

FOUR SHORT STORIES  
ON  
COMING HOME



I go to prepare a place for you.  
And if I go and prepare a place for you,  
I will come again,  
and receive you to Myself ...  
John 14:2, 3

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COMING HOME

by Feryl Christine Honorof

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## Acknowledgments and Credits

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co-author and editor, Richard Aaron Honorof

This book is not to be sold in its current form, but it is to be given as a gift to my friends. This author gives her permission for you to copy and share these fiction stories with others.

Special thanks is being given to all the many special Christian artists whose wonderful art work has been used in these short stories, including such excellent artists as Thomas Kinkade and Ron DiCianni.

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It is all His, and I hope it brings Him some joy.

# FOUR SHORT STORIES

## ON

# COMING HOME

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## The Father's House (Brian's Journey)

**“In My Father’s House are many dwelling places ...”**

John 14:2

Brian moved his sack lunch to one side of the table and then reached over and took hold of the other man’s hands. He had shared the Gospel with him for over one hour.

He had found the man lying next to a park bench on a side street that bordered the Seattle bay. He looked like he had been beaten up pretty bad. Brian could not tell how old he probably was. With these men who lived on the back streets of Seattle, it was often hard to tell. They sometimes looked twenty years older than they really were.

He had refused to let Brian take him to the police or the medical clinic. Brian had helped him up from the ground, and they had gone, instead, to the men’s aid shelter, a block away. Brian was able to clean his wounds on his arm and neck, and then they sat down for a good meal. Then Brian listened, as he talked, and told him his life story. At one time, Roy had been a fighter pilot with the United States Air Force. He had been married and had two sons who were now in college. He removed from the inside of an empty, worn gray wallet, a picture of himself and his wife and his two sons; they all sat poised on the lawn in front of a nice home.

Many times Brian had sat and listened to the sad and complex stories of how these broken, homeless men had once lived their lives. In some ways the stories were very similar. Many of them had been successful and intelligent men, but the ghosts of a destructive and traumatic past would not leave them alone, until they descended into the blurred, unconscious realities of drugs and alcohol, which led ultimately to a lost identity and a merciless life living on the back streets of the city.



Brian would listen to them over a cup of coffee, and then he would share his own story. He would tell them about the One who had changed his own life, and who wanted to change their lives as well. Many of the men he ministered to he would never see again, but for a few of these troubled, lost souls something special did happen, and their lives were very dramatically changed. And Brian never got tired of seeing this miracle happen.

“Roy,” he said, “do you want to stay where you’re at? If you knew that there was Someone who could really help you, who would take this demon of alcohol from your life, would you go for it? Would you grab on Roy, and let Him give you a new Life? He can do it! He died on the Cross for you, to take your sins, and give you Life, true Life.” Brian could feel his hands beginning to get sweaty. He felt the Lord’s heart of compassion for this man and he really wanted him saved.

Roy gently pulled his hand away from Brian’s grip. “I know what you’re saying is probably true, son. I used to go to church, you know.” He raised his hand, moving it through his gray, stubby unshaved face. “I don’t know. Guess I will have to think about it for awhile.” He smiled faintly.

Brian knew all the signs, and he could tell that Roy needed another drink, and that their conversation was quickly coming to an end. Roy stood up from the table, tipped his head, as if to say “thank you.” Brian watched as he limped on one foot to the door. Brian felt a pain in his heart and his eyes were wet with tears. He knew he probably would never see Roy again.

He put his hands together in prayer, closed his eyes and did the only thing he knew to do. He prayed fervently to his heavenly Father for Roy.

He remembered as he walked out that tomorrow was an important anniversary. It had been ten years ago that his friend, Joshua, had come into his life. He smiled when he thought about that day, and his face brightened when he remembered how he had met his very special friend.

Ten years before it had not been a good day. But back then there were not many good days. He had left school early on that day. As he was walking he had stumbled and had dropped his backpack, had spilled his beer, and had hit his knee on a rock. He was a mess and he knew it. He reached for the beer can and brought it to his lips, but then swore at the empty can and threw it into the near-by bushes.

He sat down and drew his knees to his chest. He needed somehow to get a hold of himself. Things were rapidly going from bad to worse.

He had come back from the war in Vietnam a different person. He had gone in as a young innocent soldier, but had come out of that place an angry, hardened man, using drugs and alcohol. And the only thing that helped was another drink. He had tried going home, but his parents didn't know what to do for him, and he knew that they were worried.



The nightmares of his Vietnam past would come every night drawing him into a panicky, fearful place. He dreamed of bombs going off, and villages being burned, of people running from the flames in terror and agony, and then there were dreams of his soldier friends being blown up all around him. He was left alive, but terrified and angry. It seemed like nothing was ever going to really change. He had begun to wonder if life was really worth living. A few times he had gone down towards the Bowery, by the harbor in Seattle. Down there he could escape; nobody cared how much he drank, or who he was. But it scared him a little, because he knew that a part of him liked it down there.

“Hey!” Brian turned to see who was speaking to him. “Can I give you a hand.” As the man spoke, he bent down and began helping Brian pick up the things that had fallen out of his back-pack.



“Thanks,” Brian responded, reaching up to push to one side a strand of dark brown hair. For a moment their eyes met, and Joshua saw the pain in Brian's eyes. He already knew that this young man was hurting a lot.

“Hi, my name is Joshua.” He reached out his hand towards him. “You mind if I walk with you for awhile?” He finished adjusting the back-pack to the young man’s shoulders.

“Sure,” Brian answered him. A very slight change in his countenance was evident, and Joshua could see just the beginning of a little smile. They walked together for a couple of minutes without saying anything.

“Do you live near by, Brian?” Joshua asked him. “I don't remember seeing you at the college.”

“Not too far from here,” he said. “I’ve not been at the school for very long.” He looked down at the path in front of him, preferring not to talk. “By the way,” he said, “how did you know my name?”

“Oh, I guess you just look like a Brian.” Joshua laughed softly. “Have you ever noticed how people sometimes look like their names?”

“No,” he said, “not really.” Brian was feeling nervous, and his stomach was upset. He needed a drink. He talked a little bit faster. “Joshua,” he said, “that’s a different kind of name, not one you hear very often.”

“It’s a good Jewish name, Brian. My father gave it to me. In Hebrew it is Yeshua.” He put his hand on Brian’s shoulder.

Brian felt a little more relaxed. There was something about this man that had made him feel a little better, but he was still going to be careful. He knew what people were really like. “Well, it’s a nice name anyway.” Brian smiled a little as he looked up at his new friend.

“If you aren’t doing anything, Brian, why don’t you come over and visit my father’s house with me for a while, and maybe we’ll have a little something to eat. It’s not too far from here.”

“Sure, I guess.” Brian found himself agreeing before he could really think about it. “But I am kind of a mess,” he added.

“No problem, Brian, no problem at all.”

It seemed like before he knew what had happened they had arrived there. One moment they had been standing on the sidewalk, the next moment they were in front of a very nice home, with lovely trees and flowers all around it. Brian was really impressed with Joshua's father's house.

It wasn't a really big house or anything, but it was the kind of home he had dreamed of having one day. It was very peaceful, and all the pretty flowers made it especially beautiful. "This is really nice," he said to Joshua. "I really like your father's house."



"Oh, Brian, my Father has many beautiful places, which He has set apart for those who truly love Him. Come on, we'll go inside and sit down."

Brian was aware that there was something very unusual about Joshua. It was almost as if He was not of this earth. "Sure," he answered, "I would love to go in with you."

Once inside Brian stopped, amazed at where he was. It was not a real expensive house, didn't even have all the fancy stuff, but it seemed perfect. It fit together, as if nothing ever needed to be changed. Everything was, well, just perfect. He felt he could stay there for the rest of his life, and never leave. He began to wonder if what he was experiencing was real, or if it was a dream of some kind.

"Yep, it's real, Brian!" Joshua nudged him. They walked out onto a beautiful veranda that over-looked a peaceful, lovely valley. The fragrance of the flowers was exquisite. Brian could hardly believe how beautiful it was. It took his breath away. There were hot chocolate drinks already on the table, and a plate of home-made chocolate chip cookies, his favorite.

“Sit down Brian, and tell me all about yourself. I am very much interested in your life.”

Brian was not sure how much time had passed, maybe a few minutes, or perhaps a couple of hours. But as he began to talk to Joshua the time just seemed to float away. He told him about the terrible experiences he had had in Vietnam, and how it seemed so hard now to hope for a normal life. He talked about his mom and dad, whom he loved, but how they did not know what to do with their son anymore. They had urged him to take advantage of the college grant he had received from the military. But the normalcy of college life caused him to drink even more. He even told him about his girl friend Sue, who was no longer there for him when he came back from Nam.

He talked and talked, and Joshua listened. After awhile the terrible pain he had been carrying for so long began to feel like it was losing its grip on him. It was almost as if Joshua was taking the pain from him.

“Brian,” Joshua said, “can you forgive those people who have hurt you? Can you forgive the girl who betrayed you? The only way, Brian, the pain will leave is if you can really forgive. And also if you can repent for the wrong things you have done. And I already know what they are, son. Then all your nightmares will leave, and peace will come.”

When Brian looked up, he could now see Joshua for who He was, the Son of God. There was an ageless beauty on Him, a Love that held so much hope and promise. He was dressed in a simple white gown. Brian knew that he was in the awesome presence of God.

“Yes, I want to forgive. Will you help me? I have always known You, but by the name of Jesus. Is that okay?” Brian spoke a little shyly.

Joshua embraced him in His arms, and at that moment Brian entered into a deep place in the Heart of God.

“I’ve never known anyone like You. Can I stay here with You, Jesus, in Your Father’s house?” Tears rolled down his cheeks, as he was unable to restrain his emotions any longer.

“Brian, in My Father’s House are many wonderful places. And when your time on this earth is ended then you will come Home to a place just like this one, and your Heavenly Father will be waiting for you, and so will I.

But if you were to come Home now, son, then you would miss out on so much that We have planned for you in your life. Brian, We want to make your life an experiment in Love, because there are so many who need to hear your story, and it will cause their lives to be changed.”

When Brian looked into the eyes of Jesus, he could see beyond his own hurts and needs, and for the first time in his life he could feel the Heart of God for other hurting and broken people in the world. “Yes, my Friend,” he said to Jesus. “I would consider it a real honor to live my life for You, and then he smiled the biggest smile he had ever smiled.”



Ten years later...

Brian took a deep breath as he walked away from the men’s shelter. It had been a long day. It was how he usually spent his days off from the job he had teaching high school. He smiled at the thought of his lovely and faithful wife that God had given him five years ago, and their beautiful little one year old son, Gaven. He walked quickly. He was in a hurry now to get home to his family.

“Hey,” young man,” Roy startled Brian as he rounded the corner. “I think I’d like to talk to you about this Jesus a little bit more, if it’s okay.”

