as you have seen, live under tight police and military control, but it's better than it was.

"Most of the people around here, and the surrounding areas, just try to stay out of trouble, and don't say anything to anyone, but there are a few folks who have become collaborators, and I know who they are." Jack nodded his head and looked at Robert more seriously.

"I remember my pop telling me how the people, in the village where he lived in France, treated collaborators at the end of the war. It was not a very nice picture. But I am afraid the only way this current occupation is going to end, for descent, God-fearing folk, is when the Lord returns.

"You are going to have to be careful, living here. Like I said, most of the people would not do anything, but there are some who would not hesitate to turn you in. They all know you were Melissa's husband, and I think they pretty much all knew that Melissa was

hiding a Jew in her house. I tried to help your wife out as much as I could, but there really wasn't much I could do—except to maybe watch the kids when she had to go someplace in a hurry.

“You know, it's a horrible thing that has come back again to haunt us—this anti-Semitic discrimination against the Jewish people. We didn't stand up and be the people of God we should have been the first time it happened, and we didn't pray enough for the Jewish people. So it's come back again. I hope this time the church will do a better job.”

“Well, I hope so too, Jack. It's a terrible thing that has happened to this nation of ours. It is like a holocaust, of sorts, all over again, but I am afraid most of the church is not going to answer the call to pray for the Jewish people or to stand up for them. And then you have all the evil directed at the true church.”

“It's true,” Jack said. “Most of the Jewish synagogues and the uncompromising Church have either become non-existent, or gone underground. What's so sad is to see how many have given in and united with the enemy. Bunch of dog-gone fraidy cats, that's what they are.” Jack shook his head and made an umph sound.

“Thanks, Jack, for letting me stay with you. I could have stayed at the motel, but this feels much better not to be alone, and I can also keep an eye on our house next door. I am still praying that I'll see Melissa come home.

“The truck I just bought from Smittie is being checked out down at his place. The leaders in your group were able to get me some good papers and a new ID so that I could buy it. I'll keep it in his back junk yard till I make a decision about what I am going to do on a more permanent basis. I want to tell you something, Jack. I came back from Pakistan with only one main concern, and that was to talk to Melissa and the kids and see if there was anyway to make them understand that I've changed. I need to seriously make things right—if I can.”

“What happened to you in Pakistan, Robert? You sure don't look like the man I remembered just a short time ago.”

“Well, I am not him, Jack. It's a long story, but I can tell you that the Lord got hold of me, and shook me up pretty good, and I am grateful that he did. I was on a fast-train ride to hell, and didn't even know it.”

“Well, that’s how the devil works. He keeps us blinded until in God’s abundant mercy we cry out for something else. Isn’t God Good! He reaches down very deep into the miry clay and brings us out. Praise be to the Living God!” Jack then laughed a boisterous laugh.

“You know, Robert, I was married for quite a few years—had a good, and Godly wife. Yes, I did. She went home to be with the Lord a few years back. And my two sons are living over on the other side of the country.

“I am afraid their walk with the Lord is not very good. They seem to have bought into this lie that the Jews are trying to take-over the world. Now, I know they never got taught that stuff when they were growing up. I’ve always had a lot of respect for the Jewish people. They are a fine group of folks, and have contributed a lot of good things to this old world—including our Savior. Maybe that’s why the devil hates them so much. You think?

“Yes, Jack. I think that’s exactly why.”

“Robert, I’ll share something with you. I once heard this, and I believe it is true. There is such tremendous evil out there today—different from the evil that has always been. This demonic, evil force has been released from the pit of hell. With man’s consent, the key has been given to Abaddon to open the bottomless pit—just like it says in the book of Revelation. This really began a couple of years ago, when evil men and women, serving Satan—whether they knew it or not—desired to re-create the energy force that began the universe, and of course left God out of the equation. And in their quest to be like God they began to experiment with inter-dimensional realities, opening spiritual doors that should never have been opened, that have allowed a much greater level of evil beings to enter this earth, unlike anything before—at least since the days of Noah.

“This is why the Lord must come back, and cut these evil days short, or no flesh will survive. There is only one force in all creation that can stand against this evil demonic energy, and that is the power of the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of life in every true believer. But even true Godly believers can be effected by the over-flow of this evil force, that has taken over so much of the world. Have you noticed, lately, how lethargic and dulled out people seem to be—even in our

secret meetings? Sometimes they seem to have trouble staying awake.

I believe this is why the Lord has to come soon for his true servants before they are totally over-taken by it. But there also must soon come the outpouring of His Wrath against all this evil, or no flesh would be saved. I hope I am not scaring you with all this talk?”

“No,” Robert answered. “I am finding it quite amazing, and yes, I have all of a sudden had my eyes open to the acceleration of very strange and evil things going on, almost everywhere I go. Melissa tried to tell me how much things had changed, and how hard it was to live a true Christian life in this world, anymore. But, as the song goes, ‘once I was blind, but now I see.’ ”

“I am really glad for this, Robert. All of heaven rejoices over one sinner that repents.

“My sons have been trying to convince me to come and live with one of them. But I know if I did, I’d be in a greater spiritual battle. No. I think I’ll just hang on here, till the Lord comes for me.”

“Speaking of hanging on!” Robert said. “It’s been a long day, friend, and so I will say good-night—and go and read the good Word for a bit, and then hopefully get some sleep tonight. Who knows what tomorrow may bring.”

“Well, that’s the truth—who knows!” Jack laughed lightly.

33 The Explosion

Robert looked up at the gray-white ceiling. He was glad to have a friend to stay with for a while. He'd been getting pretty lonely, especially after the friendship he had experienced in Pakistan. He prayed that God would tell him where his family was, but the silence had been deafening. He was not in doubt about his salvation, but he had wondered, a few times, if he had done something wrong. Had he misunderstood? Should he have stayed in Pakistan, at least for a while longer? No. The enemy was just playing with his mind. He closed his eyes and he dreamed.

It was a very pleasant dream. He had been walking a long distance, and he knew in the dream he wasn't sure which way to go. There were many different paths—leading in all directions. He was confused and tired. He had thought about just lying down, under a tree, and going to sleep. But then he sensed someone near him. He could not actually see him, but he felt he was being directed in a particular way.

He began to walk over a wooded hill that led to a farm. There was a farmer riding on a tractor, plowing some green fields. He waved to Robert, and smiled at him. The man sort of looked familiar, but he could not see him too clear. And then he saw them! His two children, Cindy and Sam, were running behind the tractor. They waved at their dad. His wife Melissa was coming out of the door of a little white house. She was carrying a basket of fruit. When she saw Robert she put the fruit down and began to run towards him. In the dream he could feel himself beginning to cry, as he ran towards his wife, and then he woke up.

Robert started the engine of the older truck he had purchased the other day from Smittie. It was not in great shape, but it would do for the short term. He pulled the dark, blue baseball hat down a little firmer on his head. He glanced in the mirror. He still did not quite recognize who he was. The dark brown curly beard covered a good part of his nose and chin. And he still had not bothered to get a hair cut. He chuckled a little. If only they could see him now!

He drove the pick-up into town. It was late in the afternoon. He was a little surprised that the usual check-points were not in place. He needed to buy a few things for the truck, and a bed-roll, in case he ended up having to sleep out in his truck sometime. He parked a block or so away from the part of town he needed to go to. Most of the stores still accepted a small amount of cash—usually under a hundred dollars. Soon it would be a total cashless system, and then before long to buy or sell anything you would have to sign on the dotted line for your eternal death warrant. He sighed. Even if he were to find Melissa and the kids, where would they go? ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding...’ He spoke the scripture to himself again. He knew this word well. He held on to it with all he had.

He got out of his truck and began to walk on a path that led into town. He stopped. Something wasn’t right. He sensed it in his spirit. He looked around. Everything was very quiet and then suddenly a massive explosion went off, less than half a mile away. He could see billows of heavy, black smoke and bright flames of fire leaping from what had once been a large building. The color drained from Robert’s face, and he fell to the ground. He crawled next to a tree, and covered his face. After the sounds of the blast faded he could hear screaming and panicked voices of people, as they ran for safety.

After several minutes he stood up. His legs felt weak and were trembling. The smell of fire and smoke was thick. He walked down the path to see what was happening. People were still running and screaming. The sounds of multiple fire engines and sirens could be heard. And then, almost out of nowhere, hundreds of black vested, helmet covered storm troopers began to ascend onto the city center.

People were running in all different directions as the police encircled the city building that had now been blown to smithereens.

The security police were beginning to fan out. Soon they would be coming down the road that he was on. He turned quickly and headed back to his truck. He needed to get out of there as soon as he could.

34 The Rest of The Trip

The bus had stopped for one hour. The people were all told they could get off and walk around. It was a small town, about two hours outside of Jefferson City, Missouri. There was very little activity going on near the bus depot. The people seemed oddly sedated and quite. A few sat on some benches and just stared blankly into the sky. Some of the people getting off the bus had started to talk with one another, and were politely told to keep their voices down. Jody wondered why? But more and more she was beginning to truly see how different everything was from the way things use to be.

She sat down on a bench while Rebecca went to use the rest room. She began to feel very drowsy, and pretty soon her head began to drop onto her chest. Her eyes popped open when she heard the blast of the bus horn. She looked at her watch and saw that one hour had past. She jumped up. "Rebecca." She yelled her daughter's name. Where was she? Jody ran to the unisex bathroom. She was not there. She caught her breath and prayed, and then ran to the information booth. She explained to the man sitting there that she needed to find her daughter before the bus left. She asked him if he could please put something on the loud-speaker. The man looked at her as if he did not quite understand what she was saying.

"Sorry, ma'm, but we don't have no loud-speaker here. I can't help you."

Her mind began to whirl with thoughts. What if someone had grabbed her? In this bizarre world anything could happen. She calmed herself down. She would need to get their tickets changed for the next bus if she could not find her daughter. For she would not leave there without her daughter. The bus honked its horn, as a last warning.

"Jesus, please!" the words tumbled out of her mouth.

"Mom!" Rebecca came up behind her and touched her shoulder.

Jody burst into tears. "Where have you been?"

