

The Dead

HOPE

Survived

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THE DAY HOPE SURVIVED

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Chapter One

What Manner Of Man Is This ?

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Matthew 1:23). And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us (Luke 2:7-15). Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him (Matthew 2:1-2). When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:9-11).

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days

they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How it is that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:40-52).

John the Baptist preached Jesus' mission on earth before Jesus entered the ministry. He boldly and lovingly prepared the people's mind for what wonders and sights they would witness when Jesus came into their lives (Matthew 3:11-12, Mark 1:7-8, Luke 3:4-18, John 1:15-18).

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered (Luke 4:1-2). And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all (Luke 4:13-15).

Matthew 8:23-27 and Luke 8:22-25 tell the story of Jesus asleep in the boat while the disciples battled a raging storm. Water was filling the boat and the disciples were afraid they would all die. They woke Jesus up to tell Him they were in trouble. He got up, rebuked the storm and the wind and water became calm. He said to them, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" The disciples said, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"

Zechariah 9:9 foretells Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding upon the foal of an ass. John 12:12-15 describes the excitement of the people of Jerusalem when they heard He was coming to town. They took palm branches and went to meet Him. Luke 19:28-44 tells how they laid their clothes in His path as He rode through the street. Matthew 21:1-11 says the multitudes cried:

"Hosanna to the Son of David:
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest.

And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."

Mark 6:45-52 tells how they were all weary from a day of ministering and the miracle of the loaves and fish feeding the five thousand men plus women and children. They were tired and needed to get away from the multitudes of people. Jesus told the disciples to get into the ship and go to Bethsaida while He sent the people home. After leaving the people, He went to a mountain to pray. When evening came the ship was in the middle of the sea being tossed about by a storm. From where Jesus was on the land He saw them fighting the waves and wind. He went out to them walking on the water. When the disciples saw Him they thought He was a ghost. Jesus said to them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. He came up to them and the storm ceased.

John 13:1-17 says it was time for the Passover Feast. Jesus knew the time had come for Him to leave this world to go to be with His Father. He loved the disciples very much and wanted to show them the extent of His love. After the meal, He took off His outer clothing and wrapped a towel around his waist. He poured water into a basin and began washing the disciples feet. Peter objected but Jesus said to him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." After washing His disciples feet, He put his outer clothing back on and returned to His seat at the table. He then told them He had set an example and wanted them to follow his example and they would be blessed. In this humble act of Jesus washing the disciples feet we understand humility. Without humility we will never have a part with Jesus.

Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God (Matthew 27:54). But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they peirced (John 19:33-37). And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men (Matthew 28:2-4).

We need to realize who Jesus is and what He has done for us. When He died on the cross, our life had a future. The four gospels teach Jesus' mission on this earth was to give us the gift of eternal life (Isaiah 49:26, John 14:6, Romans 6:23, 1 Timothy 1:15). He patiently blessed, instructed, healed, fed, brought life to the dead, loved, died, rose from the dead and ascended to His Father in Heaven. His love and compassion for everyone was first and foremost because He knew His mission had to be completed (Matthew 14:3-36, Mark 6:45-56, John 6: 16-21). His death for our eternal life through His own blood was the supreme sacrifice.

Don' t panic in the raging storms of life, pray to Jesus and ask Him to help you. He will save us through His Grace (Romans 6:14-23, Hebrews 5:8-10). We will always be awed by the kind of man Jesus was here on earth. His life was supernatural from conception to ascension. We want to always have a part with Him. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (1 Timothy 2:5). The day Jesus died on the cross was the day hope survived.

Chapter Two

Innocence Is Hunted

A huge, vibrant, robust, young bull elephant was walking down a familiar jungle path enjoying the cool of the day. He was repeatedly trumpeting with impatience and frustration as he walked away from the safety of the herd. He was preparing to partake of lush vegetation knowing the exact location he must walk to so he could eat the tender greens he coveted. Not wanting to wait for the herd, his journey took him to dangerous territory where hunters often took the lives of his species. Turning a corner in the path, he was brutally attacked by a band of twenty hunters. They started piercing his eyes with tiny spears while he was trying to run away. After losing his sight, the hunters were able to easily take him to the ground. His blood was splattering everywhere. Once the elephant was on the ground three groups of hunters worked quickly at the same time. They speared his head many times. They put large spears through his eyes. They repeatedly speared his body. They used two huge three foot square boards with heavy blades attached and cut off his legs just below the knee joint. He was struggling to get free through this entire horrendous ordeal. Finally, he was mercifully released from the evil that claimed his life. He then triumphantly went to be with his Creator (Psalm 50:10-11).