Brian stopped and turned around. He smiled at Roy, and took him by the arm. “You bet, Roy,” he said. “You come home with me and we’ll talk some more over dinner, and you can meet my family.” It was turning out to be a really great day after all.

**“Greater love has no one than this,  
than to lay down one’s life for his friends!”**

John 15:13

## Rebekah's Story

**“I will not leave you as orphans, but I will come to you.”**  
(John 14:18)

Rebekah looked down between her feet at the gray boarded floor. She tried to keep back the tears, but they came anyway, one after the other, dripping on to her nightgown and on the floor in front of her. She was ten years old today, not that it really mattered. She never remembered anyone saying “happy birthday” to her, except for Eloise, the old cook, who once gave her a piece of her pudding-cake, and then wished her a happy birthday. Strange, she thought for a moment, I wonder how she knew it was my birthday?

Rebekah knew the date of her birthday because once Madam Stampflie was angry at her and had wanted to remind her that she was just an orphan. She had called her into her office. Rebekah remembered how sternly she had stood up from her desk. Swish, swish, her long black skirt menacingly flared out before her as she walked from her desk to the file cabinet behind her. She knew exactly what she was looking for. She pulled the document out from the file folder and put it on the desk in front of Rebekah. On it was Rebekah's name and birth date, April 23, 1926, and also in large block letters was the word “ORPHAN.” It also stated that she was to be assigned to the orphanage in Greenville, Ohio, on second street, until the age of twenty-one. The Madam's words were cold as steel. “Don't ever forget who you are, Rebekah. You are just an orphan that nobody wants, and you will do as you are told to do, and nothing more.”



Rebekah also remembered the incident that had made Madam Stampflie so angry. Mrs. Bartell, a small, stern woman who was the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Greenville school, had instructed the students on a writing assignment. They were to write one or two pages, describing a happy time in their lives.

Rebekah could not think of one happy time. So she wrote a make-believe story about a beautiful young woman who was given a wonderful party by her father and mother. The girl's father was also the most respected man in the community. It was actually a lovely story, Rebekah remembered, and the grammar was perfect. But Mrs. Bartell was so upset that Rebekah had not done exactly as she had been told to do. The paper was marked with a big red X, and then delivered to Madam Stampflie at the orphanage.

"Clang" the loud bell went off. It was time for breakfast and the usual bowl of sticky porridge and a piece of bread that they received before going to school. The other girls in the room were soon out of bed and dressed. The girls were solemn and quiet. They knew the punishment for talking was extra dish duty. Almost in unison they buttoned their gray dresses and tied their brown stubby shoes. Rebekah waited till the other girls had left the room, and then very carefully she lifted her precious book out from under the loose board under her bed, where she always had it hidden.

It was a small book that Eloise had given her a couple years before. It was simply titled, "A Country Day." In it were the most beautiful pictures of a family that lived in the country. It was the story of a little girl named Julie, who was greatly loved by her mother and father. What she really loved about the book were the beautiful pictures.

The house the little girl lived in was surrounded by lovely green trees and there were beautiful flowers of different colors, pink and blue and yellow. A pretty white fence encircled the house. But the part that Rebekah loved the most was the picture of the girl's father. He had a kind, gentle smile. It seemed to radiate off the page right into Rebekah's heart. Some of the pages on the book were now worn, and others were stained with tears. It was the only treasure she possessed.

The second bell rang and Rebekah knew she would be late for breakfast and would be severely reprimanded, but to look at her book one more time was worth all the cruel words that would come.

With a long ruler the teacher in front of the line halted the girls, moving them to one side. The girls then watched as a procession of women dressed in browns and grays came down the sidewalk where they had been walking. The women were leaving the factory where they had been employed. For thirteen hours a day they would sew pieces of clothing together, but now the factory had been shut down, and with little hope and much despair they trudged down the sidewalk to their small houses. Rebekah looked into their

pale drawn faces, and she felt great sadness for them. Rebekah did not know exactly how to pray, but she said, “Oh, God, please help these women today to find a book like mine, something to bring them a little happiness.”

It was time for the evening meal. Rebekah looked into the bathroom mirror. She brushed back from her face her dark auburn brown hair. Her large brown eyes looked out from a small, oval face. She tried to smile at the image in the mirror, but the only face that looked back at her on her birthday was that of a very solemn little girl.

She had only started to eat when Eloise gently tapped her on the shoulder. “The Madam wants to see you Rebekah. You will have to leave the table now.” A chill went down Rebekah’s back. The Madam wanting to see her was never good news.

As she walked into the Madam’s office her heart froze. There on the Madam’s desk lay her treasured book. For an instant she wanted to grab the book and run as fast as she could, but instead she just stood frozen, looking down at her worn, brown shoes. Tears began to form in her eyes, tears of hopelessness.

Madam Stampflie’s stinging words soon reached her ears. “You see, of course, Rebekah, that I have your book. The book that you have so deceptively hidden from me. Do you have anything to say?”



“No.” Rebekah responded with a quiet voice. She felt no emotion, not even sadness, only an emptiness on the inside of her.

“There will be no dinner for you tonight, Rebekah, and you will go immediately to the kitchen to help Eloise. I will let you know if there is to be any more disciplinary action. You may go now. Oh, by the way, Rebekah,” she continued, “was this silly little book really worth the punishment?” She smirked cruelly as she picked up the book from her desk and dropped it into the trash can next to her.

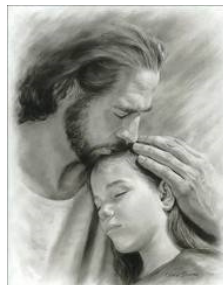
Rebekah opened the straight white curtain that covered a small window above her bed. She could see a little bit of the golden moon in the dark sky. She spoke quietly to herself. “There must be a God, who else could have put the moon in the sky?” But why, she thought, is He so quiet in my life? How come He can’t help me? She didn’t want to cry anymore. She dropped the curtain, put her head on her pillow, and soon went into a deep sleep.

As far as Rebekah could see was a beautiful green park rolling out in front of her vision. The sky was a true blue, without any darkness in it, and there were all kinds of trees and a multitude of flowers. A rainbow of colors filled the green hills all around her. There were people walking and some were holding hands, and many children were playing and laughing. It was so good, so lovely, so perfect. She knew she was dreaming, and she did not want to wakeup.



She sat down on a bench next to a man, whom she somehow knew was waiting for her. He was dressed like a carpenter. His white sleeves were rolled up, and he had on a long work apron, like the kind she would sometimes see on the workers who came to the orphanage. He was different from anyone in her life. He was full of love and gentleness. She looked up into His face and said, “You are Jesus, aren’t you?”

“Yes, Rebekah I am, and I am so glad you are here.” He put His arms around her, and she snuggled up close to Him. Everything about Him was beautiful, even the way He smelled, like fresh rain on a summer day. His eyes were like liquid pools of love. She reached up and touched His soft brown beard. It felt wonderful. She sighed, and spoke softly, “I love You, Jesus.”



“And I love you, My little princess. I know it’s been hard, My precious one, but I want you to know that I have seen every tear, and I have always been with you. One day you will come Home to be with Me and your heavenly Father. We have prepared a wonderful place for you.”

“Look!”

Rebekah looked to where Jesus was pointing. There in the midst of a heavenly garden she saw a sweet, lovely house, just perfect for her. She could tell that it was a joyful home. “Oh, it’s so beautiful,” she said.

“It’s yours, Rebekah. We planned it and built it just for you. It’s the house you have always wanted, and it will be here waiting for you, filled with Our Love.”



Tears filled Rebekah’s eyes, but they were not tears of sadness, but tears of joy, unspeakable joy. “Oh, Jesus, I want to stay here with you now, forever.”

“My darling child, you will always be with Me. I will never leave you nor forsake you. But you have a destiny to complete on the earth, a life that will bring Me much glory. And you will receive a great Heavenly reward for it. You see, nothing in your life has been an accident, although it may seem that way to you. You have always believed that you are an orphan, but you are not. We have Loved you with an Everlasting Love, and you belong to your Heavenly Father.”

Rebekah felt a Love pierce her heart like she had never ever known. It was almost too much to bear. The lie and pain of believing that she was an orphan lifted off of her, and at that moment she knew that more than anything else she wanted to do whatever Jesus asked her to do.

Jesus spoke to her again. “There are many in the orphanage who believe that they are orphans because they have never experienced their Father’s Love. Yes, even Madam Stampflie. But now, because you know My Love, you will be able to lead many to the Father’s Love, and when you pray for them We will hear you, and your prayers will be quickly answered.”

“The Holy Spirit will be with you Rebekah, and He will teach you all that you need to know and understand. Yes, He will even be in you, and you will never feel alone again.”

With tears in her eyes she looked up into His Face. “I want to do for you Jesus all that You ask me to do.”

“My child, I have so much to show you. You cannot even imagine the wonderful things that are waiting for you. You will be surprised at how quickly they come to pass.”

“Do you see those two people over there on that bench?”

Rebekah looked at a man and woman sitting together on the bench. They seemed a long distance away, but somehow she was able to see them clearly; then she instantly knew that they were her real parents. Her Father’s name was Benjamin and her mother was named Hanna. Her father, she saw, was a very gentle man, and her mother was very beautiful and had long auburn hair like her own. She also knew that they were Jewish.



“Yes, Rebekah, that is your real father and mother. They too are here for a short visit, but they are very real and alive. They love you very dearly, but their love and obedience for Me had to be so much greater ...

**“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”**

Matthew 28:19, 20

I asked them to take the Gospel to a very far country, which meant that they had to give their precious daughter to your father's brother and wife, your aunt and uncle, who also were very good people. I instructed your father and mother that they could not make contact with you till I brought them back to America. Through their obedience to do this for Me many lives were eternally saved. It was a great sacrifice they made for Me.

Your parents never heard that your aunt and uncle had been killed in a car accident, and that before you were two years old you were put into the orphanage on second street."

"They have much to tell you. Soon, before too long, your parents will come for you, and you will not have to live in this orphanage any more." Jesus continued. "But until then, Rebekah, I have an assignment for you to do. You must pray for all the girls at the orphanage, and for all the others, especially for Madam Stampflie. The Holy Spirit will show you how to pray, and then watch and see what I will do"

"I am going to give you a special gift. Your mother used to read the Bible to you when you were just a baby, so you know something about My Book. This Book will become more precious to you than the book that was taken from you, and I promise that no one will take this gift from you."



Rebekah took the Bible from His Hands. She could feel His Life coming from it, and her hands trembled as she held it close to her heart. She looked up into the eyes of Jesus. She knew He was all that she ever needed.

"You will soon understand and know," Jesus said, "that everything I've told you is true. I created you Rebekah for Myself, and you are a part of Me."

For one more moment she closed her eyes and leaned her head next to Him as she felt the Love of God fill her whole being.

“Clang!” The morning bell rang. Rebekah opened her eyes. It was still the same gray hard place it had always been, so different from where she had just come from, but now she was different. The smell of His sweet fragrance lingered, and then she heard the still small voice from within her, saying, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you.” She could not hold back a large smile. She sat up in her bed. The other girls looked at her strangely. They knew something was different about her. As she sat up she became very alert. “The Book”, she said out loud, “where is my Book?”