"I am sorry, mom. Dad called on my cell phone, and I was explaining to him that we had taken a trip to the ocean, and then all I remember is drifting off to sleep, and when I woke up I couldn't quite remember where I was. It took me a couple of minutes to get myself oriented. I am really sorry."

Jody hugged her daughter, and then pulled her by the arm towards the bus. The sooner they got out of here the better. What in the world had happened to the people in this community? They were all acting like zombies.

She really needed to be able to rest. For the last two nights she had hardly slept at all, and right now her nerves were a tangled mess. One more night and day of travel on this bus and they would be in New York, and then it would be a two day trip to Orlando. Hopefully she would get a little more sleep. She tried to control the tears that kept rolling down her cheeks. She squeezed her daughter's hand, as they took their seats on the bus.

Jody was surprised as they drove into Grand Central Bus Station in New York. She had been through here a couple of times, but many years ago. Now everything was so different. She could see out the window that the security was very tight. Blue helmeted security police were almost everywhere along the sidewalks. They looked, she thought, almost robotic. They stared straight ahead—occasionally their eyes darting from one side to the other. They would have to get off this bus, and then there would be a long wait before they could board the next one. She had a nervous stomach, but in a few hours they would be on the next bus, and on their way to Orlando.

So much destruction had come to the east-coast in the last couple of years, and it was not a place where people desired to live anymore. But citizens were not always given a preference as to where they wanted to live. They would go wherever they were told to go by the government. She shuddered as they came to a stop. She looked at her daughter. She had been afraid to ask her if she was having regrets about coming with her to Israel. So far it had been a hard trip, and they were only in New York.

Her heart felt so weak and vulnerable whenever she thought about Benjamin. The last time she had seen him, he had told her to persevere. "It won't be that much longer" he had said, "until Yeshua comes for us. Hang on, no matter what happens." He had kissed her so tenderly. She missed him terribly. The world had changed so much. Tears came to her eyes, as she tried to believe that Israel would be a better place, if she ever got there."

35 Destination: FEMA Camp

Robert parked his truck in back of Smittie's garage. He had already asked him if he could. They were friends from a long time back. He got out of the truck quickly. His heart was still racing. He looked around, but saw no one. He jogged slowly towards Jack's house. The sun was starting to set. He then walked through the woods until he came to the back yard of Melissa's house, and then crossed over to Jack's yard. His friend was listening to a radio on his kitchen table. He looked up when Robert opened the door.

"So, I guess you know something big happened downtown?"

"Yes," Robert answered. "I was walking on the path into town when the explosion went off. From what I could tell it looked like the City Center Building?"

"Yep. Somebody blew it sky high. They are already blaming the underground resistance, and throwing a few Jewish names in to make it sound good, and make people even more angry at them. Ya know, Hitler did the same kind of things—had his Nazi thugs start fires, and then found a way to blame it all on the Jewish people."

"But why? They control everything already. Why blow up a building and kill a bunch of people?"

"Well, son, because that's what the devil likes to do. And if they can make people believe that it's those radical Christians and evil Jews, then that's how they take control. Same scenario the devil has used many times before. And we ain't seen the worst of it yet. The anti-Christ is getting ready to seat himself in that temple in Jerusalem, and then you can bet all hell will be released. Were you able to get away from town without being seen?"

"Yes. I parked my truck in back of Smittie's, and I don't think anyone saw me coming through the woods and into the back yard."

"I know, Robert, that you probably just need to lie down and rest for awhile. But let's pray for a few minutes. Lot's of people got hurt bad in that blast today."

Rabbi Benjamin sat with his back up against the wall. He had been visiting with one of his favorite ministers, Hamilton Graham, before a security agent came and escorted Hamilton out of the building.

Benjamin had admired Hamilton for a long time. He came from a long line of preachers in America, and had not been afraid to stand up and speak the truth to the people, even before the economy had collapsed and destruction had hit America so hard. He had warned America of God's impending judgments, if the church did not come to a place of deep repentance and intercession for the Godless ways the country had chosen to live. He had been one of the first people they came for when Martial Law was enacted, and had been in the camp several months longer than Benjamin. He had shared the Gospel with many of the inmates. But this time Benjamin knew that Hamilton would not be coming back—at least not to this earth.

There were some men, young and old, who did not want to hear what Benjamin had to share. They found it hard to look Benjamin in the eyes. They had agreed to sign their souls away, and the next day they were transferred to a re-education center.

Soon, they would receive the mark—a very slender, electronic chip that would be inserted under the skin of their right hand or under the skin of their forehead. The mandatory cut off date for all people to receive this identification mark was less than two months away.

Life would become radically different for anyone who refused to accept the mark and the name of the beast. They would simply be unable to function in a society, where money, in one form or another, had to be used to buy or sell anything. Food, housing, life-treating medicines; none of these life essentials would be available for those people who refused to take the mark.

But many Christians had already moved up to a higher level of faith, and were truly learning to depend completely on God for all their needs. Miracle stories were being told and circulated on how God was now super-naturally providing for his people.

The chip companies—all government enriched—had made some radical changes in this chip, from what they had first produced a few years ago. The new version not only carried with it all of a person's

personal, and financial, and health information, but now required verification that the person had, almost as if in a marriage contract, received the name of the beast as his own name. For any Christian that meant totally rejecting their identity with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

This action could not be repealed, or changed once it was done. The horrific part of this “mark” was that to become one with the beast would forever change the DNA in a believer.

Benjamin shivered. He had tried to share the truth with as many of these men as he could, and many had listened and had renewed their faith in Jesus Christ. Some had come into the Kingdom as new believers and had received Jesus as Lord and Savior.

One day Benjamin had watched as they unloaded guillotines from a truck—taking them into a building on the other side of the barracks, from where he was. They were covered, but it was hard to keep the tent like material from slipping off of the head-chopping devices, as they rushed them into the other building. They moved fast, so that few people could see what they were doing. It would only take a few men to start a revolt, and they wanted things done smoothly.

When they saw Benjamin watching them, a guard came over and hustled him back into the barracks. A short time later a security agent came and took him by his arm, half dragging him out of the barracks to the interrogation room.

“So, Mr. Rosenberg, have you made up your mind?” The head Commander spoke as he chomped through a thick sandwich, and slurped down a bottle of coke. “We desire your expertise, Benjamin, for the good of the new world we are creating, but we have no room for you unless you agree with where we are going—as an altogether new world order.” He burped and then smiled at Benjamin. “Our camp has been given the honor of beginning the final depopulation order, not only for the feeble minded, but especially for those who are rebelling citizens—homegrown terrorists. The Commander’s eyes took on a wild gaze. He looked past Benjamin as if in a vision.

Rabbi Benjamin felt an unusual peace. He would leave this filthy pit, one way or the other. And leaving FEMA Camp # 32 to be united with his Lord forever brought a smile to his face. He looked straight into the eyes of the pitiful man who sat behind his desk.

“There is only one new world order that will rule over this earth, Commander, and I guarantee you that it will not be run by your boss.

“Once again I speak to you of the life you can have in Jesus Christ—an everlasting, eternal life, filled with true joy and peace. If there is any place in your heart for this truth, I can pray with you now, and God will forgive you your sins, and welcome you home.”

The Commander wadded up the rest of his sandwich and threw it into the trash container. He glared at Benjamin. “You are a fool. I have offered you a new kingdom, far grater than your brilliant mind can imagine. And so, before this night is over, you will go to be with this weak God that you are so devoted to. Fools—you are all fools.”

Benjamin knew that a manifestation had taken place, and that he was no longer speaking to the Commander of the camp. But he felt no fear. He spoke the words of his Master clearly and without trembling.

“Away with you, Satan, for it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only you shall serve.’”

In an instant the Commander was looking at him with a stunned expression. “You can leave now, Benjamin. I have nothing else to say to you.”

Robert had fallen into a deep sleep. His mind raced from one dream to another. In one of the dreams he heard a voice screaming. He shot up out of bed. This was not a dream. Jack was yelling and he heard loud voices as a police Swat team was trying to break down his door.

As the police continued to batter down the door, Robert threw a pair of pants on and ran to where Jack was standing in the kitchen. Jack was white with fear and was holding onto his heart. He could hardly breathe.

Robert put his arms around Jack and tried to help him sit down. But by that time the camouflaged, masked storm troopers had busted down the door. A flash grenade was thrown into the house. Robert threw himself over Jack’s ailing body, but then fell paralyzed and screamed when a strong electrical volt from a taser gun struck him in the leg. He was sure he was going to die. The pain was horrible.

There were six Swat team police, altogether. They charged into the room where Robert and Jack were still on the floor, and shoved them up against the wall with their guns.

“Please,” Robert tried to talk. “This man is having a heart attack.”

One of the police grabbed Robert by the throat, hit him hard across his face and threw him into the living room. They grabbed Jack and threw him into the same room with Robert. Then they began to pull down and break everything they could lay their hands on, trying to find something that could be used against their captives. They grabbed notebooks, and Jack’s computer. They took Robert’s small back-pack. Without any compassion, they set out on a path of ruthless destruction, as they smashed and ravaged Jack’s house.

Robert looked over at Jack. He was unconscious, perhaps dead. He tried to move in his direction, but was immediately hit in the side with another taser shot and thrown back onto the floor. Robert prayed—again he wondered if he was going to die. Then he heard the loud voice of one of the brutal leaders of the pack say, “Let’s go. We’re finished here.”

Robert was then thrown into the back of a large van and taken to a transit center. He was still in his jeans and tennis shoes. They had given him a black-t-shirt to soak up the blood from the cuts in his arms and sides—so that he would not bleed all over the van.

He was numb. He was sure Jack was dead. He did not remember seeing him in the van. After about a forty minute ride he was dumped into a large warehouse. It was filled with many people. They were all fearful and terrified, wondering what would come next. But some of the people were huddled in small groups, and praying. It was obvious they were the only ones who had any peace.

The little children had been sequestered into groups, separated from their parents. It seemed to Robert that the children had been drugged. They sat on the floor in small circles, without moving and just stared straight ahead. A man or a woman monitor would occasionally walk by the groups of children—checking to see that they were not behaving differently than expected.

Every so often he would hear different names or numbers called out over the intercom. These men and women and children were then ordered to line up in different rows and marched out of the center.