How often do you sit down in your favorite, comfortable, cozy chair and think about all the evils in life that are pursuing your child? Satan is after our children and will stop at nothing to take what he wants! Do you make sure your family walks the Christian path of life together so you can guide each and every step? Are you prepared for what may happen if you don't walk with your children and prepare the way for them gently teaching, guiding, loving and caring for their needs? Their needs require and demand your attention. We have to monitor the media our children observe. The guardians have to be the adults in the parent child relationship taking the responsible position.

Ephesians 6:4 says we are to bring them up with instruction and nurturing in Jesus. We are to teach them right from wrong, morals, manners, and most of all the love of Jesus Christ (Proverbs 19:18). Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).

If we raise them knowing, loving and adoring Jesus, they will always

be able to ask for His help when they confront evil. Proverbs 23:7 says as a man thinks so does he become. Our thoughts affect us and our problems begin in our thoughts. Philippians 4:8 says whatever is good think on these things. We must think about good and stand fast on our morals because Satan is just waiting around every corner for a chance to attack anyone (1 Peter 5:8). God will always lead us in a positive direction so we can triumph over evil (Deuteronomy 30:19, Romans 8:26, Galatians 5:1, James 1:13-15). Luke 10:19 says we have power through God. Colosians 3:1-2 says we need to seek and set our minds on God. The Holy Spirit will always come to our aid. James 1:12 says we are to stand up under temptation because we will receive the crown of life for loving Jesus Christ.

What are some of the media evils in our society today? A few we will be discussing are Nintendo, Internet activities, books, television, and peer influences.

Nintendo has a chilling degree of violence not known until this present time. The school shootings in our country have been linked to children playing extremely violent Nintendo games. Some games have people hunting people with guns. When they are shot they fall down bleeding and land in a pool of blood. Almost every game is about shooting at something. The seemingly innocent games have the main character killing animals and strange little beings as he travels through the maze. I witness no empathy from our children regarding injury or death. Our children are lacking love, compassion, sorrow, kindness, integrity, forgiveness, and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Children get intensely involved with these games. They curse, swear, cuss, and are full of anger. I have seen children reach a level of anger that is so extremely frustrating they purposely break controls and TVs and will end up in tears because they didn't win the game! You may think your child can play Nintendo without it affecting his/her moral status but you are very wrong. We need to help our children focus on positive activities. We must keep the killing and destruction out of our children's minds (Proverbs 23:7).

The Internet is full of deadly temptations for our children. CNN made a statement that children as young as seven and eight are addicted to pornography. We as a society have a moral obligation to our young children and teens to redirect their minds to clean, pure thoughts. It is the adult's responsibility to block this media from the child.

What about Satan's magic? Are your children reading books about magic or witchcraft? These books introduce children to magic spells, satanic rituals, incantations and devil worship. The writers use religious symbols from the Bible to carry out the devil worship in the plots. These stories are intriguing for our children and in the context the writer hides devil worship. There are web sites for children to go to so they can learn more about magic and how to perform magic spells and satanic rituals. There are books at Christian book stores for adults to read to learn and understand the truth regarding the evil in magic.

The new craze for kids on TV is all the shows involving magic. There are many programs now that feature the occult. Not just the teens but extremely young children are hooked on this witchcraft. Parents don't realize the danger involved if children start experimenting with the occult. Ecclesiastes 8:8 says Satan won't give you up! There is no release from wickedness except through Jesus Christ. You need to ask God to release your child from Satan's grip (Job 4:8, Proverbs 17:5, Galatians 6:7-8).

Children are their own worst enemy. Sadly, the cool kids are not always a positive influence for other children. Peer pressure is so great many children feel forced to do things and go places where they don't feel comfortable. Smoking is becoming so popular statistics show more children are addicted now than ever before in history. The nicotine is stronger than ever before in cigarettes and experts say anyone smoking today will most likely never be able to stop (CNN).