She looked around her and on her bed, but then the Holy Spirit caused her to look up on the window sill above her bed. There it was. She reached up and brought the special gift close to her heart.

“Oh, yes,” she spoke to the One who loved her, “I will read Your Book every day.” She was amazed that the other girls did not seem to notice the Bible, almost as if it was invisible. She put her hand over her mouth and laughed a little.

The second bell rang, hard and clear. She knew she would be late, but before she went to breakfast she would pray for all the girls and the others. “Oh, yes,” she giggled, and twirled around in a little pirouette. Everything was brand new, and it could not be taken from her, not by anyone, anymore. Because now she knew she was not an orphan, and never would be again.



**“Unless one is ‘born again’, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”**

**“Unless one is born of water and the Spirit,  
he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.”**

John 3:3, 5

## The Path Seekers (Robert, a Modern Prodigal Son Story)

**“And a Highway shall be there, and a Way,  
and it shall be called “The Highway of Holiness!”**

Isaiah 35:8



Robert woke up with a startle. He sat up in the small bed he was sleeping on. Beads of perspiration had formed on his forehead. He didn't like the dreams that he had been having lately. They would often leave him with a dark and uncomfortable feeling.

In this last dream he had been running along a path. At first it seemed like a pleasant place to walk. In the dream he had been drawn to explore the path and see where it led to. There was music emanating from the lovely green trees that surrounded the path; an odd, seducing kind of music, but enchanting none the less. The music compelled him to go further, deeper into the forest, but as he did he discovered that the path behind him had disappeared. There was no way to go back. The path had been erased, and he could only go deeper into the woods. The music changed from something fun and enchanting to an unearthly and strange melody. It was very dark all around him, and he could hear the sounds of large flapping birds over-head. In fear and desperation he went down on his knees as a large ancient bird made a dive for his head. “Oh God, help me!”

He remembered saying this as he woke up. He pulled his blanket up over his chest and turned on the light next to his bed. “I am okay,” he repeated softly. “I am okay.”

Tomorrow in class he would ask Surran about the dreams. Surran would know what to tell him. He knew everything. He switched off the light and curled up with his pillow, like he had done when he was a little boy. But it wasn't Surran's face he saw as he eased back into sleep, but the face of his dad, smiling at him, as he rode his bike on the lawn next to the house where he had grown up.



Robert was late for class. He tucked in his light cotton shirt and then opened the door quietly. He sat down in a chair in the back row. A soft, pulsating drum like music was being played as Surran continued to teach the class where he had left off the day before. He spoke to a class of about 20 students.

“There are many roads, many paths to explore in one’s life-time. To not explore is to die a slow death. There are many religious paths and to know truth they must all be journeyed.” Surran lifted up his hands, as if directing an orchestra, and smiled at his students. His light colored toga fit him perfectly. His long black hair and trimmed beard were perfectly manicured. Everything about his appearance was meticulous. He knew he was being admired. He continued.

“Truth is whatever you believe it to be. Evil is only in the mind of the beholder.”

A pretty young woman named Alison, with soft brown shoulder length hair, tied back with a blue ribbon, asked Surran a question. “I believe we must pursue tolerance and diversity, but is there any religion that has more truth than another?”

For just an instant Robert saw something on Surran, as he smiled at the young woman, that he had not seen on him before, something not right, but he quickly dismissed the thought. Surran walked a pure, almost holy walk, and he was a good and sensitive teacher.

“There is truth in all of them.” He answered the young woman, not removing his eyes from her. “But you must search for and choose your own truth.”

Robert noticed that Alison had a flushed, almost embarrassed look on her face as she looked down at the book in front of her.

Robert had not told his parents about this class. It had been a big enough struggle for them to agree that he could come to this liberal arts college. They had really wanted him to attend a more conservative school, preferably a Christian College. But at the end of a long, on-going discussion they had agreed that he could attend Green River Arts Academy for one year, and get some of his basic required subjects out of the way. But he knew they were not happy with his decision. And they would be horrified if they knew he was taking a class on “Spiritual Realities.” He squirmed in his seat a little as he thought about his dad and mom. He had not called them for a couple of weeks, and when the phone rang he would always wait for the message to come on. He didn’t like lying to them, but he knew they would just not understand his new life-style.

At the end of the class Robert moved up front so he could talk privately with Surran. He remembered when he had first seen Surran. He seemed so remarkable. He always wore a simple green toga. He was a good looking man, but it was more than looks. He carried in his demeanor such wisdom and knowledge, and he never lost his cool with anyone. He seemed to flow with everyone, no matter what their background. Robert admired him.

Robert felt a little on edge. Maybe the dreams were no big deal. He didn’t want to sound like a little kid or something. Maybe he should not have come, but as he got up to leave Surran spoke to him. “What can I help you with Robert?” Surran smiled at him an all knowing smile.

“Oh, it’s not really anything important,” Robert said nervously. “It’s just that I’ve been having these really weird dreams lately, since I came here, to the college,” he emphasized. Sometimes they get really strange and frightening. And I was just wondering if you could tell me why you think I’ve been having them.” Robert was feeling very uncomfortable, and was really beginning to wish he had not come. “I mean, you seem to know so much about everything,” he added.

“Have you been thinking about leaving the college, Robert?”

Robert twitched, wondering how he could possibly have known that.

“Not really,” Robert said apologetically. “I’ve learned a lot since coming here, especially in your class.”

“The dreams, Robert, come from your soul. You have created them because you are not trusting the light within you to be your guide. Once you begin to follow the true path of the light within, then your dreams will have more peace. Come over to my office tomorrow and I will give you some books to read. Now you must excuse me. I have other disciples who are waiting for me.”

“Thanks, Surran. I am sure you are right.” A length of his light brown hair fell over his forehead as he started to open the door. As he walked out he saw Alison standing there.

“Hi,” Robert smiled. “Do you have time to go with me to get a drink or something?” He still felt clumsy, especially around pretty girls.

“Oh, I am sorry Robert, but I am waiting for Surran.” She looked down for a moment. “Maybe another time.”

“Yeah, maybe.” Robert smiled back at her.

He glanced down at his watch as he walked down the hall. He would have to hurry or he would be late for his job at the store. He wondered why he was feeling concern for Alison. He put the thought out of his mind and started a quick jog down the sidewalk.

“How you doing there, Bud?”

Robert smiled back at Jack, the owner of the Greenery Food and Exchange.

“I am almost done, Jack, just a few more bags.” Robert lifted a twenty pound bag of brown rice over his shoulder and laid it on the counter. He liked his job at Jack’s store. Jack reminded him a little of his own dad, even when he sometimes called him “Bud.” He chuckled softly to himself.

“Come on over and take a break.” Jack pulled up a stool for Robert to sit on and put in his hands a can of cold root-beer.

“Thanks, Jack.”

“So how’s school going, Robert?”

“Oh, good,” Robert replied. “I am staying on top of things, and learning how to live my life in a new and exciting way.”

Jack’s smile moved into a more serious expression, his dark blue eyes becoming more thoughtful. “I have seen a lot of kids come and go, Robert. Sometimes, not everything is what you think it is. Sometimes, not everyone is who you think they are.” He helped him pick up another bag.

“Do you ever read the Bible, son?”

Robert looked down at the cold root-beer in his hand, and then took a big swallow.

“Yeah,” he responded. My parents read the Bible all the time. I used to read it when I was a kid growing up, but now I am exploring other things. I mean the Bible is okay, and everything, but it’s not the only way, not the only book”.

Jack smiled and patted Robert on the shoulder. “Why don’t you come over to the house after work, and have dinner with me and the wife?”

“Uh,” Robert muttered. “I got plans tonight, Jack, maybe another time.” He took another swig of his drink, and then tossed the can in the trash. He picked up another bag of meal to put on the counter, looking up for a moment to see if Jack was still there.

“Well, let me know if you change your mind.” Jack said as he walked away.

It was late when Robert opened the door to his small apartment. The room had a dank, musty smell. He opened the window and breathed in the fresh air, looked up at the starry sky for a moment, and then sat down on his bed. He gulped the last bite of a hamburger that was still in a sack, and then stretched out on his bed. “Wow” he said out loud. “I’ll sleep good tonight.”

“The light from within, the light from within.” He repeated the words Surran had spoken to him. As he closed his eyes a scripture he had once memorized from the Bible flashed in his mind, something about Jesus being the Light. “The Light that had come into the world,” he mumbled the words and then fell into a deep sleep.

And again he went into a dream. In this dream Robert felt like he had been walking for a long time, but this path did not lead into a dark, fearful forest, but appeared to be a mountain path. Large, gray boulders lay on either side of the path, and he could see for a long distance. The path seemed to meander down into what appeared to be a lovely green valley. Robert looked up into a clear blue sky. Everything seemed very normal. He took a deep breath and began to walk down the path. He did not feel anything fearful.

There seemed to be many paths that went out from this path, all leading in different directions. Some of the paths eventually disappeared from view, as did the people who were walking on them. But some of the trails seemed to continue in a very large, complex circle, and eventually came back where they had begun. The people on the paths seemed oblivious to the fact that they were walking in a big circle, going nowhere. And yet they seemed like very normal people. Some looked like young professionals, lawyers and doctors and ministers. Some were young mothers, with little children who followed close behind. Some looked like him, young students.



There were older people, and young people. There were prim looking older ladies, and sophisticated attractive adults. There were religious looking people, of every race and color. Robert continued to watch with amazement this huge conglomeration, this multitude of peoples and nations. He was fascinated as he watched the scene in front of him. Some of the people, he noticed, would happily begin one path, and then turn around and come back to the starting point, almost like a game, and then begin another trail. Once in awhile he thought he saw someone he recognized, or at least someone who looked familiar.

“So what do you think, Robert?” What are all those people doing down there?”

Robert was surprised at the voice. He turned to see Michael on the path next to him. Michael was someone who came to the college once in awhile, and would gather students, if he could, who were interesting in Bible study. Robert had always avoided him. He seemed nice enough, but he was not one of Surran’s students.

“Why are you in my dream, Michael?” It was a funny thing to ask, he thought, even as he said it.

“Not sure.” Michael responded. “But I think God sent me to help you.”

“Oh,” Robert said. “I wonder why?”

“Well, you are lost, and you don’t know where you are going! You’ve been hiding from the real Truth, and you’re going the wrong way, and God wants to help you because He loves you. Just like He loves the people you’ve been watching in that big parade down below, who are all going the wrong way on that dark path.”



“What makes you think they are going the wrong way? They have a right to choose their own path, don’t they?” They are just searching for truth. What’s wrong with that?”

Robert could feel a sense of defiance rising up in his voice toward Michael, and He didn’t like the way it felt.

“You mean good people, like you?” Michael questioned him.

“Well, yeah.” Robert answered. I mean I may not do everything perfect, but I am not a bad person.”