Robert sat down next to an older man, who looked safe. He tried to smile at the man but his face felt stiff and unreal. He smiled as best he could. The man acknowledged the smile and nodded his head slightly. "My name is Simon. What's yours?"

"Robert." He had stopped trying to smile. It was too hard.

"When I was a little boy I remember sitting like this once in a train station in France, with a whole bunch of scared people. Then the Nazis crammed us onto this ole, stinking train. I never could figure out how I survived that ride. And then there was the camp. I should have been killed right away." The old man could not seem to stop talking. "Yeah...I should have been gassed, like all the other children, but I had a special talent. So they kept me alive, till the end of the war, and then the Russians came."

He looked up at Robert. "So you want to know what my talent was?"

"Sure." Robert did not know what else to say.

"You see, my pop was English speaking—born in America, and my mother was French. So I grew up speaking both languages perfectly, and then learned how to speak German too. I was a pretty smart little kid." He chuckled just a little. "So they decided to use my skills to read letters and things like that, and translate for some of the people, before they killed them."

"That's quiet a story," Robert responded. He was beginning to wish he had not sat down next to the old man. The last thing he needed right now was this kind of thing. Maybe he'd try to find a bathroom and not come back.

"That's what they're gonna do with us here too. I'll stake my life on it—not that my life matters anymore. I am an old man. I've seen too much of what evil men can do to other men...and the women and little ones too. I guess you can tell by now that I am a Jew. Never could figure out why the world hates the Jews so much, but God says he'll never desert us, and I guess that's good enough for me."

"Yes." Robert was feeling a little more kindly towards him.

"But I'll tell you something, Robert. If they put us on a train, then you find a way to get off—even if you have to jump, and just pray God will keep you alive. I hope you are listening to me, son."

"Yes," Robert said, "I am."

“I may be old, but I know what I am talking about. Don’t let them take you to one of them camps. I know all about those places, and you don’t want to go there. That ole devil has not changed his plan, not one bit. He wants to kill as many people as he can, before he’s taken out.”

Robert started to answer Simon but then he heard his name being blasted over the loud speaker. When he stood up a guard came and took him to another room. The room was empty.



36 God is My Refuge

Jody took hold of Rebecca's hand. They were still waiting in Grand Central Station, in New York. They had brought little food with them, and they were hoping to get something to eat before they boarded their last bus for Orlando. The security guards were everywhere with their blue UN helmets, and their icy, robotic glares.

New York was not the same. Much of it had been destroyed when the big tsunami came crashing down over buildings, and the powerful wave had swept through the streets, destroying everything in its path.

In the beginning, following the calamity, everyone had been put to work doing whatever they could, and helping to prepare for a new, reinforced, super city to be built. The governing elites, of course, were not part of the work force.

"We will build again," the cry had gone out, "better than before." But many in God's true church had cried out in repentance for the sins of their nation—knowing how desperately they needed God's mercy.

Large refugee camps had been established in much of the city. Of course none of the new super city that was being planned was for the common people. They would be used for slave labor, and if they were old or sickly they would be sent away, and then done away with. The new order would be for those who could govern and for those who were still able to be productive, in a particular trade. But they all had to agree that the new Godless one world religion was what the world needed most. The ancient, ossified religions, especially Jewish and Christian beliefs, would not be tolerated any more in this new order.

Jody pulled Rebecca closer to her side as one of the security guards began to carefully observe her young, attractive daughter, watching her with his lustful eyes. Jody knew it was their prerogative, if they just wanted to take someone aside and do a total and complete strip-search. And she could tell that's what he had on his mind. He did not take his eyes off of her. Jody was not sure what to do. It would be at least another hour before their bus left for Orlando, and they were hungry, but that meant walking right past that guard. But she had already made up her mind. She looked at Rebecca and then they

both turned quickly and went back to the other waiting room. The security guard could not leave his post, and without even turning around, Jody could feel the glare on his face. They quickly found a place where they could sit and watch for their bus to come.

As Jody looked around the room they were sitting in she noticed that one area had been marked off for Jews only. The letter 'J' had been posted near the entrance to the secluded room. Jody felt a stab of guilt and anger, as she looked at the small group of people sitting in their designated area. The ordinance for Jewish registration had come three months earlier, and all Jewish citizens were required to register at a local office in their area. Jews were defined as any person who had ever belonged to the Jewish religion, or had a Jewish parent or at least one Jewish grandparent.

Benjamin had known that this would mean a death blow to ever getting back to Israel. Even people who had never really considered themselves Jews would be included in this illegal registration—this roundup!

"One thing is for sure," Benjamin had said, "we will avoid this however we have to. It's not hard," he had assured her, "to change our identity, at least for awhile. It will give us enough time to get out of here." And that's what he did. Jody went into hiding at Melissa's as soon as this illegal act had been ordered for all the Jews, and other freedoms had quickly become more curtailed. But she did not have to use her forged identity papers until she left on this trip.

She noticed that even in the bus terminal people were afraid to look at each other. Intimidation and fear were the main controlling agents that were used to keep people in line. She could look back now and see how obvious this build up to tyranny had been, even before the disaster and the economic collapse. But many people, like herself, had not taken it seriously until it was too late.

Things had transpired so fast. One day she woke up and it was all over. A globalist military take-over was right in front of her, even right on her door step. And then after the economy had collapsed all hell broke loose—especially against the Jews and fundamental Christians. But like her grandpa Shimon used to say, "Things change over time—nothing just happens."

Jody remembered that there had been a period of a couple years, before the collapse, when it had become popular for politicians and leaders to speak in a derogatory manner about Israel, and then about the Jews themselves. Sarcastic cartoons started appearing—first on the back pages of the news, and then more blatantly in the main news.

And jokes were made on talk shows that pointed to how Jews were really not as smart as people thought...but no one said anything, not even the Jewish Community itself. And those who did speak out, like Jody's grandfather, who still had memories of how the holocaust had started, were first warned to be quiet, and then physically attacked.

Certain patriotic leaders, especially those who had hidden away guns, veteran's groups, and Bible Christian leaders, who were in the light and saw what was coming, were the first to be hauled off. They were the first to be neutralized. Well known radio and television activists disappeared, and journalists who were not on the right side also quickly vanished. But few American citizens said anything. People were just looking out for themselves and their own families.

Jody looked again at the quiet room full of Jewish families and wondered where they were going.

"Mom." Her daughter's voice broke her train of thought.

"Yes, darling, what is it?"

"Look!"

Jody looked to where Rebecca was pointing. Two black vested security police were coming right at them. She also noticed the guard who had been eyeing her daughter was standing in the background. Rebecca reached over and took hold of her mother's hand.

The steely eyed security agent looked first at Jody and then at Rebecca. "We need for you to please come with us—just a routine check."

Jody could feel the palatable fear in her daughter as they stood up and followed the guards to a sealed off room. The other guard, who had been eyeing them, followed them into the room. They first checked the bag they had with them, and asked to see their IDs.

They then explained what they would be doing. "It has come to our attention that your activity leads us to be somewhat suspicious of your behavior."

“We have done nothing,” Jody said. “And we are not hiding anything. Please let us go.” One guard then roughly but quickly did a pat down on Jody. The guard who had been looking at Rebecca came and stood in front of them. “You can leave now.” He spoke to Jody. “We are just going to do a brief pat down on your daughter.”

Jody’s blood was boiling. Her daughter was terrified. Jody was beginning to wish she had not brought Rebecca with her.

“I will stay here until you are finished,” she said.

“No, you will not,” the guard said, and took her by the arm and led her out of the room—leaving her daughter alone with three guards.

When it was time to board the bus for Orlando Jody had to take her daughter by the arm. “Come on, honey, we have to go.” We can’t stay here.”

Rebecca looked at her mother with tears in her eyes. She had become very quiet—her head bent down most of the time. They had stripped all her clothes off of her, and the one guard had fondled her and had forced his hands upon her. She had just stood there, tears rolling down her face. Finally, when they were all finished with her they threw her clothes back at her and told her to get dressed. Then a guard had led her back to where her mother was sitting.

They boarded the bus and found two seats together. Jody put her arm around her daughter, and prayed with her. “It’s going to be okay, honey. We are leaving here and we’ll never come back.” Jody was so afraid of what those animals had done to her daughter.

“Rebecca,” she said. “Did they rape you?”

Her daughter turned and looked at her mother. “No, mom, they didn’t rape me, but now please, I don’t want to think about it any more. Jesus was with me, and I know he was protecting me from much worse things.”

Jody brought her hands to her face and wept quietly.

37 Memories

Robert was quickly ushered into a small, dark room. The only thing in the room was a desk and two chairs. He was told to sit down. He was left alone for about thirty minutes, but there was no place to run to. He was locked in for as long as they wanted to keep him in this place. When the heavy door finally opened up, he was very surprised to see Tom standing there.

“Well, Bob, what a mess you’ve gotten yourself into.” He smirked, arched his eyebrows, and laughed. “I suppose you’ve gotten rid of all those nice, expensive suits. What a shame—that you’ve decided to live your life like Robin Hood?” He chuckled. “I would guess a beautiful woman, huh? They get under your skin and then before you know it you’ve gone and done something really stupid. But I really thought you had risen above all of that. You could have any woman you want—all you had to do was ask. It’s always been part of the company benefits—you know that! But then I am not here, Bob, to listen to your stupid, tragic love story—or from what I have heard your new religious gimmick. And I know you too well, Bob, to believe anything else.” He sat down in a chair across from Robert.

“I just need a couple of things from you, and then I will leave. If I get what I need...who knows? Perhaps you will live? And perhaps even get out of here.”

Robert was astounded that he was looking at Tom. In all the craziness of the last couple of weeks he had almost forgotten about Tom and the Corporation. His thinking was not clear. He was trying hard to process what Tom was saying. What did he want?

“What is it you want from me, Tom? You want me to sign one of those promises that I won’t talk about what I did at the Corporation? I can do that—no problem.”

“Oh, Bob...I wish it was that easy. But do you really think I would be sitting here, because I need for you to sign a ‘leave the firm’ agreement? You see, because of your little hide and seek game you were playing with your new friends in Pakistan, you got the general upset with us, and before we can complete any more business deals with him, he wants to know where Ms. Adeela is. Personally, I think

it's some kind of a little vendetta with him—finding her, that is. But nonetheless we need this information, and I am sure you know where she is—at least where she was when you left the country. So let's cut to the quick, Bob, and get this done in a hurry. Then I'll tell the nice folks here at this little penitentiary what a good guy you really are, and maybe you can walk out.”