Teen pregnancy is out of control in our high schools today. A friend of mine is a senior in high school. She is very excited to graduate so she doesn't have to be around the immorality. The pregnant girls brag about being in their condition and/or situation in life. If they aren't pregnant they have a child. They wear short tops and low waist pants proudly exposing their bellies while pregnant. The girls that aren't pregnant say they wish they were pregnant. She says it is the "in" thing to be pregnant. It is interesting to bring up the fact that these children belong to all ethnic, moral and financial groups in our society. We need to realize these are problems and we need to find solutions. These solutions have to start at home and in the church. We have to instill the love of Jesus Christ into our children.

Kids have abundant energy and need activities to keep them busy. We need to find churches that provide social activities on a regular basis. Keeping kids busy with wholesome fun outweighs the alternative of where they might spend their time. When I was a child I vividly remember the many functions our church held for members and guests. We played volleyball in a school gym in our community, we played table games and ate popcorn and apples, we went swimming in the lake near our church, we gathered canned goods for Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets for those who wouldn't have had a nice dinner on the holidays. We had so much fun going door to door asking for food donations. We had a special club for the older children. This club did so many fun things. We learned arts and crafts, woodworking, Bible memory work, cooking, how to tie knots, swimming lessons and much more. We went on camping trips to the mountains, lakes and ocean in the summer. We had the most fascinating parties. It was wonderful fun. We just need to take time for our kids.

Satan pulls us into his web and spins the fibers of this evil world around us so fast, we have no chance of being released without Divine intervention. We have a choice to follow good or evil. Innocence is being hunted but we have wonderful promises from God that He will give us peace and wisdom as we study the Bible and guide our children to Him.

Chapter Three

The World Is Full Of Evil

Man was created in God's image. Man was given the choice of good and evil from the beginning of his existence (Genesis 2 and 3). It has always been a fight between good and evil in this world. Will man prevail against evil?

In our desperate fight for eternal life, we are not fighting against flesh and blood (2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 6:12). We are up against a force so powerful we may lose the battle of good versus evil if we are not prepared. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness (1 John 5:19). We must have the power of God in our life so strong we are not afraid when evil tries to steal our life. Satan tries to blind the minds of those who don't believe so they won't know the wonderful gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan wants to steal the word of God out of our hearts so we won't believe in God. Satan wants to take our happiness, health, wealth, family, respect, honor and peace that all comes from knowing and loving Jesus Christ (Luke 8:11-12).

1 Peter 5:8 says, Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 2 Corinthians 11:14 says for self gain Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. He will stop at nothing to cause us to lose our salvation.

Satan's purpose is to destroy the people on earth. He will carry out his plan through many methods. He has been lying to us since the moment he told Adam and Eve they wouldn't die when they ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but instead they would become gods (Genesis 3:3-7). He is a liar, deceiver, prince of devils, enemy and prince of this world who wants your soul (Genesis 3:4, Matthew 9:34, Matthew 13:37-45, John 14:30, 1 John 2:22).

James 2:19 says the devils believe and tremble knowing there is one God. This should explain a lot about the fact they know their fate and will do anything to take us with them. We are told in James 4:7 to resist the devil and he will flee from us. This is wonderfully encouraging because we know we have God's help to get through our trials. Evil will not be able to penetrate our soul if we have a stronghold in Jesus.

CNN, FOX, MSNBC, etc. have stated there are terrorist cells in sixty (60) nations, including the U.S., ready to destroy and kill. John 8:44 says Satan is their father. Numbers 35:16-31 states murderers should be put to death. Revelation 21:8 says murderers will go to the lake of fire.

The Bible offers so much hope through all this turmoil. There won't be any reward for the evil people because their lives will be snuffed out (Proverbs 24:20). The story of the rich man and Lazarus tells us when we die and have not given our heart to God we go to hell. It seems to be a very horrible experience for the rich man. He begs Abraham to send Lazarus to put a drop of water on his tongue because he is so hot and dry. But Abraham told the rich man that Lazarus couldn't go there because he was reaping his reward for all the bad things that happened to him while on earth (Luke 16:19-31). Where do we want our soul to go to? Satan will try to steal our soul but Jesus will save our soul if we follow Him. 1 John 4:4 says greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Psalm 34:7 explains how the angels of God protect and deliver the believers. We need to have a pure heart to gain spiritual maturity. God will protect us from whatever danger we may innocently be around. With God on our side, we will prevail against evil.