All of a sudden in an instant visions started flashing before Robert, like the time he had yelled and screamed at his mother until she cried, or the time he and some friends watched some pornographic movies on the net. And what about the time he had blatantly lied to his parents, and then joked about it with some friends. And then there was the time he had picked up a pocket hunting knife in a Sports Store, and hid it in his school books. Like popcorn, one after the other, many ugly scenes came back to his memory, and then they finally stopped.

“I am not really a bad person.” Robert was now feeling quite defensive. He didn’t like where this dream was going. “I mean I don’t go around kicking dogs or hitting people.”

“But you are a seeker of truth?” Michael asked him.

“Well, in my own way.” Softly at first, but then with a louder voice Robert answered Michael. “Yes, I seek the truth, and the light that is within me and in all of us.”

“Let not the light that is in you become darkness.” Michael spoke softly under his breath.

“What did you say?” Robert responded to the barely audible words.

“Are you willing to see what that light on the inside of you looks like, and the light in the people down below, what it really looks like?” Michael spoke now with authority.

“Sure!” Robert was openly defensive. “I am not afraid of your words. Besides this is just a dumb dream.” He looked down again at the multitudes below. They seemed to be walking in a much faster pace now. All of a sudden he felt a little uneasy.

“Michael, I don’t think ...” Before he finished the sentence, he turned and saw that Michael was no longer there. And then, as if compelled, Robert began walking down into the midst of the people.

“Hey, you can’t cut in.” The voice of a large man came at Robert in a threatening way. “Yeah,” other people along the path began to chime in. “Who do you think you are?” Robert quickly stepped to the side of the path and let the people go by. “Excuse me.” Robert spoke to a young woman who looked nice. “Can you tell me where this path leads to?”

“Well, I’m not sure.” She giggled a silly sound. “I’m just a follower. But I think we are going to that big opening up ahead. You see, some of us got together, kind of like a meeting, and we decided that life has not been fair, and that it’s God’s fault.” She sounded more forceful now. “We want to determine our own destiny, and we don’t want God interfering in our lives any more. We are going to settle this once and for all.” She raised her fist in the air, as if making a declaration.

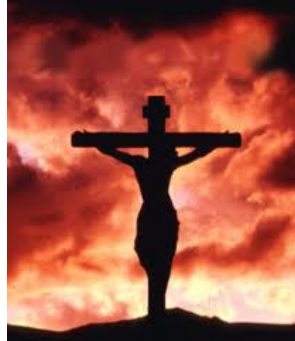


Robert found himself being carried along with the crowd. It was getting frightening, but in the dream he didn’t have the strength to change direction, and he could not seem to help himself.

As they came into a large clearing he saw that there were thousands of people, huge numbers. Some of the people were obviously from the middle east, and spoke the languages of their countries. Some were fair and blond from the northern Scandinavian countries. But they were all united in the anger they felt. They were screaming and raging. “We aren’t going to take this anymore!” Some had even formed into small groups, where they had begun to grouse in discontent and self pity, complaining about everything.

“I don’t have to take this anymore!” A slender, young woman looked accusingly at her husband who was standing next to her on the trail. She shoved him with her hand, and then redirecting her anger at God, she raised her fist in the air. An older woman, who looked like someone’s grandmother, began to scream with her. “Yeah, we aren’t going to take this anymore!”

Robert found it difficult to breathe. He gasped for air. And then in the middle of this bizarre macabre scene, he saw a Man being lifted up on a tree, high above the peoples.



They watched, the anger still evident on their faces, and then almost in unison they began to shout, “Crucify Him.” They yelled louder, “Crucify Him!” Their faces became dark and contorted. It was like a mad feeding frenzy. The scripture came quickly to his mind, “They hated Him without a cause.” But at almost the same moment he heard the words coming out of his own mouth, “Yes, crucify Him.”

The Man on the cross was bleeding profusely, and as His blood poured down from His Body onto the cross and then into the dark earth, a profound silence fell upon the people. Some of the people began to run, trying to find another path where they could hide from the Face of the One they had crucified. But a few of the people fell down where they were standing, with broken hearts, crying tears of shame.

Robert went down on his knees, his hands and face touched the blood stained earth. Tears flowed from his eyes. He sobbed into the ground. “Oh, Lord Jesus, I am one of them.” He cried out loud. “It’s me. I am the guilty one. I crucified you. I am so sorry.” He could hardly speak. “I am so sorry.”



**“It is finished!”** He heard the words as he woke up.

Robert stumbled over the step going out onto the sidewalk, but then caught himself. The sun had already come up. He wasn't sure where he was going. He needed to find Michael. He was desperate. It felt like everything in his world had been turned upside down, and he wanted to find out what to do. He needed to talk to someone who really knew God. He walked and walked. He searched from one end of the campus to the other, but could not find Michael.

It was mid afternoon when he finally sat down on a small hill overlooking the bay. Tears of remorse continued to fill his eyes. He didn't even know how to pray. He felt so horrible.

"Robert." The voice of the Lord fell upon him like a cool waterfall. He lifted up his eyes to behold His Savior, but this was not a dream.

Jesus had on a simple white robe. He wore sandals, and on his feet and on His hands Robert could see the scars where the nails had pierced Him. Jesus sat down next to him as Robert looked into the Eyes of Eternal Love.

"You're alive, Jesus! You're really alive!" He cried.

"Forever more." Jesus smiled a beautiful smile, and then put his arms around his son. When Robert's head fell upon His chest, a great Light entered his heart.

"The Price has been paid for you, Robert, and now you belong to Me."

"How could I have strayed so far from you?" Robert buried his head deeper in His chest, not wanting to move.

"The Love of My Father is in Me, and now this Love will be shed in your own heart, My son. I know the days I have planned for you, and you will never again depart from Me. You will walk with Me on the path that I have made for you with My Body and My Blood. Look and see."

Robert lifted his head to see where Jesus was pointing ...

In the distance he could see people from every nation, walking along a very long path. It stretched far beyond where he could see, and it was filled with the most Glorious Light. There was no darkness on this path. It was 'the Highway of Holiness' that he had once read about in the Bible. And the ransomed of the LORD were coming from every nation.

He watched as new people came onto this path. They were each given a cross to carry. Every cross was individually designed for each person.



Jesus spoke, “It’s not an easy journey, Robert, but it is a glorious one. It’s a Bloody path; and there are those who begin this path thinking that it will just be all joy and delight without the Cross, but it has always been and always will be a walk of humility, holiness and purity.”

For an instant Robert could not only see, but could feel a deep sadness in the eyes of the Lord.

Jesus continued. “Some of the ones I have chosen for Myself get discouraged and turn back, seeking another path, a way of compromise that does not require the Truth. There is much dying to be accomplished along this way, and the more you are able to be humble and die to yourself, in submission to Me, and to others, then the more you will begin to resemble Me. And then more of My Glory will fill you, and you will walk in even greater light. Robert, this is truly a priestly walk requiring much surrender.”

“Immediate darkness” Jesus said, “will come to those who fall off My path. You have watched some, whom you know, descend into this terrible darkness. But My Father and I are always watching to help those who will repent and come back to us, that once again they might walk in the Light of Our Love and Truth.



“The greatest lesson for My children to learn, Robert, is to simply trust Me with all of their heart. This is the path of the Righteous, and there is no other way to enter My Father’s Eternal City of Light and Truth.

“Where does this path end?” Robert asked the Lord.

“Look.”

This time when Robert turned to look, he saw shimmering against a golden horizon the most beautiful and radiant heavenly City. Even at a distance he could see that it’s beauty was even beyond his comprehension. He instantly knew that this was where his heart had always longed to be.



“Can I go there with you now?” Robert almost pleaded with Jesus.

Jesus looked into Robert’s eyes. “There is much you need to first accomplish on this path, son, to prepare you for your eternal Home with your Father who is eagerly waiting for you. You will meet many others along the journey. Some of these people are a little difficult,” Jesus laughed softly, “kind of like you, sometimes. But they are all My family, created for My Father and I, and meant to be One with us and with each other. The Holy Spirit will always be with you as your Friend and Counselor.

Your life on this earth, Robert, will be of much value to me. But one day your course will be finished, and you will come to the end of the path and enter My Eternal Glory and the Glory of your Heavenly Father. And then you will see the place that We have prepared for you. Robert, it is truly a surprise worth waiting for.”

“I will never leave you, Robert. I have chosen you for Myself.”

For a brief second Robert closed his eyes, not wanting the moment to pass. When he opened his eyes Jesus was gone. He was surprised that he did not feel sadness. Instead, a joy unspeakable began to fill every part of him. The tears that came were tears of great joy.

“Yes, Jesus, yes!” He raised his hands into the air and jumped as high as he could. He couldn’t wait to tell his parents. He would call them right away. “No,” he spoke out loud. “I will catch the bus home this afternoon and surprise them.” But first, he thought, I have something I need to do. He looked up as if waiting for an answer. “Yes.” The reply came almost immediately from within his heart. He had heard the Holy Spirit clearly. For a moment he felt like doing a cart wheel, maybe a few of them.

Robert opened the door to Surran’s classroom. The students turned to watch him. Robert knew there was an anointing on him, and he knew that he now had real authority. The students also knew there was something different about him. Surran watched him. He was not smiling. Robert walked over to the stereo and the pulsating, mind-bending music that was always playing. He turned the music down.

“Robert, what are you doing?” Surran screamed at him. He had noticeably lost his cool, and everyone could see it. “Leave my room, now! Immediately!” He fired off the words, “I am telling you....”

“I will leave, Surran. But first I have something to say to my friends. It will only take a moment.” A fluttering of voices and shocked surprise came from some of the students.

“I want to tell you,” Robert spoke calmly and clearly, “about something that just happened to me, that has changed my life. I have just come face to face with the Living God, Jesus, the Messiah.” The room became unbearably silent. Surran was so taken by surprise that he was speechless.

“And, yes,” Robert continued, “Jesus is very much alive. We have all listened to this man for months,” he pointed directly at Surran, “this so called truth teacher. He has been very successful in causing us to doubt and disbelieve what many of us were raised to believe. He has told us that all religions are the same, and that there are many paths to Truth. But he has lied to himself and to us. There is only One True and Living God, and He sent His only Son to die for our sins, and to set us free forever from fear and death, and Hell.”

Many knew that the fire of God was upon the words that Robert was speaking to them, and no one dared to move.

“Without Jesus there is no hope for anyone. Because we are all sinners, each one of us, and we so desperately need a Savior like Jesus in our lives. It was His precious Blood that made a way for each one of us to come back to the Living God, through His Cross.

Robert turned to look at Surran. At the mention of the Blood of Jesus a strange, guttural sound came forth from him, and he began to take on a strange, dark countenance. The class was stunned. They had no idea what they were watching as the darkness in Surran began to manifest. He began to rage and then to threaten Robert, like a madman. Robert could not even believe what was happening, but he continued to feel a true peace. And then, all of a sudden, a compassion and sadness for this lost and tormented man began to fill him. He looked at this demoniacally bound man next to him, and he spoke. “Surran, you must repent and get right with God, before it’s too late. God loves you more than you can ever understand.”