Robert looked into Tom's watery, gray eyes. Tom looked even worse than when he had last seen him, almost three months ago. But Robert no longer blinked, nor did his eye twitch when he looked at Tom, and as he sat listening to him a real peace began to flow through him. He found that he could now even smile at Tom—which was not expected by Tom, and caused him to grow straight faced and sullen.

“I don't have time to waste on you, Bob. So what do you have to say?”

“My name is Robert.” He kept smiling. “I don't know where Adeela is. She and her friends were on the run, when I left Pakistan. Sorry, Tom. I can't help you, or the general. And just so you have it on your company record and on your on-running tape recorder, I have given my life to Jesus Christ. No gimmick. I am a born again, authentic Christian. Much better future benefits, Tom. You should think about it for yourself.”

Tom's face went from a dull grayish complexion to a pinkish red. “You are a fool, Robert. Worse than that—you have gone mad. They will make you talk at the lovely place where they are taking you, and I will get the information I need. I have no doubt about that.” He laughed smugly. “Of all the people I've ever worked with, Robert, I have to admit you really surprise me! You had everything, and could have gone a lot farther, and you've given it up for a fairy tale and whatever that woman had that made you jump off a very dangerous cliff.

“Good-by, Robert. After they get finished with you, we'll see if you still like being a Christian?” Tom tapped on the steel door and a guard immediately opened it and escorted him out. It was a few minutes before they came and dragged Robert back to the barracks.

The old man he had been sitting next to was no longer there. He looked around but could not see him. He sat down and leaned back against the wall, and began to pray for Melissa and the kids.

38 And I will give to you the Crown of Life

Jody took hold of her daughter's hand. In one more hour they would be able to board the final bus to Orlando. Their brief stop in Jacksonville would not take long. And then they would be meeting their contacts. She was so very tired, and Rebecca was near tears most of the time. Her daughter was really worried about what her father might do. He had called her cell phone a couple of times, but she dared not answer it, because he would be able to tell where they were located, and then he would have the police on their trail.

Jody wanted to take out her Bible and read some words of comfort for both herself and her daughter. But Bibles were not allowed in public places, or for that matter even in homes. They were considered anti-social propaganda. But Jody had long ago memorized many of the promises of God, and while they were sitting on a bench she began to quietly quote the scriptures to her daughter. She could see her daughter's countenance begin to soften. She squeezed her hand. But pretty soon a woman sitting in back of them got up quickly—shot a hostile look at them and walked away in a hurry.

Jody grabbed her daughter's hand again. "Come on! We need to find someplace else to sit." They moved into a crowd of people who were waiting to get past the gate and onto the bus. Jody glanced around—she did not see the woman looking for them, with a security guard. Hopefully there would be no bus delays and they would soon be on their way to Florida.

Jody leaned back and took a deep breath. As they took their seats on the bus, she looked out the window and saw the woman who was upset because she had been speaking Bible scriptures to her daughter. The woman was searching the crowd for Jody, and she had a security agent with her, but he looked bored, and pretty soon walked away from the angry woman. The incitement against the Bible had become intense. Too many things in the Bible did not agree with how a lot of folks wanted to live their lives, and now that the government had banned it from the pulpit and from being read in public places, the

sharks had become bloodthirsty to attack anyone who tried to break the law, by reading or speaking Biblical scriptures. But they could never take it out of the hearts of the true believers. Jody knew her history, and she knew that this was not the first time that reading or owning a Bible was considered an illegal act.

She looked over and smiled as her daughter leaned back in her seat and slept. She looked more peaceful than she had for a few days. Her father had not tried calling her back. But they both knew that did not mean that he was not up to something! But in a short time they would be in Orlando, and then they would be hidden in a safe place until it was time to leave for Israel. She closed her eyes and prayed. "Please, O God, keep Benjamin safe in your loving arms. Until we meet again, dear Benjamin, until we meet again."

Before they came for Rabbi Benjamin Rosenberg, he had been able to share with some Jewish men, many of the Old Testament scriptures that spoke clearly about the coming Messiah. There was no doubt that these scriptures were referring to Yeshua. To the men he was sharing with, he used the name Jesus. Most of them had never been religious at all, and had never heard of the Lord's Hebrew name.

Some of the men had broken down in tears as they felt the presence of God, and began to truly realize that there was a great life after the pain and suffering of this world. They had believed on Jesus as their true savior, and now no one could take this from them.

When the guard came, and grabbed Benjamin harshly by the arm, he knew where he was going. He smiled at the men he had just been talking to. "See you soon, my friends." He spoke the words loudly as they hurried him out of the barracks.

"What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or peril or sword? No," he yelled, "nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Jesus, our Lord."

Most of the men and women in the line were scared and crying. A guard would walk by and repeat to them that they did not have to suffer this horrible death. They had all watched as men and women had their heads decapitated in front of them. A few of the observers told the guards that they would agree to whatever they wanted, and were led out. Benjamin began to speak loudly to the people.

“Don’t be afraid. Call upon the name of the Lord, and you will be saved. I promise you! God is true and He loves you.”

The guard grabbed him and pushed him to the front of the line. They could not afford to have him speaking like this, and getting the people stirred up and fighting back.

As they led him to the guillotine he stopped and turned and looked at the people behind him. The guards tried to usher him forward, but they were unable to stop him from speaking to his Christian brothers and sisters. “Do not fear,” he said. “Soon you will be home, and the pain of this world will be over.” He then looked at his captors and said: “Father, forgive these men this terrible sin...they do not know what they are doing.” He then kneeled down and put his head into the guillotine, but before the sharp blade came down upon his neck, Benjamin had already left his body to be joined with his Lord forever.



39 Time To Run

Robert had just started to fall asleep when he heard his name being called again over the loud speaker. As soon as he stood up a security guard came and took him to where a group of people had lined up.

“You don’t leave this line!” was all that was said to him.

He asked the man in front of him if he knew where they were going?

“Where do you think, stupid?” He answered Robert with an irritated voice. “We get to go for a little train ride—yeah! A train ride to hell.”

Robert stepped back from the man. He was very angry—heavy and mean, and was looking for someone to hit. Robert wanted to share some hope with him, but did not feel he should say anything.

He had not been standing in line for long when a security agent ushered them through a door to the outside. They had all been counted and then pushed and shoved onto a train. It was almost like a cargo box—no seats, and no windows. The people were squeezed into the train car until there was no room to do anything but sit down and huddle together.

The fearful panicked sounds eventually grew silent, except for a groaning here and there. There was one guard that stood near a door to a toilet. People were allowed to form a cramped line, and one by one they could use the bathroom. He had no idea how long they would be traveling or in what direction they were headed.

Why? He kept questioning. He knew of course it was the Corporation that wanted to get back at him, but it all was so bizarre. Was God allowing such a hard degree of judgment to purify his church, and what about the Jewish people? Was it too late now for them to get back to Israel? He had none of the answers.

Robert looked around for the old man that had been sitting next to him in the train depot, but could not see him. He was thinking about what he had told him—it was almost like a warning or message from God. Somehow he needed to get off of this train, but how? He had no doubt that what Tom had said to him was the ugly truth. He knew from some of the things the Corporation had been involved in that

they had ways of making people talk that didn't even require the old torture methods. All they had to do was inject someone with a lethal mind altering substance and they would get all the information they wanted. But he could see no way of escape. He prayed. His trust level with God was beginning to grow weak, and he felt sick. He was confused and scared. He began to quote scripture and focused on the Lord.

They had stopped and the people had eagerly gotten off the train for a few minutes. There was a small depot next to the train, but it looked deserted. Were they near Nevada or Utah? There was no way to know for sure, but he knew they were not in the desert. It was cool and felt like the mountain camps he used to go to as a boy. For a brief instant he thought about his father and mother. They had both been killed in a plane crash shortly after he had started college. He had one older brother, but they had not been in contact with each other for a long time. Funny, he thought, how a feeling or a certain fragrance could bring back a distant memory. He began to feel very sad, but then he pulled himself out of that reality and shook his head a bit, as if coming out of a dream.

God was trying to show him something. He looked around and then began to walk towards the end of the train and then he stopped. The guards had begun to yell at the sad, morose people to get back on the train. Robert just stood where he was, and then stepped to the very end of the train. It was amazing that no one was watching him. And then, almost as if instructed, he slipped under the train, and waited.

There was enough room above him that the train would go right over him, without hurting him. At least that's what he hoped, but he knew he had been divinely instructed in what he was doing. He just laid there. He could hear the steps of the guards walking around the train. He slowed his breathing down as much as he could, but his heart sounded very loud to him. The whistle blew and the train began to roll forward. As soon as it had passed over him, he laid as flat as he could against the tracks. He was glad that he had dark jeans and a black t-shirt on. After a few minutes he raised his head. The train was already out of view, but it would not be long before they knew he was missing. He stood up and without hesitation began to run for the hills.

He knew before long they would be scouting the whole area where he had been, and they would have dogs. He moved as quickly as he could through the long branched pine trees. The forest was pretty easy to navigate, but he had to watch for the fallen trees so that he did not stumble over them. He took out his compass. He still had it tucked in a small pocket in his jeans. He felt he was to travel north. He took a second to see what his direction would be. While he was thinking on these things, and had slowed down for just a minute, he heard the dreaded, distant sounds of black-hawk helicopters, and they were not that far away. He knew what they were doing. They were searching for him.

He ran as fast as he could to a cliff and looked down at the ravine below him. He had no time to think or ponder what to do. He began to slide down about two hundred feet to the edge of a shallow, but fast moving stream. Fortunately, it was not a very wide river. The sounds of the helicopters were coming closer. On the other side of the river on the shore a broken canoe had been turned over on its side. He jumped into the cold water and began to wade to the other side. The water was moving fast. He slipped and fell. He got up as fast as he could, and steadied himself from the fast moving current and got to the other side and to the canoe. Quickly, he pulled the broken boat over himself, and curled up inside as much as he could. As soon as he was under the canoe he heard the chop chop sounds of two helicopters coming over the trees towards the ravine. He laid very still, and he prayed. He prayed that they would not notice his tracks, and the sliding marks he made going down the cliff to the ravine. He prayed hard for God to hide them. The black hawk helicopters flew up and down the river a few times.