Chapter Four

The Recent Tragedies

It is sad that it takes a tragedy for God to get our attention! The 9-11 tragedies left us feeling helpless and defeated. We witnessed God's intervention by allowing several other flights to somehow be detained or diverted. These other airplanes were headed for various destinations of destruction in the U.S. and around the world. God only allowed the evil to go just far enough to give us a huge wake up call.

Jesus knows when our hearts are breaking and He puts our tears in a very special bottle (Psalm 56:8). 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 says we are to be everyone's servant. The emergency crews and others at ground zero have been an inspiration for all of us. Their perseverance has kept us humble and determined to focus on the future. Nehemiah 8:8-11 states the joy of the Lord is our strength. When we give ourselves we are happy and content. We need to keep helping those around us wherever we are located. We need to have compassion for our fellow humans. We need to show kindness to others no matter what the nationality or situation (2 Samuel 9:1-13, Proverbs 25:21-22, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Matthew 19:19, John 15:12-17, Romans 12:9-12, Galatians 6:2, 1 Peter 2:17, 1 John 2:10).

To be in the power of God we must be in servitude to humanity. 1 Peter 5:5 says in everything be humble because we are to help one another and if we are humble God will give us grace. We need to be humble and in awe of God's power and love (1 John 1:8-10). Jesus is our humble example to follow throughout our life. (Philippians 2:4-11). It is impossible to live a Godly life if we aren't humble (Proverbs 15:33, Proverbs 18:12, Proverbs 22:4, Luke 14:11, Luke 18:14, Acts 20:19, Colossians 3:12). The changes we face are going to be impossible unless we recognize our need for resolution through God.

We think we can solve every problem that comes our way. Then suddenly out of the unknown we are hit with something so profound we are literally in shock. We absolutely can't get a grip on reality. We are stunned! Life blends doubt and fear with all odds being against us. Emotions attempt to take over common sense. We need to let go of what lies behind and focus on the future. Psalm 94:12-13 says God gives us power to stay calm in adversity. Proverbs 15:15 says we will have a glad heart regardless of our circumstances.

Americans will never forget the old way of life when we could trust and have confidence in each other. We are all frightened and understand we are forever more living a new and foreign life in our own country. We will always be looking over our shoulder for suspicious actions or wondering if we are safe in public and private venues. We must remember God is in control and will give us protection, peace and joy through our sorrow (Psalm 34:7, Matthew 28:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, 2 Thessalonians 11:14-15, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 4:1-4, Revelation 12:9).

Chapter Five

A Time For God's Healing Touch

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted (Matthew 5:4). He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Isaiah 40:29-31). Our nation is trying to heal from the tragedies of September eleventh. We need to be kind, considerate, respectful and show love toward one another (Galatians 5:14, James 2:8).

Love was the theme of Jesus' entire ministry. Love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 19:19, John 15:12-17). Christ forgives us and we need to have a forgiving heart with those around us (Luke 6:37, Colosians 3:12-14). We must look for ways to return good for evil. Forgiveness has to be our way of life. We must grasp Jesus' hand and never let go or we will always be defeated by Satan. Thank God for loving, molding, making, disciplining and leading us. It has to be our lifelong theme to love others and treat them with respect. Choose to forgive. 1 John 4:8 says God is all about love. If we truly have God in us others will see the effects of His love through us.

Ephesians 3:17-21 explains that we can not begin to understand the fullness of God's love. The love He has surpasses all knowledge we understand (Philippians 4:4-8). The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us because of our ignorance (Romans 8:26-27).

Webster' s Dictionary defines love as the following:

- love:** 1a (1): strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties
1a (3): affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests
1b: an assurance of love
2: warm attachment, enthusiasm, or devotion
3a: the object of attachment, devotion, or admiration
3b: a beloved person
4a: unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another
4 (1): the fatherly concern of God for man
4 (2): brotherly concern for others
4b: a person' s adoration of God

Understand what Christ has done for you. The act of sacrificing His life for us on the cross is the extreme example of love. Death on the cross was a very harsh and cruel punishment. Don' t underestimate what God can do in your life. He will give you clear direction. Matthew 11:28-30 states He gives us rest and refreshes our soul. He wants the best for us (Philippians 4:19, James 4:10).