Robert turned once more to the class. “Everyone has to make a choice. We either choose God’s way, or we will go down a very dark path that will lead to our spiritual death, and our permanent separation from God. Yes, there are many spiritual paths,” Robert said. “But all of them will lead you to hell, except the path that Jesus has made for us.”

A number of students had already left the class, but some, surprisingly, looked at Robert with anger and defiance. When Surran saw this he was able to regain some of his composure. With a voice of ice and a cool smile, he commanded Robert to leave his room. But Robert had already reached the door by the time Surran spoke to him. His assignment was completed.

Some of the students had lingered in the hallway, waiting for Robert to come out. He encouraged this group to look for Michael at the student hall, telling them that Michael was really the one they needed to talk to, and not himself.

Alison asked him to stay with her for awhile, explaining that she really needed to talk to him.

“I have to leave, Alison,” he answered her. “I’ve got a bus I need to catch this afternoon.” He handed her a slip of paper with his phone number on it. “But you can call me anytime you want. I also would very much like to talk to you. But please, Alison,” he could feel an emotion rising up in his heart, “don’t go back in Surran’s class. He’s not who people think he is, and his ways and teachings will lead you to much pain and destruction.”

“Don’t worry, Robert.” She smiled back at him. “I am not going anywhere near that man or that class, or anyone who wants to be part of it.”

“I don’t know if I’m coming back here, Alison. I have a new Boss that I answer to now. But I hope we will stay in touch.” Robert reached out and took hold of her hand. They stood silent for a moment, looking at each other, and then said good-by.

Robert opened the door. The sky was clear, and the air was fresh. He really felt good about himself and about what he had just done for Jesus. He looked up and smiled; then he heard the Voice inside his heart say,

“Well done, My son!”



**“He who overcomes will inherit all things,  
and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.”**

Revelation 21:7

**“Enter by the narrow Gate ...  
Because narrow is the Gate and difficult is the Way  
that leads to Life, and there are few who find it!”**

Matthew 7:13, 14

## A Place for Anna

**“For You formed my inward parts  
and covered me in my mother’s womb.”**

Anna looked out the window as the train sped past the green and golden fields, already ripe for harvest. This great expanse of rich farmland had been her home for 17 years, and she had never thought of living any place else, at least not until now. She lowered her right hand over her belly, gently letting it rest there. Her light brown hair had fallen loose from her scarf, framing her slender face and blue green eyes.



Things had changed, and now she was going as far away from here as she could, far away from her dad. She watched for a moment as the man seated in front of her stood up, so that his wife could sit down next to him. His arm went around her and she nicely snuggled up next to him. Anna sighed. If only she could talk to her mother. Her mother would of course know what to tell her, but that was impossible now. Her mother had died when she was only twelve years old. Her relationship with her father had gotten much worse after her mother’s death. Her mother’s gentleness had been a buffer between her and her dad. But after she died there was nothing that helped restrain his temper, and he would frequently lash out at her, for hardly anything at all. When this would happen she would find a place, as quickly as she could, to get away from his angry words, and sometimes even the hard slap that would come against her like a weapon.

“Excuse me, ma’am.” The porter’s voice was low and soft. “Will you be having dinner in the diner tonight?”

“No,” she answered. “I have a little something I brought to eat.” She pointed to her knapsack. “That’s okay, isn’t it, that I don’t eat in the diner?” I am afraid I couldn’t afford anything so nice.” She smiled back at the kind black porter’s face.

“Yes, ma’am, that’s just fine. You have yourself a nice lunch.”

The kindness in his voice almost made her want to cry. She smiled back at him. “Thank you.” She wasn’t really hungry yet, but she was glad she had thought of bringing a sack lunch.

The sun was starting to set over the Sacramento hills, casting a lovely golden glow over the swaying wheat fields. She put her head back against the seat cushion, and closed her eyes. She remembered the time when she and David had sat on a bench and had watched the sun slowly slide behind the hazy, brown hills, washing over them with a pink, lavender reflection. How beautiful it had been, those sweet days when love had come into her life, and oh, how she missed him, her beautiful David. She did not even try to hold back the tears that fell one by one onto her cheeks.



She had never known anyone like David, and they had been so much in love. She had just turned seventeen when they met, and he was nineteen. She had been working part time at the ice-cream parlor when she first saw him sitting by himself in the corner. He looked so handsome in his Army uniform. She could hardly keep her eyes off of him, and she had not failed to notice that he kept glancing her way too.

For six months they had dated each other, whenever he could get away from the base, and when she could think of an excuse to not go home right away after work. And then came the dreaded news that he would soon have to leave for Vietnam. They had planned on getting married right away, but now they did not even have the time to figure out where to go. There was no place to get married in Homer, not with her dad less than a mile away. They both knew that the next time they said good-by might be the last time they would see each other for a long while. And for both of them that day came suddenly and horribly. David only had a few minutes to call and say good-by, before he was shipped out.

The train had slowed to a stop, but she was not getting off here. She had bought a ticket all the way to Eugene Oregon. David had talked a lot about Oregon, the place where he had grown up. The sky had grown very dark now. She looked out the window and could see just a scattering of stars. She reached into her knapsack and took out her sandwich. She didn't know what was ahead for her, but right now she felt safe, and all she wanted to do was get as far away from her dad as she could. She could still see his raging face the night she came home from work, and then saw that he was holding David's letter in his hands.

David had instructed a friend to mail the letter to Anna, if anything ever happened to him. It was a tender love letter, meant only for her eyes. Her father had opened the letter and had read it, along with a note from David's friend, telling her that he had been killed in the line of duty. His heroism, he said, had saved many lives.

The words her father screamed at her that night were so mean and cruel. Anna had stood frozen, the dim light in the kitchen shadowing her face. All she could pray at that moment was that he would not tear the letter up, or worse yet burn it up.

"I am sorry," she kept repeating, "I am sorry," hoping he would stop. Finally, he threw the letter on the table and left the room. Anna took the letter and ran out to the barn. She climbed up into the hay loft, where she often went. She found her niche in the corner under a small window. She read David's letter and then cried herself to sleep. Her David was gone, and she was now two months pregnant, and nobody knew, not even David.

For the rest of the train ride she closed her eyes and drifted in and out of sleep. After getting off the train in Eugene she double checked her knapsack to make sure her money was still there. She had saved enough, she figured from her job, to stay for awhile at an inexpensive hostel. Hopefully, she would find a job and then a permanent place to live. All she could do, she knew, was take one day at a time.

She sat down on a bench, outside the main waiting room of the train station. Even though she had slept some on the train, she felt a deep tiredness in her body; the days of fear and stress had taken their toil. She shivered in the darkness and pulled her jacket up over her shoulders. It had been a long time since she had prayed. She remembered how her mother had often prayed, and would tell her, "no matter what happens in your life, honey, a nice, little talk with God will always help."

But after her mother died, God seemed so far away from her. She looked up into the dark sky. “Lord,” she said, “if you’re up there, and my mother is with you, I could sure use some help.” She remembered to say “amen.”

“Hey.” A voice came from behind her. “You okay.”

Anna turned to face a woman dressed in jeans, her hair pulled back in a red scarf. She smiled at Anna. “You have someplace to go, hun?”



“Well,” Anna replied. “A friend told me about a hostel she had stayed at in Eugene.” She fumbled for the slip of paper with the address on it. “It’s on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, next to a movie theater. I guess that’s where I am going. At least I think that’s where I am headed.”

“It’s not good for a pretty young woman to be sitting out here by herself. I know where the hostel is. My husband and I drive right by it. So come on, we’ll give you a ride.

“Thanks, I’d sure appreciate it.” Anna smiled with relief.

Anna was pleased when she arrived at the hostel to find that she got the bottom bunk. She shared the small room with two other women. They were asleep. She quietly put her knapsack next to her and crawled under the blanket. She was sure she could sleep for a long time.

The sparse morning meal that was offered by the hostel was almost gone when she came into the coffee room. Two young women, about her age and one nice looking man sat at a table. They invited her to sit down with them and were glad to share their meal with her. She could tell they were hippies, but she thought they were nice.

“You might want to try the Farmer’s Market, down the street about three blocks. They sometimes hire new people.” The young man with blond hair tied back in a pony tail, spoke to Anna. She had asked them if they knew of any place where she might find work. “Not a bad place to work,” he continued. “They don’t pay much, but none of the places around here do.” The two women he was with were more interested in counseling her about watching out for her belongings, if she was going to stay at the hostel for any length of time. “It’s okay here,” the slender girl said, “but just watch out for your stuff.”

Anna was starting to feel a little nauseous as she finished the last bite of an egg sandwich.

“Hey,” you okay?” The blond haired woman, whose name was Kathy spoke to Anna with some concern. “Honey, you don’t look to good right now, a little green under the guiles. You aren’t pregnant are you?”

The question startled Anna, and she didn’t know how to answer the young woman. But her inability to answer her was all that Kathy needed to know.

“Listen,” she spoke like someone giving instruction. “The first thing you need to do is go across the street to the free clinic. They are really good people over there. Ask for Doctor Pete. You need to get some help before you get any further along.”

“What do you mean?” Anna responded to Kathy’s remark.

“You know!” Kathy answered, “too far along in your pregnancy. It’s not a problem now, but pretty soon, if you wait too long it will be.” The other woman smiled at Kathy, agreeing with what she had said.

Anna got up quickly, feeling another wave of nausea, and ran for the bathroom. When she came back into the coffee room the people she had been sitting with were gone. She knew they had been talking about abortion, but she did not want to talk about her pregnancy with them. Since abortion was now legal she had known a couple of girls at school who had done it. She had never thought about abortion, but she did want to see a good doctor, to make sure everything was okay. And it sounded OK that this was a free clinic.

Anna sat quietly as she waited for the doctor to come back into the room. He had completed a brief examination, but had not said anything. He seemed nice enough. When he came back into the room, a stout, broad hipped nurse was with him.

“Well, Anna, you are just about three months pregnant. Everything seems to be good, but you can’t wait any longer.”

“Wait for what?” Her voice felt and sounded tense.

“For an abortion, Anna. Isn’t that why you are here? That’s primarily what we do here at this free clinic.”

“I never really considered having my baby aborted, doctor. I just wanted to make sure everything was okay.”

“Well, young lady.” His voice had lost its smooth tone. “First of all it’s not really a baby, not yet. It’s just a little blob of flesh, just a few cells stuck together, kind of like a little fish, or a tad pole.” He laughed stiffly at his little joke. Anna could tell he was beginning to lose patience with her. He was talking much faster. The heavy set nurse who stood next to him smiled a plastic smile at Anna. Her words were gooey sweet.

“We’ve never had anyone complain about our desire to help them. It’s a wonderful thing, young lady, to be set free from these unwanted burdens.”