For Robert it seemed a very long time. He shivered in his cold, damp clothes. He knew the signs of shock in the human body. The panic and cold had caused his body to begin to shut down. He prayed again for God's help, but also asked the Lord to take him before they could capture him. His breathing was becoming shallow, and his heart beat was slowing down. "I'm yours," he whispered to the Lord. "Whatever you choose to do—my life is yours." He closed his eyes, hoping that he would soon go unconscious.

Robert opened his eyes. He wasn't sure how long he had passed out for. He was very wet, but not as cold. His clothes had partially dried. He looked out from under the canoe. The sun was starting to go down. It was quiet. No helicopter sounds, no dogs barking, no guns being fired. He pushed the canoe off of him and slowly stood up. He was still shivering and weak, and very stiff, but he had to get out of there, and find someplace where he could hide out for the night. They might still be searching for him, and even if they had stopped for the night, they would start again in the morning—he was sure of it.



40 Helping Hands

Robert began to follow the river downstream. He stopped every few minutes and listened for any sounds. He scouted the horizon as far as he could see, searching for anything unusual. The twilight had turned into night. He took out of his pocket his small compass. The illuminated hand pointed north. He continued to walk downstream in that direction. He could see a large forest of trees ahead of him. It was now cold in the forest, and he began to shiver again in his wet clothes. He found a small cave in the side of a hill.

He got down on his knees and crawled inside. It was warmer inside the cave. He pulled some broken branches off the path that led up to the cave and put them on the floor. He laid down, pulling one branch over himself, and immediately went to sleep. He had only slept for a short time when he woke up with a startle. In a quick dream he saw that in the early morning hours they would be searching this area with their dogs. He needed to get far away from here, and he had no time to waste.

He had walked for about two hours when he saw what looked like an old barn, not too far from where he was. He could also see a fence that encircled the barn and a small house. By the time he got to the fence he was feeling desperate. He needed a place where he could hide for the rest of the night. The gate was open, and the ground was wet and muddy. The house was dark. He walked over to the barn. It was quiet—no animal sounds of any kind. He walked into the barn. He did not think it had been used for quite some time. He began to climb the steps of a homemade ladder to the loft above. It was dirty, but warm, and there was still a small amount of hay in the corner of the loft. He walked over and immediately lay down. All he wanted to do was sleep.

He prayed and thanked God for finding him this place to rest. Before he closed his eyes he asked God to keep his family safe—wherever they were.

“Hey, up there!” The old woman’s voice made Robert think of a nice neighbor he had known when he was a little boy. He closed his eyes, wanting to go back to sleep.

“Hey! It’s almost noon. You’re gonna have to get up and come down here, or somehow I’ll have to come up there, and that might be a bit of a problem for me.”

This time Robert woke up and sat up straight. A jolt of fear shot through him. There was nothing he could do but go down, and maybe plead with this person for his life. He climbed down the rickety steps.

The woman was old—maybe in her late seventies or eighties, but she did not look frail or helpless at old. Her blue eyes were clear and sharp. Her white hair had been pulled in a bun to the back of her neck. She had on a red-checkered shirt and a pair of blue jeans. He doubted that she would have had any trouble climbing up the steps.

“Hello. My name is Robert. I had to have a place to sleep last night. I hope you don’t mind that I used your barn. I’ve been trying to find my...”

“Slow down son. I’ve known you were out here from the moment you came through my gate. My dog, Joey, let me know the moment you got here.” She smiled. “So come on in to my house —much nicer than this old barn, and have a bit of breakfast. And don’t worry about that police posse that was looking for ya. They came here pretty early in the morning with them yapping dogs. But I squirted some raccoon juice around—over there a ways, and when they got their noses in that they wouldn’t leave it.” She chuckled. “They asked me a few questions and then I sent them on their way.”

Robert followed the woman out of the barn, past her dog Joey, and into the house. He thought for a moment he was going to cry.



Sally Myers had a small, but comfortable house. It was very old fashioned. Robert would not have been surprised if it looked the same way seventy years ago. But Sally was not old in her body or her mind, and she had a great sense of humor. She had comfortable looking fuzzy slippers on her feet. He could not believe how fortunate he was to have been led here by God. “I am so thankful that you are,” he fumbled a little over his words, “a nice person.” I’ve been on a very scary and frightening journey—and I need to keep going, and...”

“Come on now, and sit down. I can’t eat this breakfast all by myself.” She laughed nicely.

Robert sat down to an unbelievable meal. “Wow!” he said to her. “Hope I am not dreaming.” He smiled and laughed a little, as he dished up on his plate hash brown potatoes, fried eggs, sausage and a homemade blueberry muffin. A tall glass of juice sat next to his plate. He tried to slow down his eating, but it was so good. “This is amazing!” he said again.

Sally watched him eat for a few minutes, while she ate a piece of toast with one egg, and sipped on a cup of black coffee.

“So, Robert, do you know where your family is?”

Robert looked up from his plate, patted his mouth with his napkin and then took a deep breath. After a good night’s sleep, and a meal to eat, he was beginning to feel human again, and he was able to clearly focus for the first time in a couple of days. He wondered how Sally knew that he was looking for his family? But she was truly, such an extraordinary woman. He didn’t question that.

“No, Sally, I don’t, but with God’s continued help and direction I am going to try and find them. It’s a very long story—very long. I came back from a trip to Pakistan, and have been on the run ever since, but God has kept me going—in his mercy. Are you a Christian, Sally?”

Sally smiled. “Well, Robert, you might say that I’ve read some pages in the good book a few times, and I’ve had some pretty interesting encounters with my Lord. Yes, Robert, you could say I am a Christian...just never put a name to it.” Sally laughed lightly.

“Sally.” Robert took a big bite of his muffin and a long sip of coffee, and then continued. “You are living here like nothing has

changed, and yet it's really gotten bizarre out there—in the world. How have you managed to stay isolated, and why haven't they come and taken your house and property from you?"

"Oh, they don't want much to do with me. I am just a strange, old lady to them. And I guess the good Lord has kept them from taking my property—in that he needed it for himself." She smiled, as she sipped on her coffee.

"I am very much aware of how crazy this ole world has become, Robert. I've been watching it for sometime. My good husband, David, always believed that people would get so advanced with all their electronic gadgets and things, and their fancy way of living, that one day it could prove to be a real problem for everyone. Once they take away your electricity and things, what are you gonna do? You see, living this simple way, you don't have those worries. So we always just sort of stuck to the old ways. I have an outhouse in back, and I've still got a good fresh water well out there. And I use our oil lamps, when I need them. I have a natural growing garden in the summer—and have plenty of preserves stored away downstairs. Maybe that's why I've stayed pretty healthy for an eighty-five year old gal—ya think?" And God has also blessed me with good eyes, even at my older age. And besides the good Bible, I always have a few books to read. So I keep up on things.

"I use to ask myself why I've not been run out of here by them ole government police, when so many others around here have been, but then I began to see that God had plans for me to help out some of his people, and so he keeps me here, and keeps the wrong kinds out.

"You see, Robert, that's why I wasn't surprised when you ended up sleeping in my barn. I would have invited you into my house, but I figured you just wanted to be left alone—most of them do."

Robert was very interested in what Sally was telling him. He found it fascinating. "You speak of 'most of them.' I am very curious! What does that mean? Aren't you afraid to be out here all by yourself?"

"My husband died ten years ago, Robert. I have a daughter who wants me to move into town where she lives, but I just can't imagine doing that. I wouldn't be happy in the city. No. God has me here, and this is where I will stay till he takes me home.

“A couple of years ago the Lord woke me up one night, out of a very vivid dream, and told me that some people would be coming my way—men and women, and even children. Now the Lord told me that my house and my little farm would be a place of refuge for people.

“You know in the Bible, God provided places of refuge for the people of Israel. And it seems the Lord wants to do that again.” She laughed a little. “Not so sure why he chose this old lady? But whatever I need, he always supplies—though I never know where it’s going to come from.

“You know, there are a lot of God’s children on the run these days, trying to escape the clutches of some pretty mean and crazy people.

“I know,” Robert said. “I’ve run into some of them. It’s so sad they have no place to go—no safe place.”

“Yes, I know son. There is not a lot I can do, but for everyone the Lord sends my way I have something I can give them. Sometimes it’s just a hug and a word from the Lord—that he is watching over them, and that his love will not fail. I think, Robert, he wants me to share that with you too—that his love will not fail you.”

Robert’s eyes filled with tears. Just being around someone who showed him such kindness was so wonderful. “I know, Sally, that God will bring me through, and I pray that I will not fail him.”

“I don’t think you will, son, or you would not be asking that question. You know, sometimes, the Lord has honored me by allowing me to help some of his chosen ones get back to Israel.

“I’ve helped a few very nice Jewish families get going on their way back to the land of their Father’s—Israel. But for everyone God sends my way he does something a little different. Let me ask you, Robert, what exactly is on your mind. I know you are searching for your family. The Lord showed me that.”

“Yes, Sally. I need to find my family. And my prayer is that before God takes me off this earth I will be able to ask them to forgive me for a lot of bad things I did to them.”

“Hmmm, sounds pretty serious.”

“It is.”

“Well, have you prayed and asked God to show you where they are?”

“I have prayed—many times. But it’s been pretty quiet. For some reason God has not given me even a clue as to where they might be. It looks like my wife—should say my former wife—left with the children in her car. So I am praying and believing that they have not been arrested. Melissa was hiding a Jewish woman in her home for a few months, and I guess you know that’s now against the law. I know that some police thugs came to her house, but I think she had already left.”

“Well, she sounds like quite the brave woman, and I kind of feel in my spirit that God has her hidden someplace. Now, Robert, you may have prayed, but you’ve not prayed here. You see, I like to think I have an open heaven over my home—some pretty amazing things have taken place here. So I would suggest that you pray to the Lord while you are staying here, and you might be surprised at what happens.