When we do it God' s way, we never lose. We have to give Him pure devotions (2 Corinthians 11:3). We must choose in our spirit to do everything God' s way. We can' t get through life on our own. We need Him and He wants to help us. He is constantly searching for those whom He can show His Divine protection (2 Chronicles 16:9).

When we are in trouble, He doesn' t send someone else to take care of us. He shows up Himself. God will never leave us to be alone and face our problems by ourselves (2 Samuel 14:14, Isaiah 56:1, John 1:16-17, Romans 6:14-23, Hebrews 5:8-10). Nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37).

Webster' s Dictionary defines compassion as: bear, suffer, patient, sympathetic, consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it. What a perfect picture of our Lord. He assumes full responsibility when we surrender to Him. He desires the best for you. He banishes the fear in our life. We are under His protection. Isaiah 41:10 says God is with us and He will strengthen us.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John describe Jesus' life here on earth. His was a life full of compassion and love for others. The trials He went through are teaching tools for us. We need to look to Jesus for our example. His is the

only life we need to imitate. While on earth, He went about His Father's mission. He helped everyone around Him. In John 20:30-31 it states He did much more than what was written in the Bible. John 21:25 says the world couldn't hold all the books regarding His ministry if they had been written. That tells us He did everything he could to make life better for those who came to Him. God wants us to be kind and loving to others. We must have understanding and love for everyone in every circumstance. There are many ways we can help others.

Jesus healed the sick. We can visit the sick and help them by the simple things in life. We might clean house, wash clothes, prepare meals and run errands for them. Helping them in any way will encourage them and bring happiness to their day. We can visit nursing homes. The elderly enjoy having visitors and dote on the attention. Families of the elderly often fail to visit their loved ones in the nursing homes.

Jesus healed the oppressed. We can follow His example and help those here on earth who have been oppressed by Satan. We need to be about our Father's mission and help those around us who are thirsting and hungering for His Word. He fed their spiritual hunger. We can feed those around us. The most important mission is to feed them the Word of God. We can do this by simply reading to them or studying with them. Our desire should be to give everyone a chance to know Him so they can become His child and have a chance for eternal life. This is the one and only direction for happiness and satisfaction in life.

Jesus raised the dead. We can help those hurting and suffering from loss through a death or those on their death beds. Losing someone close to you is a difficult trial to go through. It takes years to mentally work through the anger, hurt and need for understanding after someone close to you dies. We need to reach out to these people through love and compassion. We can study, talk, spend time with them and show them what the Bible states regarding death. Encourage and give them hope through Jesus Christ.

Jesus loved the little children. He sometimes put adults needs aside so He could raise from the dead, heal, bless and commune with the little ones. He told those around Him how important the children were to Him. We can help children. There are so many single parent families needing help. This is such an important work for God. There are so many things we can do to help give these children a happier more fulfilled life. Taking them to church, to the park, to the movies, to the zoo, etc. is a place to start. If you are blessed financially, you could help with their need for food, clothing, school supplies or a musical instrument. Just spending time with a child makes the difference

between a sad or happy day.

Jesus cast out demons from those oppressed by Satan. Removing their chains of bondage gave them new life. We can help those who are depressed and oppressed by Satan. People need our support through time spent with them. Most depression comes from a tragic event in our lives or just being alone in life. Rising above this is not easy. It takes a very strong person in Jesus Christ to have the bonds of Satan removed. Mental depression is very real and has a devastating control over your entire being. You feel as though you are being sucked under the water's surface and you can't pull yourself up. We can do things with these people to stimulate their minds and help fill in what would be time alone. Sacrificing our time for others gives us joy beyond our dreams. We need to teach them what God says about depression and oppression.

Everywhere people are hurting, lonely, tired, in pain, needing Jesus' love, feeling helpless, feeling as though they have no control over their life. We need the gentle calming of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We need to feel the soothing, warm love of the Holy Spirit spread through our entire being. We need to want to be basking in Christ's love. Our only chance for happiness is knowing Jesus and depending on Him for everything in life.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John 14:26-27). For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end (Jeremiah 29:11).