The doctor spoke up next. “We can do it right now, Anna. You just get up here on this other table, close your eyes, and before you know it, presto! It will be all over, and you will feel so much better.” The nurse took Anna by the hand, as if to lead her to the slaughter.

Anna pushed the nurse’s hand away from hers. She put her hand over her belly. “No! You aren’t going to touch me.” She picked up her green jacket on the table, bent down and grabbed her shoes, pushed past the doctor and headed out the door. She didn’t slow down till she was two blocks away from that clinic.



Anna put the broccoli on the scale, then stuck it in a sack with the other vegetables. She was hot and tired. Being on her feet nine hours a day, selling produce, was hard work. But she desperately needed the money, even though it wasn't much. The over-weight, older man who had hired her was always looking over her shoulder to see what she was doing. She moved as far from him as she could. She had worked at the Farmers Market for three weeks now, and she really looked forward to her one day off. Five more minutes and she could leave for the day. She breathed a sigh of relief that her boss was not around, for she also resented the unclean lust-full looks he would sometimes shoot her way.

It was harvest time in Oregon and the street where she walked was bumper to bumper with heavy laden produce trucks. She sat down on a bench for a couple of minutes before continuing the walk back to the hostel. She smiled as she put her hand on her belly. For the third time in a couple of days she had felt the small butter-fly movement in her womb.



“Well, sweetie,” she spoke to her baby, “not sure where we are gong or what’s going to happen to us, but maybe God will help us.” She laughed softly at the thought of her David. “I wonder if you will look like your daddy, little one?”

She got up and continued to walk to the hostel, stopping briefly by a small pond, where she enjoyed the peacefulness of nature for a few moments.



She didn't like what she felt when she walked into the small room. The two other girls she had been sharing the room with were gone. She immediately went to the end of her mattress, and lifted up the far corner. She sighed a heavy sound as she saw that the money she had hidden there was now gone. She had not wanted to leave it in her knapsack at work, and she felt it was safer to hide it here. No one had seen her put it in an envelope and stick it under and inside the mattress. But now it was gone! It was all the security she had, besides the slave labor she earned at work. She brought her hand to her forehead and massaged where the pressure had built up. Now she really didn't know what she was going to do! She tried to resist the panicky feeling that was beginning to creep up her throat. "What am I going to do?" she said out loud. The voice of the burley nurse came back to her. "You will be grateful to be rid of this unwanted burden."

"No!" She spoke aloud into the empty room. "You are not an unwanted burden, but you sure picked a bummer of a mother to get stuck with." She stretched out on the bunk bed, and closed her eyes. I wonder, she thought, if I were to go home, and beg my dad to forgive me, maybe he would. And perhaps with the baby he would not be so mean. But she knew that what she was thinking was only a desperate plea. "What am I going to do, mama?" She cried into the pillow. "Oh, Jesus, please help me." She pulled her knees to her chest and finally drifted into sleep.

The house that she came to in her dream was at the end of a very long road. It was a sweet little house. A shingle hung above the door that read "The Potter's House." She peeked inside the window to see what she could see. Inside the shop a man dressed in a light brown garment sat in front of a potter's wheel. He held in His hand a partially molded vessel. He smiled as He looked down at the uncompleted work of art.

"Oh, My little vessel," He spoke softly. "Before you were formed, I saw you in My mind's eye, what a beautiful, fashioned piece you would be. You will be different from all the others, uniquely crafted for My delight."



He sat the molded piece of clay on the table for a moment, and looked up at the shelves in front of Him and the Master pieces that were before Him. He reached up and brought one down. He had named each one. The sun glittered on the one He held, like diamonds on a blue lake. “My sparkling beauty,” He said. “You are one of My absolute favorites, stroked with great peace and faithfulness. Look at how you shine for the world to see.” But then He reached for another one and could not help but laugh a little, as He brought it to Himself. “You too are My favorite one. Look at how you glow, My little singing vessel of joy, brushed and glazed with the colors of life. And what a blessing you are to those around you.”

He glanced down at the vessels that were not yet finished, all created for His joy, made in the secret place. How beautiful, He thought, they will be.

He turned as the door opened and Anna came in. He smiled. He did not seem surprised at all to see her.

“My beautiful daughter. Come Anna, and sit down next to Me.” As Anna sat down she was immediately drawn into His wonderful presence and sweet fragrance, like apple blossoms on a spring day. “Come,” He said. “Put your hands in the clay and see what you can do. You too, My daughter, are a creator.” He laughed a deep true laugh.

Anna put her fingers in the cool clay. It felt good.

“If you will only believe in the Light of God, Anna. If you look to Me, then We will create a beautiful garden out of your life, for you and your precious daughter.”

“Look!”



When Anna looked up from the clay in her hands, she saw in a vision, a pretty little girl playing by the sea shore. She was splashing and having lots of fun. She was probably, Anna thought, about two years old.

She had curly, blond hair and sparkling blue eyes. Anna could vaguely see a young woman come and take her by the hand. She could tell they were both very happy, and then the vision ended.

Then the Master spoke one word to her before she woke up, “Agape.” She was speaking the word when she opened her eyes, the word, “Agape.”

Anna knew that the Lord Jesus had given her a dream, a very special dream. But the word “Agape,” what did it mean to her?”

Anna stretched a long stretch as she got out of bed. Today was her day off. She quickly got out of bed and packed a peanut butter sandwich. She did not want to waste a minute of the day. She had decided to go for a walk through a neighborhood that was close by. She had been there once before and had enjoyed watching the children play. It was a very old fashioned neighborhood, with big yards and lots of trees and flowers.

As she walked along she noticed many people who were just sitting on their porches. They seemed to not be interested in anything other than just watching and feeling the day go by. She felt comfortable in this neighborhood. It felt nice and safe.

As she came to the end of the street where she was walking, she looked up at the name of a small church on the corner. The sign read, “Agape Church, House of God’s Love.” Anna stood where she was and continued to look at the name of the church. It was not a large building, but it was well taken care of, and there were tall trees, some bearing fruit, all around the building. “Is this the Agape?” she said to herself.

She spoke the word again as she walked up onto the porch. She looked in the window but could not see anyone. She opened the door. The room was filled with a sweet fragrance. It reminded her of how Jesus had smelled when she sat down next to Him in her dream.

“Can I help you?”

Anna turned to see a man in his early forties, dressed in jeans and a light blue shirt. He was clean shaven, with curly blond hair. He had a nice smile.

“Oh, no, that’s okay. I was just taking a peek to see what it looked like on the inside.” She laughed a little nervously.

“Hi. I’m pastor Tim Little.” He reached out his hand to Anna.  
“Are you new in the area?”

“Sort of.” Anna replied. “My name is Anna, Anna Kitsel.” She used David’s last name.

“Listen, we have a Bible study here tonight, and you are more than welcome to come and join our little group. It’s just a small get together. We share, and actually we all have a pretty good time.”

The fear and dread Anna had felt the day before when she saw that all her money had been stolen, now seemed to be lessening, as she stood in the entrance of this church speaking with pastor Tim.

“Maybe,” was all she could say. “I’ll see.”

She smiled back at the pastor as she went down the steps to the sidewalk. “Starts at seven a clock,” she heard him speak to her as she walked away.

That evening Anna walked into the Bible group by herself. The room still smelled special. A few people, not more than fifteen, sat around a table. When pastor Tim saw her, he motioned her to come over to the group. She felt awkward, and was worried that someone might notice her pregnancy. She knew that she was already beginning to show, a little. But everyone seemed very nice and made her feel welcomed.

“Hi Anna. Tim told me that he met you here this afternoon. I am Tim’s wife. My name is Glenna. And I am so glad to meet you.” She reached out and gave Anna a little hug.

Anna really thought Glenna was pretty, and she had such a peaceful look about her. For the first time in a long while, Anna felt like she had come home. She was sorry when the evening ended.

“Anna,” Tim spoke to her. “Why don’t you let us drive you home?”

For a moment Anna was perfectly silent. What would they think if they knew she was living at a hostel and didn’t have a home? Would they reject her? “Oh, that’s okay,” she said. “I can walk.”

“We’d like to give you a ride, Anna. It’s really not safe for a young woman to be out at night here. This neighborhood is not as safe as it looks.”

Anna made a decision. If they were going to reject her then let it happen now, and not later. “Okay,” she said. “But first I have something I need to tell you. Can we sit down for a moment?” In a matter of a few minutes Anna had shared with Tim and Glenna the whole story. She told them about David. She told them about how mean her father was to her, and she even told them about her mother’s death. They listened quietly. Anna thought she saw tears in Glenna’s eyes.

Tim spoke to her. “We’d still like to take you home, Anna, and we’d feel very privileged if you would come with us to church on Sunday. We’d like to help you, Anna, if that’s okay?”

Anna was not embarrassed that tears could be seen in her eyes. Glenna’s arms around her felt so much like her mother’s. “Oh, yes,” Anna said, “I would love to go with you.” She was beginning to learn about Agape love.



Anna was having a cup of tea with Glenna and enjoying another one of her stories about her wild frontier childhood in Alaska. They always amused Anna, and made her feel good. It had now been three months since Anna had been invited to stay and had moved in with Tim and Glenna. She sipped her tea and listened, and then ate another peanut butter cookie off the plate.

Glenna reached over and took hold of Anna’s hand. “You’ve been with us now, Anna, for almost three months, and you know we love you as our own daughter.”

It was true, Anna thought. Pastor Tim and Glenna had taken her into their home to live with them. She had helped Glenna as much as she could, and they treated her like their own daughter, a daughter they could never have. She was so amazed at how unconcerned they seemed to be about how people were talking; her pregnancy was becoming very obvious now.

Wherever Glenna went she would take Anna with her, and was never ashamed of her. For the first time Anna was really learning about the Love of Jesus in her life. She was learning about the Bible and how to walk every day with the Holy Spirit. With God's help, and with Pastor Tim and Glenna, she had come a long ways.

Glenna continued to talk to her. "We want to be here with you, Anna, when your baby is born. And we want to help you get a new start in life, in whatever you might want to do, but there is one thing."

Anna was not sure at all what the 'one thing' could be. She could feel her body tighten up a bit.

"It's about your dad, Anna," Glenna said. "You've not mentioned him once since you came here, and Tim and I both feel that you should make contact with him, and let him know ..."

Anna interrupted Glenna. "I don't want to do that, Glenna. I don't want him to know where I am. I don't want him to know about my baby."

"Anna," Glenna spoke again. "You will be eighteen years old in a couple of months, and then you can legally live wherever you want, but you must trust the Lord, Anna. I think it's the right thing to do. Please pray about it?"

Anna spoke softly. "Yes, Glenna, I will pray about it." She put down the tea she was drinking and walked outside. She felt upset on the inside. She wished Glenna had not said what she did. She loved Tim and Glenna. They had been so good to her, but she had put her dad out of her mind, and that's where she wanted him to stay.