“I will,” Robert answered. “Yes,” he said again, “I will.”



41 New Beginnings

Robert slept at Sally's like he had not slept for a long time. And he dreamed. In the first dream he was looking down upon the village where Nasir and Adeela and the other Christians he had known were living. In the dream many of the homes were on fire and people were running away from black uniformed police—they were charging the village on huge, snorting horses. It was a terrifying scene. And then he saw Adeela. She was standing in front of the fleeing people. She had a peaceful look on her face, and she was holding up the Bible.

She did not seem to be afraid at all. Pretty soon the flames surrounded her. He remembered, in the last part of the dream, the glow she had on her face, and the Bible she was still lifting high.

Then the last dream had caused him to sit up in bed, wide awake. In this dream he had been driving. Part of the country he was driving through looked like prairie; tumble weed was blowing across the highway, but then there were times when he was driving through heavy, dark green forests. In one part of the dream he had stopped by a lovely, fresh flowing river. He remembered thinking that he had not seen such a nice clean river like this for a long time. Not far from the river was a small wood cabin. He could hear people singing—they were singing Christian hymns. Some of the songs he remembered from a long time ago. He walked into the cabin. The people all looked very old fashioned, almost like they belonged to another age, like a hundred years ago. But they were all alight with the glory of God, and their faces were bright and shiny. He was happy to be invited in.

A tall, thin man, dressed in a nice old fashioned gray suit with a dark red vest, was at the front of the room. The man immediately reminded Robert of a picture he once saw of Smith Wigglesworth. He motioned for Robert to come in and take a seat, and then he began to read scriptures from the Bible.

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went, not knowing where he was going...and by faith he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

“Brothers and sisters,” the preachers face was radiant, almost luminous. Robert could not take his eyes off of him.

“We are on a journey but we have not yet reached our final destination. Oh,” he looked up with glee, “what God has prepared for those who love him. Our life on this earth is a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before me. Picture, dear brothers and sisters, if you will, on a cold and icy day, a short breath escaping your mouth—such my friends is the escaping condensation of our lives on this earth. So how then should I live my life if indeed I know how short it is? And that I will soon stand before a holy and altogether righteous God. Yes, my friends, I say...how then should I live my life?”

Robert found himself transfixed by this man’s sermon. In the last part of the dream this stately man of God had walked down the isle and had put his hand on Robert’s head and had started to pronounce a word over him, but then the dream faded, but before the dream ended he found himself driving into a small town, called Dayton. He had the feeling that he was in southeastern Washington, but he was not sure.

In the dream he had just driven over a very steep hill and could see a short distance away what appeared to be a very nice house and farm. It looked the way farms used to look, with animals and green gardens. And that’s when he saw his wife and children. They were waving at him, as if they knew he was coming. He woke up laughing, and speaking the name ‘Dayton.’

Jody was so glad that they were now less than an hour away from Orlando, Florida. It had been a two day trip from New York. The tsunami that had devastated so much of the upper east coast had also done some damage to northern Florida and Georgia. There had been massive flooding, but not anything compared to what had taken place farther north. And these southern areas had also come through some more recent floods and earthquakes in pretty fair condition—as a result many had tried to emigrate to this part of the country. The DHS had quickly issued a restraining order as to how many could move

there. The more money people could afford to pay the government, the easier it was for a decision to be made.

Rebecca had slept, leaning her head on Jody's shoulder. Jody was glad for this. The sleep brought healing, but soon she would have to wake her up.

Her daughter had always been such a special gift to her. They had laughed together and cried together so many times, but now her daughter was going through very hard things, like so many others. Jody's heart was broken especially for the little children. So many of them had been deprived of their childhood, and their parents had been taken from them—so much suffering. Many times Jody had cried out for the Lord's return, simply for the sake of the children. "Forbid not the children to come unto me." She prayed this many times—only God's love and protection could now save the little ones.

"Hey, sweetie, we're going to be there pretty soon. Do you need to use the bathroom?"

Rebecca looked up at her mom. "No," she said in a small voice. She looked at her mother in a funny way.

"Are you okay?" Jody asked

"I will be all right mom. You know it could have been a lot worse. I really do believe that God was protecting me. But soon we will be in Israel." She smiled up at her mother. "Look, we're coming into Orlando."

Jody looked out the window, as the bus drove up near the entrance to the greyhound terminal. Then her face turned pale. She turned and looked at her daughter with shock. "Look! Your father is standing over there by those benches, and he has two security police with him."

Rebecca looked out of the window. "Oh, no! What are we going to do?"

"Jody closed her eyes. "Oh, God...please show me what to do."

"Mom. There is only one thing that we can do. If I promise to go with dad, under the condition that he leaves you alone, and does not have you arrested, then you can still go on to Israel."

"I don't want to go without you, Rebecca!"

"There is nothing else we can do. Listen! I know Dad. He loves me and he won't hurt me. And maybe this is God telling me to stay here."

Dad needs me more than you do. We have no other choice. My prayers are going to change his life.”

Jody looked at her sixteen year old daughter—wondering how she had become so mature.

The bus came to a stop. “I’m going to tell Dad that you got off the bus, and I will also tell him that if he wants me to go home with him and not to run away, then he has to stop looking for you.”

Jody looked at her daughter, and took her face in her hands.

“I love you sweetie. One day soon we will be together again, and if I get to Jerusalem, or anyplace in Israel, for that matter, then I will call and let you know I am safe. Stay in prayer, and be so alert to what’s going on around you.

“You run from your dad, if he tries to force you to take the mark.”

“No one will make me take the mark, mom. I probably know more about it than you do!” She smiled a weary smile. “Don’t worry about me. Maybe I will be able to convince Dad not to take it either. I do love him, even if he’s a mess.”

Jody hugged her daughter before she got off the bus. Then she moved towards the back where she could not be seen. She watched out the window as Rebecca walked up to her father. As she was talking to him he glanced over at the bus—looking for her. The determined look he had on his face began to soften as Rebecca continued talking to him. He looked one more time at the bus, and then said something to the security guards and they all walked away.

Jody’s heart skipped a beat as she watched her daughter walk away with her father. Perhaps her daughter was right—maybe it was meant to be. If he had persisted in trying to find his daughter he could have blown the cover for several other escaping Jews.

Jody sighed and wiped the tears from her eyes. “Everyone has to get off the bus, lady.” A security guard came towards her with a sharp sounding voice.

“Oh, I am sorry. I must have fallen asleep. She tried to smile at the guard and then grabbed her bag and walked off the bus.

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42 After the Dream

Robert walked out into the kitchen. Sally already had an old fashioned percolator bubbling on the wood stove. The coffee smelled great. Robert was anxious to tell Sally about the dreams God had given him. He told her about the stream and the cabin, and the man who looked like Smith Wigglesworth, and then he told her about the place he saw called Dayton, and that he had clearly seen Melissa and the kids on a farm.

“I’ve got to get there, Sally—one way or the other.”

Sally took a long sip of coffee and then sat it down on the table and smiled at Robert. “I just love it when the Lord does these things.” Her eyes twinkled with laughter. “I want you to walk with me out to the barn.”

Robert put his coffee down and followed her out the door.

“You see that pretty red truck?” She chuckled a bit. “It’s still in good shape—just hasn’t been driven for awhile. I’m gonna sell that fine ole truck to you, Robert—if you’ve got a couple of dollars for it?” She laughed. “Of course we’ll have to go down to the DMV and get things taken care of—get it signed over to you. My daughter has a good friend that works there, so we won’t have any problems. And then we’ll ask my friend, Joey, to check it over real good—just to make sure all is good. And then, Robert, you can go find that place in your dreams. Just follow the trail that the Lord showed you. From what you described...sounds like it might be northwest of here—maybe southeastern Washington. I’ve got a big map book, and we’ll look it up.”

Robert pulled over to the side of the road and looked at the map. The weather had turned warmer and it felt good. He looked out over the valley below him, and the beautiful green trees of Oregon, that lined the highway. He lifted his arms up in praise to God.

Everything had gone amazingly well at the DMV, and except for a new set of brakes the truck was running perfect. Sometimes he just let the tears roll down his face. I wonder if she was an angel, he thought. He had given Sally a big kiss and hug before he left her house, and had told her that one day they would meet again,

if not on this earth then in the Kingdom of heaven for sure.

Robert got back in his truck and started to drive away from the side of the road, when he saw the flashing red and blue lights in back of his car.

He turned the engine off and said a quick prayer as a tall DHS security officer, dressed in black with a machine gun at his side, walked up to his window.

“Hello,” Robert said. “Beautiful day, isn’t it?”

“Can I see your license and registration. The officer was not smiling.

“Sure.” Robert handed him his fraudulent papers.

“I see you’re from California. What brought you this far north, Mr. Hicks?

“I am just going to visit some family in Washington—no problem is there?”

The officer looked down at the gadget in his hand and punched a few buttons. He then looked up again at Robert. “I am going back to my car. You wait here. I’m not finished with you.”

Robert began to pray softly in the spirit. Surely God had not brought him this far, and shown him such favor for it to all end in a big disaster. He felt a little sick, but then looked in the rear-view mirror as another police car quickly pulled in back of the first one. In a couple of moments the DHS security guard opened his door and came back to Robert’s car.