She walked a short ways to a nearby park where she enjoyed watching the little children play. She took a deep breath. "Lord," she said, "I need to know what to do. I feel very confused." As she was sitting on the bench she opened her Bible and began to read from Matthew 6:15, "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father in Heaven forgive you your trespasses." And then she read next from John 15:12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." She read some more from John 14:23, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word." She closed her Bible, and then opened it again at Matthew 5:44, "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

After reading these words Anna felt a pang of fear. She knew that God had clearly spoken to her through His Word, and she also knew that she was not keeping Jesus' commandments. But it was really hard for her to forgive her dad. And then suddenly she felt the Lord's presence, almost as if He was sitting right next to her. She could feel His heart of Love for her, and then she heard His words clearly saying, "Anna, I have wonderful plans for you and the family you will have."



"But to continue this walk with Me there is something you need to do. You need to forgive your dad. I can help you, but you need to be willing. You are not responsible for what your dad does or does not do. But Glenna is right, you need to call him, because if you don't the pain will never leave. Anna, this is very important to Me and you, and to your heavenly Father, and it is very important for the life We have planned for you."

With her eyes closed Anna spoke to the Lord, "If I call my dad, will you be with me, Jesus?"

"Anna, My beloved." Jesus spoke tenderly. "I am always with you. You feel My presence when you get up in the morning, and when you go to bed at night. You will know some difficult times in your life, Anna, but as you grow, you will learn to trust Me with all your heart."

Anna discovered that in the presence of Jesus it was impossible to be angry with her father. In fact she was feeling a new kind of compassion for him. "Yes, Jesus," she said, "I will do what you have asked me to do. I will call my father."

Tim was home when Anna walked into the house. She smiled at both of them. They could tell something was different, but they said nothing.

"Glenna," Anna said. "You asked me to pray about calling my dad. Well, I have prayed." She laughed. "In fact I have just prayed with Jesus." She beamed a joyful smile. "Yes, Glenna, I will call my father, but I would like for both of you to be here, please."

Anna sat down and picked up the telephone. She could feel her heart beginning to beat faster as she dialed her home number in Homer, California. She felt a little shaky when her dad answered the phone.

“Hi, dad, this is Anna. I just wanted to...” Before she could finish the sentence her dad had hung up the phone. At first she felt a little shocked. But then she remembered what Jesus had said to her. “You are not responsible, Anna, for what your dad does or does not do.”

Anna put the phone down and looked up at Tim and Glenna. She didn’t understand why the tears were coming, or why she felt any emotion at all about her dad. “He hung up on me,” she said.

“Anna,” Tim spoke to her. “Would you like for us to pray with you for your dad?” “Yes,” Anna responded, “I think so.”

“Lord,” Anna spoke to God. “My dad is so unhappy. I forgive him for all the mean things he has said and done to me. And I really hope that You can find a way to come into his life, so that he will know You, and can learn how to love people.” When she finished praying her short prayer, and after Tim and Glenna had prayed, she looked up and felt her heavenly Father smiling down on her.

A few months later ... Anna bent over the crib to look at her little baby girl one more time before she went to bed. She was so perfect, so beautiful. Anna could already see that she looked so much like David.



She spoke to her beloved Jesus. “She is so beautiful, Lord, this little golden vessel of joy! And so Joy is the name I have given her, because she was created for Your Glory and Your Delight. And I pray that I will be the good mother I need to be, watching over her to guide her in Your ways.

## Epilogue

**“Father I desire that they also whom You have given Me, may 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 17:21**

King Yeshua, with His Father, looked out with great Joy at the multitudes of people gathered together before God from every nation, tribe and tongue. They had come, all His beloved sons and daughters, to worship their God before His heavenly Throne. While on earth these faithful ones had laid up for themselves true treasures in Heaven, which now they were able to enjoy far beyond their greatest expectation, as they worshiped their King and their God. (Isaiah 40:10; 62:11; Revelation 11:18; 22:12)



Bowing down, they cast their crowns before their God. For by the precious Blood of the Lamb of God they all had been Saved and Redeemed, and now they could love and serve their God forever.

“For the Joy set before You, and before Me, My Son.”

“All is Yours, Father.” Yeshua spoke the Eternal Words of Truth. “You gave them to Me, that I might bring them Home to You, so that We would all be One. I in them, and You in Me, in perfect Oneness.”

“Yes, My Son. The price has been paid and Our Joy is full!

The rewards and joys of Heaven are truly without measure, but the greatest joy for these redeemed sons and daughters is to worship their Beloved God and Savior. Heaven is a place of true humility, where pride does not exist. Here everyone loves and serves their King and each other.

All of Heaven is filled with the fragrance and presence of our God. Beautiful flowers, fresh and alive, cover all the hills and valleys; a true delight. Everything is in Perfect order and balance. That which God gave man to enjoy while on earth is only a poor copy of what it is like in Heaven.

All of Creation is immersed in the Love and Joy of Heaven, and nothing can harm on 'His Holy Mountain,' for not even the smallest molecule of sin can ever enter Heaven's Gates.

There is no pain or suffering or misery of any kind for these heavenly children who belong to God's Family. And none of the things that pollute the earth can ever affect their blessed Home in Heaven.

**“Behold, I make all things new!”** John 21:5

All of Heaven knows that soon the Wedding of the Lamb of God will take place, for His Wife will have made herself ready. Revelation 19:7 I believe His Wife, the Bride of the Lamb, are those sons and daughters who have entered into a very deep and intimate relationship with Yeshua, and have laid down their lives in love and service to their King. For they are truly “His called and chosen and faithful ones!” Revelation 17:14

But there are many of God's children who are not part of Yeshua's Bride; they will be blessed as honored 'guests' at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Sometime later after this Glorious Wedding in Heaven, the Lion of Judah (the Son of man) will return to earth with His beloved Bride, where He will set up His heavenly Kingdom, **His thousand year Reign of Peace**, where “the knowledge of the Glory of the LORD will cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.” Habakkuk 2:14

And then after this Millennial event, the Master will put all things under His feet, even death. And then He will bring forth a new Heaven and a new Earth, with all the Joy of Heaven. And that Day will come where, “as it is in Heaven, so also it will be on Earth.”

**“For by Grace you have been Saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is a Gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand that we should walk in them.”**

Ephesians 2:8, 9

The different rewards of Glory received by each person are easily recognized by everyone, and there is no envy or jealousy, only honor and appreciation, with a pure love for God and for one another.

Time in Heaven is not like on earth. None of the King's children are left out of His view or His Presence, as He walks among them. Any sense of time is lost as all of Heaven worships Him. And what might have seemed like a moment on earth is in Heaven a long and lingering expression of the Love relationship that exists between God and His children.

Rebekah

**“For the Son of Man will come in the Glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each one according to his works.”**  
Matthew 16:27

A beautiful woman, dressed in a Glorious white gown, stood near a sparkling diamond like river. She had not forgotten how, when she was a young girl in the orphanage, Yeshua had revealed to her just a touch of Heaven, and had spoken to her such beautiful words and promises, which now had all come true.



Rebekah had lived a long fulfilling life. After her children were grown she and her husband Aaron had spent most of their life in Israel. There they told many Jewish people about their Messiah, and how He had died for their sins to set them free. The very early Messianic movement was pioneered under their guidance. They had brought four lovely daughters into the world, and had really enjoyed loving their ten grandchildren.

The years she had spent with her parents, after the terrible years at the orphanage, were joyful and treasured moments. She had learned at a young

age the value of prayer and the power of using God's Word from the Bible. Many came to her for counsel, and she also led many others to the Lord. Her life had been lived out to the very last moment for her Beloved Savior.

At the Gates of Heaven she encountered many friends that she had known when she was still at the orphanage. They had been saved through her prayers and her encouraging testimony. In Heaven she was once again able to embrace her loving husband and her precious parents. Her parents and her husband, like herself, were now young and vibrant. How she had laughed and rejoiced with them.



Heaven is a place of true happiness and continual laughter and rejoicing. Everyone moves with such grace and ease throughout all the heavenly landscapes. Every day is a day of joy and great expectation and true fulfillment.

Of all the people who had come to greet Rebekah, there was one lady dressed in a lovely glittering blue gown, amid so many different colored gowns in heaven. She was very beautiful, and Rebekah recognized her immediately.

“My Rebekah,” she had said. “My dear Rebekah.” She put her arms around her, embracing her with all of her heart. It was Madam Stampflie, but in heaven she was simply called Bertha, the name she had been given as a child.

“I am in Heaven, my dear one, primarily because of you.” Her eyes filled with tears. I know that you prayed for me many times, even after you left the orphanage. And every time you prayed for me God changed my heart. I am so grateful, Rebekah, that I can be here in Heaven with the One that I too have come to truly love. Thank you my dear for being so faithful.”

Rebekah was filled with delight at the memory of meeting Bertha in Heaven. However nothing that she had ever done on earth compared to now being close to the One she loved the most, and had now become one with.

**“I will come again and receive you to MYSELF.”** John 14:3

“My King,” she said, as He approached her. “All the sufferings on earth were worth it, to be with You now and forever.” She bowed before Him.

Her Master’s words came to her like sparkling jewels. “My Father and your Father have planned your reward before the beginning of time, Rebekah. It was part of the Joy set before Me, to know that one day you would experience such great happiness. Continue, My precious one, to enter into Our Joy.” He reached forward and kissed her tenderly.

**“So a Book of Remembrance was written before Him,  
for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His Name.”**

Malachi 3:16

The Book of Memories ... (Malachi 3:16)

God will judge His servants with Justice. He has a Book of “Remembrance”, a Book of photos for every one of His children, and like every good Father, He enjoys this Book of Memories.

With a most tender Love, He will sit down with each one of His sons and daughters, and they will look at this Book together. As they look at the photos of what they did for the Lord on earth, the pictures become animated and full of light. There are so many things that we have forgotten, but the Lord has remembered every good deed that we did in His Name.

It is God’s idea to reward His faithful servants, because it’s His Joy. For even the smallest cup of water given in God’s love, there awaits an Eternal reward. Every word of encouragement to a brother or sister, every good deed, every kind thought that leads to helping another person, and especially every time the Gospel is shared with another person, then a treasure of highest reward is secured in Heaven. I Corinthians 3:12-14

But there is another part to this Heavenly photo Book that also awaits God's redeemed children. The things that we could have done for the Lord, but did not do. Sometimes the very ordained works that God has prepared ahead of time for His beloved children to accomplish are left undone. The loss we will feel, because of our selfishness or disobedience will be very costly. But our Heavenly Father has also promised to wipe away every tear, and that He will do. (Revelation 11:18; Isaiah 40:10)

Brian:

**“In My Father’s House are many abodes.”** John 14:1

In the gathering of saints and angels there stood a handsome young man. Of course all the people in Heaven are young because there are no old decrepit people or sicknesses in Heaven.

This young man, whose name was Brian, was worshipping the Lord with all of his heart. Brian had been given much authority in Heaven for his faithfulness on earth. But to be ever close to his best Friend, to be near the Savior's Heart was truly his greatest reward. Brian gave the Lord a big hug when He came near. They were very good friends. He had brought the Lord much happiness while on earth.



On that amazing day on earth when Brian had sat with Yeshua in the Father's House, he had been instantly delivered from alcoholism. He went on to finish college with honors. With his scholastic achievements he could have gone into any number of successful fields of work and become wealthy, but with the Lord's guidance he spent the next 35 years working as a teacher so that he could help troubled young men like himself find their way to Life. He had spent many hours on the streets of the big cities, often times going into places no one else would go, to bring hope to many of the hopeless.

When Brian was joyfully released into Heaven, there were many who had come to welcome him Home. His parents were so excited to see him, along with many family members and close friends. He was especially excited to see a great number of men and women who would not have been in Heaven if it had not been for his dedication and prayers. These men, once tragic and pitiful, who had been saved off the hard city streets, were now shining in the Glory of the Lord, radiating His Presence. When Brian saw Roy and many others coming to meet him, he threw his head back, and with his Savior next to him, they both laughed with all the Joy of heaven. His great reward were ‘these treasures hidden in darkness,’ that he had brought Home to the Lord.

Anna:

**“They shall be Mine, says the Lord of Hosts,  
on the Day when I make them My jewels...” Malachi 3: 17**

Anna was also found to be in the group of worshiping saints. Anna was reunited with many loved ones in Heaven, but it was her Beloved that she desired to worship and be with above everything else. In Heaven there are no distractions of any kind that can come against one’s pure and devoted worship. In Heaven there is a total abandonment, unlike anything on earth. The One who had come to her when she was struggling on earth, and had given her His Love and Peace was now and forever her eternal Beloved.



For a few years after her baby was born, Anna continued to be mentored under pastor Tim and Glenna. Her walk with the Lord grew strong and she was found faithful in many things. Her daughter Joy also grew to become a strong woman of faith, and ultimately left a successful medical career to go with her husband as a medical missionary to Africa. Because Joy's life had not been aborted, she was able to bring much joy and glory to God, and she was loved by many.

In California, Anna became a strong voice for the pro-life movement. Through her dedication and personal courage and testimony, many young women were reached who then chose not to abort their babies. Anna eventually married a good man, who was a pastor. They had two children of their own, and they were shepherds over a small church, where many lives were turned around from evil to good through their love and dedication to their faithful God.

Anna never stopped praying for her father after her baby was born. One day when her daughter was still a small girl, her father came to pastor Tim's house. Her father had aged, and the sickness that had gripped his life was very evident.

In the two months that he lived after being reunited with his daughter and grand daughter, he was able to repent from the bottom of his heart to his daughter and to God, for the ways he had formerly treated Anna and for how he had lived and wasted so much of his life. The love he witnessed in Anna, and also in Tim and Glenna toward himself began to truly change his life, and before he died he had found peace with God.

When Anna died at an old age, she was triumphantly escorted to Heaven, and there she was greeted by her beloved husband, her father and mother, her dear friend David, and also by all those that her life had impacted.

The pure Love of the Lamb for all His children, and the love we will have for each other is unlike anything on earth. Her pastor husband on earth, who had died a short time before Anna, had already become good friends with David. How Glorious everything had become.



Robert

**“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of Life.”**

Revelation 2:10

Robert wore a very special crown and robe in Heaven. He was chosen to be a part of the Great Cloud of Martyrs. He was known as one who had sacrificed all for his Lord, and his reward was very great.



Two years after leaving college Robert and Alison had married. Both had pledged and sanctified their lives into the service of their God. They attended Bible college together for a couple of years, but they soon understood that God’s calling on their lives was to take the Gospel to the unreached peoples in many of the difficult places of the world.

They spent very hard but fruitful years in the Russian lands of Siberia and in the Caucasus mountains. It was there that their precious baby son was taken with fever and died. Their sacrifice was great. They finally went back to America where Alison, who had also become very sick, was not able to recover. One year later Robert buried his dear friend and wife.

In brokenness, Robert leaned on the Lord for his strength, and he became a mighty and well respected voice in the believing community, calling people to give up all and follow the Lord into those nations where the Gospel had not yet been taken.

The last twenty years of Robert’s life were spent taking the Gospel to the peoples of northern China, and then into the remote villages of India. At times Robert felt almost overwhelmed with the burden for winning souls to Christ. But had not his Master said: “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” And, “My Strength is made perfect in your weakness.”

In a distant province of India, Robert had refused to leave his brothers and friends in the Lord, even after being warned that an angry band of raging men had gone on a killing spree, and were coming his way. Robert was on his knees praying for the souls of those who were coming to kill him, when the death blow from a machete cut off his head.

An instant later Robert found himself standing in the Glory of Heaven. He was in awe. It was far more beautiful than he ever could have imagined. Here he was united with his precious Alison and their son, who had grown into a wonderful servant of the Lord. A huge gathering of people had come to celebrate Robert's Home Coming victory, but all the cheering and enthusiasm grew quiet when the King of kings approached.

"Well done My good and faithful servant," the Lord said to Robert. Tears of joy filled the Lord's eyes. "Enter, My son, into the Joy of your Lord."

Robert bowed before his King, and the crown of Life, the Martyr's crown, was placed on Robert's head for all his sacrifices. And then as he bent down on his knees, Robert took off his glorious crown and laid it before His God and King, and all of Heaven rejoiced.

**"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**

1 Corinthians 2:9

Lord Yeshua has gone ahead to prepare **a place for His Bride**, where He will Reign forever with His Beloved family, never to be separated again.



What a wonderful promise that the One who came and rescued us from sin and from death and hell, has gone ahead of us. Like a great Architect, He has laid out in detail, for each member of His Body, an incredible heavenly Paradise, and then later a New Earth domain. For Yeshua was a Carpenter by trade, a builder and planner of things before being KING!

Heaven is a real place, not a misty or surreal and cloudy experience. It was made by God for His children who desire to be with their Loving Creator. It is an extraordinary place for us to live and work and be a part of something so wonderful that goes far beyond any experience on earth.

**“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.”** Hebrews 4:9

Heaven will be a glorious rest from a sin-infected earth and cosmos. For all creation groans under the weight of man’s sin. Even the air we breathe, every part of life on this earth, has been so contaminated with sin; and every sin laden molecule is in chaos and disorder, far from its original creation. The pure air of Heaven is radically different, and is truly a joyful celebration of Life. How we taste and smell, how we see and feel will be experienced in Heaven without the sinful condition that corrupts and destroys all things. Oh, how Glorious it will be!

Through the Word of God and by the Holy Spirit we are able to look. But we still see only partially what God’s Glorious Heaven will be like.

**“All things are but a shadow.”** Colossians 2:17

Everything that God has given us on this earth, that has been good and for His purposes, we will experience in Heaven. We look forward to banquets and the great Alleluia choruses being sung by multitudes of angels along with His worshiping saints, because God has already put all these things in our spirit.

We can envision great parks and valleys filled with beautiful flowers and wonderful fragrances, because in our desire for beauty we have designed such places on earth. But in Heaven everything will be, well, just Perfect!



Most people have attended, at some time in their life, a beautiful wedding, and perhaps also a lovely wedding banquet supper. Many people feel pretty good about weddings, for there is much to feel good about ... a beautiful bride and a handsome bridegroom, good friends, lovely flowers, great food. For many it's also a time of joy and real celebration. Weddings are an emotional time, as memories are evoked, and tears are cried. People, attending weddings, especially after watching the beautiful bride, have been known to sort of slip away into a fairy tale land. Something inside of us truly wants to believe that the bride and groom will really be 'happy ever after.' But of course on earth there are not many 'happy ever after' realities.

However God has, nonetheless, given us the understanding of the idea of a wedding, because in Heaven **the greatest Wedding of all time** will take place, the Wedding between God and His chosen Loved ones, His Bride. This Bride, His Beloved Wife, are His sons and daughters who love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, strength and mind, and who have desired Him above all else. She is truly a spotless Bride. The wedding attire of each saint will have been washed and made white in **the Blood of the Lamb**.

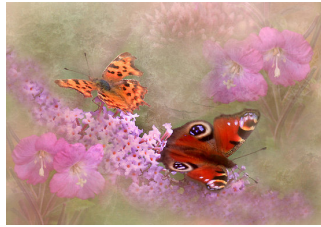
All Heaven is anxiously waiting for **this Great Wedding**. The idea that God would have **a Bride for His Son** is really an extraordinary thought. God needed to create in our minds and in our spirits an understanding of the deep and intimate Love that He has for each one of us, and so He created a bridegroom and a bride, a wedding and a wedding banquet.



**“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.”**

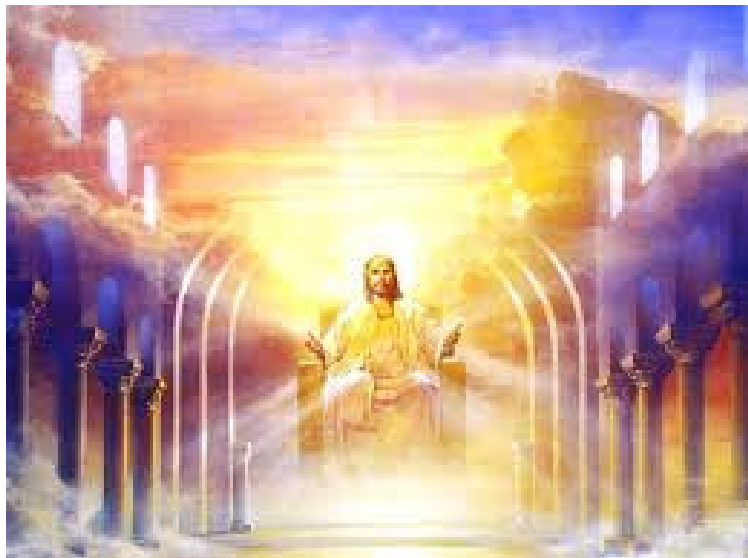
Revelation 19:7

**“Then I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth.”** Revelation 21:1



God has planned it all. He has had it planned from the beginning of time. In Heaven we will truly enjoy our new Home in a divine Paradise. We will also reign with our beloved King in our new glorified bodies during the Millennial Age. And those who have been faithful in even the little things will be given authority over much. Luke 19:17 And then ... at the end of the Millennium, we will watch as the Master of all Creation brings forth **“a new Heaven and a new Earth.”**

At the end of the Age the Great Carpenter will do His finest Work ...



**“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”**

(Revelation 21:4)



**“For the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost!”**

Luke 19:10



**“The Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with Him...”**

Matthew 25:10



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**“Blessed are those [guests] called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!”**

Revelation 19: 9



## THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

The Kingdom of Heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom.

Now five were wise and five were foolish ...  
the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

**At Midnight a cry was heard,  
'Behold, the Bridegroom Comes!'**

The Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with Him to the Wedding, and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:1,2,4,6,10

“Surely I am coming quickly. Amen! Even so, come Lord Yeshua!”

Revelation 22:20