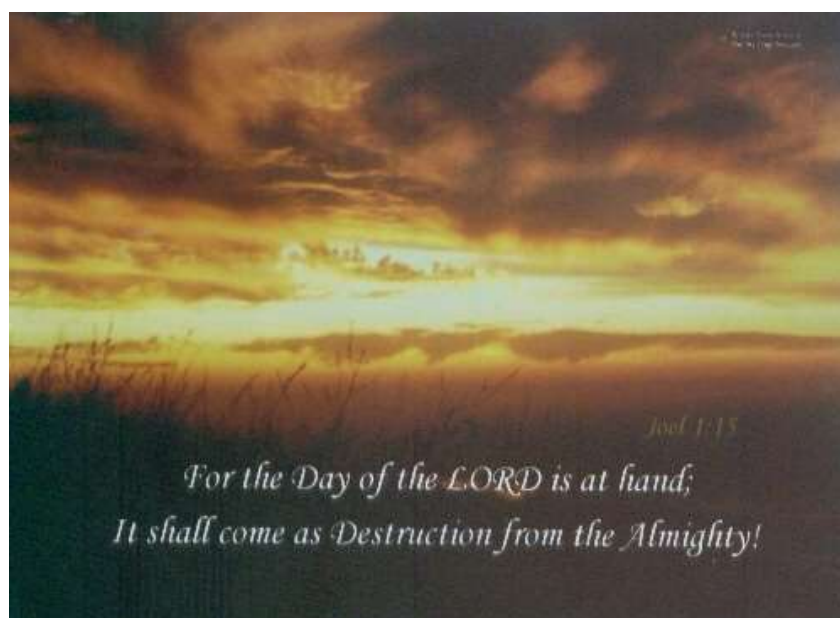
“I’m going to take down your license, and check a few things out, but for right now you can leave. We’ve got some serious business to take care of, but I hope you’ve been telling me the truth. I won’t have any trouble finding you if you have not.” He looked at Robert with a hard expression and then went back to his patrol car. Robert watched as both the cars, with their lights flashing, squealed around in a fast circle and quickly drove away.

It was early in the evening when Robert stopped by a fresh flowing river and rested for a few minutes. He had prayed for a long time after the police cars left him. “Oh, God,” he kept praying, “just let me find my family.”

There was a sign near where he had stopped that pointed to a camp ground, one mile away. When he got there he wasn't surprised to find a little wooden cabin and people at a meeting, singing Christian hymns. He had no explanation for how or why....but he smiled at the old fashioned, nicely dressed people who were enjoying their church meeting. And there was Smith—standing up front, preaching his heart out. This was just too great, he thought. If only his Melissa could be here with him. He closed his eyes feeling a wave of God's love touch his heart. After a while he noticed that the pastor was standing next to him. This time he heard the words that were spoken over him:

“God has raised you up, son...to preach the Word of God, and so it will be. It does not matter the time or the place. The anointing will come like lightening from heaven and you will open your mouth, for the fire of God will be in your bones. You will stand against the tyranny of your time, and many will turn from evil, and repent, and be saved.” When the pastor put his hands on Robert's head a feeling like hot oil flowed from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet.

“You will finish the work God has called you to do, and when you stand before Him on that great day of His reward, you will be given eternal recognition as a soldier of the ‘brave heart’ legion. Go forth, son, and do not fear the trails that await you. The day of the manifestation of the Sons of Glory draws near.”



43 Back in Pakistan

Adeela cradled Nasir's head in her hands. The Taliban had stormed the peaceful village where they had been living for the last couple of months. The terrified Christians had run for their lives, including Rauif and his wife and baby. Some had managed to hide in the tall trees that boarded the village, and some had even been able to escape, but many had not.

Adeela had stayed behind trying to help the little children who had—in all the panic—been separated from their parents. Nasir was one of the few men who had a gun. As his wife desperately tried to run with the children, taking them out of harm's way, he took up a position of defense behind one of the small houses and began to fire at the fierce enemy. Adeela hid in the trees with the children. When the Taliban had finished burning the village and had left, she went back to find her husband, Nasir. She found him lying crumpled up on the doorstep to one of the houses—at first she thought he was dead. He had been badly wounded, and his breath was very weak.

“My darling,” she whispered to him. “Soon you will be with Yesu, and all the pain will be over.” The tears streamed down her face. Nasir had been a good husband to her for the short time they had been married, but now she must release him into the hands of God.

For a brief second he opened his eyes and tried to mouth the words “I love you...” but then closed his eyes, and his spirit departed from him.

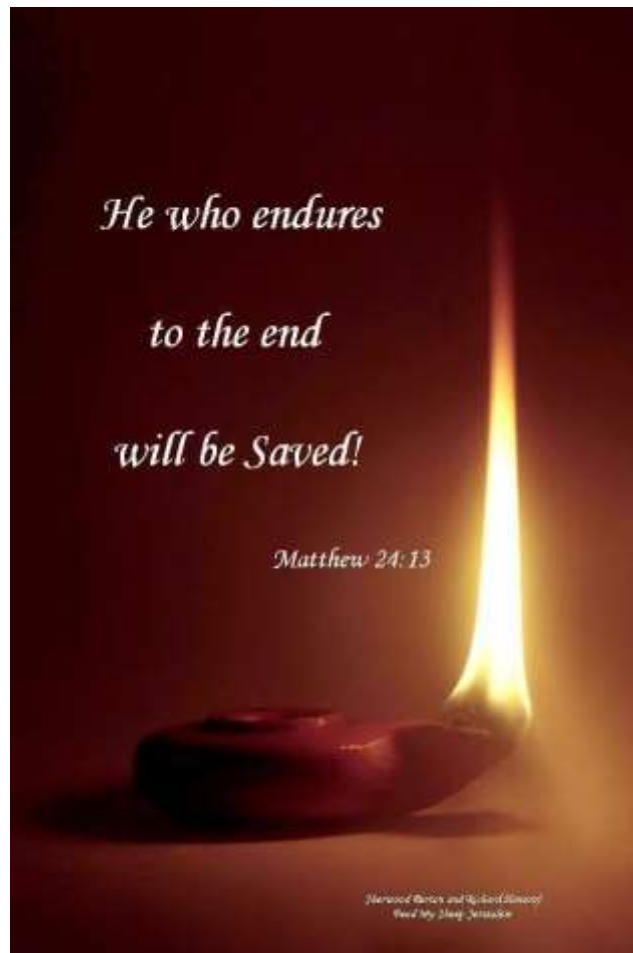
Adeela left her husband where he was. There was no way to bury him, but she knew where he was. And one day the Lord would resurrect his body, and it did not matter where on this earth it lay.

Adeela kissed her husband's forehead one more time, and then hurried to the woods to try and locate the children. Many of their parents had been murdered by the Taliban—some of them had been beheaded. She tried to keep her eyes on the path ahead of her, and away from the bloody massacre. The little ones were hiding behind the trees, where she had left them. They were terrified. Some had even gone into shock. She ran to as many as she could, and then gathered them around her. “We must leave here now,” she said to them—their little faces and large brown eyes looking up at her.

“God will lead us to a place of safety. I want you to pray. Your parents are now with Yesu in heaven, and one day you will see them again. So try not to be sad. Now, I want you to follow me closely. There is another Christian village not too far from here, and we will be safe there. It is closer to the border with India, and so the Taliban do not go there as often. So come children—we must leave here quickly.”

Hasan, and his wife and sons, and many other dedicated Christians in Pakistan, continued their work for the Lord, wherever they went or were forced to relocate. They prayed continually that the church would arise victorious in their country, where so much martyred blood had already been spilled.

But whether the violence increased or decreased, Hasan and the others would continue to go where God would lead them—knowing that God would keep them safe, and if it was his will to take them home, then they would die his willing servants.



44 Arriving in Israel

Jody Cohen leaned her head against her brother's shoulder. They had walked a short distance from their house to a clearing in the woods, where there was a wonderful view—they could see all the way to Tel Aviv. And they could even see the Mediterranean Sea. She had been in Israel now for two weeks. It had been an amazing journey. She had flown on a small cargo plane with five others from Florida to a small town in southern France. From there they had traveled, under false passports, to the Greek Island of Cyprus. And from there it was a one day boat ride to the coast of Haifa in Israel. The captain of the boat had been able to make contact with Jody's brother, Michael, and he had been there with his wife and sons to meet his sister.

They had laughed and hugged each other. Jody's family lived on a small moshav called Kesalon, about twenty-five miles west of Jerusalem. They had traveled by bus from Beit Shemish to Haifa, to meet Jody. In these hard times in Israel few people traveled by car any more. Even though Israel owned huge gas and oil reservoirs in the sea off of their coastlines, they had not been able to produce it. The heavy embargos and boycotts from so many nations had left Israel totally alone, but God had been their strength and their help.

Michael was so glad to see his sister. He knew that she was now a believer in Yeshua, but there had been little time to talk with each other, and they had so much to catch up on.

"Dad prayed for you so many times, Jody. I would not be surprised if he is looking down from heaven right now and smiling that you are here with us in Israel—although I am sad that Rebecca could not come with you."

Jody looked up at her brother. He had changed little, except he now a lot thinner and had a more tanned, Israeli look about him. Angela, his wife, looked great. She hardly recognized Timothy and Jeremy—they had grown so tall. She had also met a lovely young lady, named Anna, who had a beautiful little two year old daughter. Jody had felt a mother daughter kinship with the young woman from the moment they had met.

“I too am sorry, Michael, that my daughter had to leave me, but I can only believe that for some reason it was God’s will. And I do believe that it will all work out for good.”

“You know, Michael, we all have regrets about some things. One of my big ones is that I did not come, two years ago, with you and Pop. I was heart-broken when I found out that he had been killed in that mob attack in Jerusalem.”

“Well, sis, it was hard for all of us when Dad and Grandpa Shimon’s good friend, Yacov, were killed. But we all felt that Pop did not want us to morn at all. Dad had a great home-coming and reward. And I don’t believe it will be that long, before we all join them in our glorious new homes.” Michael smiled at his sister.

“I can see that you’ve made some good friends, up here in the hills.”

“Well, when the temple was completed, after the war, we figured it was time to get out of Jerusalem. We’ve been watching closely what’s going on, and we don’t have much time left. And also the persecution against believers in Jerusalem and in the larger cities is a lot worse than in some of the country places, like up here. But the day is soon coming when our people will all have to flee for their lives. The one who will bring on the abomination is soon to enter the scene. But we have been given time to share the Jewish Gospel with our neighbors up here, but we need to be wise and careful with how we do it. Some of the people up here also experienced the revival that took place almost three years ago, and their eyes were opened to who Yeshua really is.

“Of course Israel has been abandoned by the nations, but in settlements like this, all across the country, we’ve been able to bring in a good harvest of fruits and vegetables, and so Israel is surviving.

“We are reaching out and helping each other like never before. Even some of the well known politicians have taken off their political hats and have become real servants to the people. Now that is truly amazing!” Michael laughed a hearty laugh. “But I guess I don’t have to tell you what it’s like for the Jews in the diaspora—although God is using it as a tool to bring as many of his people home as he can.”

God is going to restore Israel, and he will bring her back to be the head and not the tail, but difficult times are coming. Israel has been through a lot already, but it’s not over yet.” He continued to talk to

his sister. “God won the war for them against Gog and Magog, but they also lost many soldiers, and it has taken a long time to rebuild many of the communities. But the really hard part has not even started—not yet. After the dragon makes war with Israel, then he will go after the remnant of her seed, those which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Yeshua, the Messiah, and we are already experiencing some of that now.”

“And after that, God’s Wrath will be poured out upon our enemies for the sake of God’s elect, not only here in the land, but also in all the nations.”

“Do you think we will be here for that?”

“No, Jody, I do not. I have always believed and I still do, that God will rescue his true, faithful believers—Jew and Gentile—from God’s anger against an unrighteous and wicked world. This is why we are told to pray that we might be counted worthy to ‘escape’ these things and to stand before the Son of Man. I have always believed that ‘escape’ means just that. God has also told us that because we are keeping his command to persevere, that he will also keep us from the hour of his testing, that will test all those who dwell on the earth.

We have always been subject to the tyranny and evil of men and tribulation, but as His beloved bride, we are not called to endure the Wrath of God. But now, my dear sister, let’s go inside and see what kind of a dinner Angela has prepared for us. Maybe we can talk some more during our meal.” He smiled warmly and took Jody by the hand.

45 A New Beginning

Robert had been driving for a few hours. He had crossed into the south east section of Washington State. It did not look as lush and as green as it had in the dream, but the people seemed friendly, more friendly than he had experienced in other places, and they had a more positive sense in their attitudes. He kept looking at his map, to make sure he had not taken a wrong turn. According to the map he should have come to the town of Dayton by now. He knew he was close.

He pulled off to the side of the road and looked at the map one more time, and then he prayed for God's help and direction to find that farm. A few cows had ambled over to the fence where he was standing. He smiled. It had been a while since he had seen this many farm animals. He started driving again. As he crested the hill he saw in the valley below a little white house, with a fence around it, and a red roofed barn. It was not the beautiful place he had seen in the dream, but he was sure it was the same place, even though he had not seen any sign telling him that he was near Dayton.

He drove down the hill and parked in the driveway, behind an older looking blue truck. There were no people anywhere to be seen. He felt a little confused. He so much wanted this to be the right place.

He walked up to the house and knocked on the front door.



Epilogue

It was a small barn with a red roof. People had filled the barn, and were also standing outside and sitting on the ground, near the entrance, just to hear the preaching of the Word of God. Many bibles had been confiscated and burned, so the Word of God was rare.

They were so hungry, and so many had come! They had left their homes before the sun had risen. They had walked the roads and paths to this place in the small community of Dayton. But there were also many other places in America where God had provided a refuge for his people to come and be spiritually fed—for the anointing was great, and the love and power of God filled their hungry souls. And God made sure that they were protected and covered, for in these dark end times, the Lord God of heaven and earth still reigned over all of his creation, and no one could stop or come against that which he had purposed.

Robert stood on a small wooden platform. He looked out over the hundreds of people who had come to hear him preach with fire the Word of God. But most of all he looked down with tears in his eyes at the face of his beautiful new wife, Melissa, and at the shining faces of his son, Samuel, and his daughter, Cindy. They were so proud of their father. They had been together now for a few months. On that day when he had knocked on the door, Melissa had opened it. They had both stood there for a minute with tears in their eyes, just looking at each other. Without having to say anything they both knew that God had worked many special miracles in their lives.

It had been a simple wedding in a small white house that belonged to Pastor John and his wife, Mary. They had taken Melissa and the children into their home and had cared for them. They had known that it was what God wanted them to do.

While Melissa was still in California, God had woken her up one night and had told her to put the kids in the car and to start driving. He would show her where to go. Melissa had known that Robert would come, and she knew that he would be a different man.

With great passion, Robert McLaren began to preach the Word of God—for he had been called and chosen to be one of God's brave-heart's.

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ...And there shall be no more curse, but the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve Him.”

“Hear the Word of the Lord, and prepare to meet your God!” Robert's face was shining with the glory of God, and his words were like burning fire upon the spiritual altar that had been prepared. God consumed the sacrifice, and the people fell to their faces, repenting of their sins, and crying out for God's forgiveness, some giving their lives to Jesus Christ, and others rededicating their lives to Jesus Christ.

In the months that followed, Robert preached the Word of God day and night, and thousands upon thousands were saved and redeemed for God's glory.

One day they came for Robert and God allowed it. They took him to a prison camp and put him in a dark hole, and then they killed him. But before he died he led fifty inmates to the Lord. He died a brave man, a Brave Heart—proclaiming freedom to the captives, leaving the world behind for the glory of heaven.

“Father, I will that they also, whom you have given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which you have given me; for you loved me before the foundation of the world.” John 17:24

The day of the gladness of Jesus' Heart had come—His Wedding Day! The Bridegroom had come for His Bride, and those who were ready went in with Him to the Wedding, and the door was shut. This Jewish Bridegroom had also promised His Bride one year away from the affairs of the world; Time to share with His Beloved. (Deut 24:5)

For God's faithful saints, coming Home was like opening a gate and walking into a world that their hearts had always yearned for. Here was the most perfect Home they could ever have dreamed of.

It was Heavenly, filled with so much laughter, and so much joy, and so much beauty, and so much peace.

Robert stood with his family—gazing at the colors and the sounds of heaven. There were great forests, and gardens with flowers, more beautiful than anything on earth could ever be. Heaven was a very big place, and they had only glimpsed a small part of it. But what they had filled all their senses with was beyond anything they could ever have imagined on earth.

There was Benjamin with his wife. And Jody was there too, enjoying her very large and beloved family. Her father Samuel, and her grandfather Shimon, stood at her side. She was awed to discover that many of her great and honored Jewish ancestors had also walked with the patriarchs of old, even Abraham, and King David.

And the One who made it all perfect was fully enjoying each one of his sons and daughters—no one was left out of his love and attention. Jesus lifted up the little children, who had left behind the dark and fearful earth, and they giggled and laughed with happiness.

Robert was no longer clothed in the filthy prison rags he had been dressed in when leaving the earth. He was now clothed in a pure white shining garment. Benjamin, and Nasir, and Adeela, and Hasan and all the others also shined in their garments like the stars and the brightness of heaven.

A great celebration had been planned by the King, for it was His heart's desire to reward each faithful martyr. Robert and Melissa, and Adeela, and Benjamin and Nasir, and Hasan, and his wife, and Rauif, and millions of others, bowed in reverence and passionate love for their God and Savor and wonderful King, as he bestowed upon them crowns of Martyrdom, and then put around their necks the Brave Heart necklace—that they would wear for all eternity. For the Brave Heart Legion was a most honored position.

Many other great rewards were given and no one felt left out. Even those who had just repented before death and had declared Jesus as Lord and Savor, were given a reward. But the greatest reward of all was given to those who had given up everything just to be near the heart of their Bridegroom King—the great, heavenly Bridal reward.

The Return

One day, while Robert and his friends and family were continuing to enjoy and explore the vast realms of heaven, everything suddenly grew very still, and they soon found themselves in the presence of the Holy One of heaven. All of heaven became quiet as the King mounted his great, white stallion. It was time!

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His Head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in Blood, and His name is called **The Word of God**. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.”

“Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written, **KING of Kings and LORD of Lords!**” Revelation 19:11-16

For what had seemed like a very long time for the saints in heaven, had only been a short time on earth. And there were now multitudes of Jewish and Gentile men and women who had not been ready for the wedding event, but now had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and had persevered to the very end. And they were waiting for their “Master” to return from the “wedding.” Luke 12:36 It was time for the King to rescue them, and to destroy all his enemies, those who had become one with the beast. For the day of vengeance was in his heart, and the year of his redeemed had finally come! Isaiah 63:4

And then the great Wedding Banquet, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb would begin on earth, in Jerusalem, and many honored guests would take their places, as all of heaven and earth Rejoiced!

Jerusalem, the Eternal capital of the whole world, awaits His coming. For in the ancient city where he once walked, and where he was crucified and resurrected, He will set up His millennial Kingdom, and then He will rule forever over a new earth and a new heaven.

“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”
Revelation 20:6

“Are you ready for His Glorious Coming,
and to be one of His Brave Hearts?”



Pakistan Christians need your Prayers!

Pray for Pakistan

Pakistan's Christians are caught in the crossfire between Islamic militant organizations and mobs that violently target Christians, and an Islamizing culture on the other hand that results in Christians being isolated from the rest of the population. The notorious blasphemy laws continue to have devastating consequences for minorities, including Christians. A Pakistani mob beat and burned to death a Christian couple in November for alleged blasphemy charges. Women and girls are experiencing violence every day; especially those from minority groups who are vulnerable and easy targets for rape, sexual abuse and kidnapping.



PRAYER POINTS

- For Aasiya (Asia) Bibi who remains in prison for alleged blasphemy after her appeal was turned down by the Pakistani High Court
- For the growing number of Christian women and girls who are targets of kidnappers and sexual assault
- That the Taliban will be driven out of the country by government forces

Pray for Israel and Pray for America!

One day Jerusalem will be the capital of the Kingdom of God,
directed by the KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, Jesus Christ!

Pray for the government of Israel to be united in God's desire for
His nation and His people. Even though every nation in the world will
one day turn against little Israel, her faithful God will never abandon
her. And every Word God has ever spoken over Israel will happen.

“For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a lamp that burns.” Isaiah 62:1

June 15, 2015

America needs much prayer—she is now in big trouble. In many
ways America has become a real pagan nation, for her educational
systems and her governments in many places have forgotten the God
that created her as a righteous and covenant keeping country. Without
the Holy Light of God shining on America, she will continue to face
even harsher Judgments of God. Pray for God's Mercy upon America
and for a great new Awakening among His believing Christians.

Pray for the Church in America to rise up to it's End Time calling,
& to be a radiant Brave Heart people, who know their God and Savior.



**The Bridegroom came, and those who were ready
went in with Him to the Wedding ...
Matthew 25:10**



**“Let us be Glad and Rejoice and give Him Glory,
for the Marriage of the Lamb has come,
and His wife has made herself ready.”
Revelation 19:7**