Chapter Six

Our Nation 's Future

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance (Psalm 33:12). God will give grace and glory to those who walk in righteousness. They will have every good thing (Psalm 84:11). On 9-11-01 a horrific act of terror on our sovereign land stunned our nation and much of the world. Proverbs 24:10 says if we allow ourselves to be weak our strength will be small. Righteousness empowers a nation but sin will discredit it (Proverbs 14:34).

I am so thankful for our Christian President to lead us through a time like this. President Bush says he studies the Bible and prays every morning and throughout the day. God chose Mr. Bush to be our president for this very time in the history of our country because He knew Mr. Bush would be a God fearing man to carry out the needs of our nation. Psalm 37:23 says the steps of a good man are ordered by God. 2 Chronicles 20:15 tells of the spirit of God coming on Jahaziel while the people were assembled together and through the prophet came the words of God telling them the battle was not their' s but God' s.

Jeremiah 29:11 says God has a good plan for us. We need to pray for wisdom for our leaders in everything they attempt to accomplish (Psalm 119:133). Our present goal is to show ourselves strong in Jesus Christ to the world. The meaning of E. Pluribus Unum is very fascinating. E. Pluribus means out of many and Unum means one. We migrated from many directions to the U.S. but once we are a citizen we are one nation under God. We are Americans and very proud to serve our country in any capacity.

Proverbs 27:1 says we don' t know what will happen tomorrow so don' t be boastful. We are living in a permanent unfamiliar time that will forever be a part of our existence. Psalm 46:1-2 says God is our help in times of trouble. We as a nation desperately need His help now because we are hated by many because of our Christianity and freedom.

Webster' s Dictionary defines fear as the following:

- fear:** a: an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger
b(1): an insistence of this emotion
2: anxious concern: solitude
3: profound reverence and awe especially toward God
4: reason for alarm: DANGER

We need to talk to God about our fears so we can confront them. Fear is the negative "what if" that often comes to thought. Fear is harassing, oppressing, tormenting and destructive. We have to ask God to give us faith to conquer our fears putting our faith to work. We need to turn fear into evangelism for God. Every time Satan puts thoughts of fear, hate, anger, anxiety or hurt in our mind we need to immediately ask God to take out those thoughts. We need to start praising Him and telling Him how much we love and need Him. While doing this we realize the fright is gone and we are happy. Your mind will be filled with love and reassurance knowing the battle is God' s (2 Chronicles 20:15). The evil demons get tired of it and they will be bothering you a lot less with terrorizing thoughts.

The closer we are to God the quicker we will get past Satan' s snares. Fear comes from Satan. We need to attack fear with God' s love and positive thoughts. We must develop an intimate relationship with God and it will be a buffer for everything negative that comes our way. Once we conquer fear we will be able to concentrate on helping out in our communities. John 13:35 says to have love for each other. There is so much need for volunteer work in our communities. Call your favorite charitable organization or churches in your area and find out how you might be a much needed help. The more we can do for our nation, the more confident our nation will become. The more confident we become as a nation we will witness the power of God guiding our leaders and guarding the people.

Our nation faces more diabolical horrors. We have to be prepared with faith in God to get us through these horrific times. We may have warfare bringing horrible diseases. Many theologians including the pope believe we are living in the end time. This may very well be true. Don' t panic over this but rejoice and let that feeling of excitement take you for a joyous ride. We have God' s promise of never leaving us. He saved Noah through it; Lot was taken out of it; the nation of Israel was removed from it; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo were saved through it; Daniel was saved through it; Jonah was saved through it. When the Great Tribulation Hour arrives God has promised

to be our protector. There are many verses in the Bible giving us this assurance (Jeremiah 30:7, Zephaniah 2:2-3, Luke 21:36, Romans 5:9, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Revelation 3:10).

2 Thessalonians 2:7 says the Christians are the light that keeps Satan from taking over. We will be taken out before the antichrist comes to solve the world's problems. We are in the time where the stage is being set for the Great Tribulation Hour. Every nation on earth will come under the one world government of the antichrist. The Vatican stated the one world church is set up and ready to function by 2005. God's protection is over us now and will be until the meeting in the clouds. Many comforting verses tell us we aren't meant for wrath and that we will be taken out before the terrible times come to pass.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever (Daniel 12:1-3). 2 Corinthians 4:18 says to keep a spiritual vigilance on eternal things.

Following God takes time. We need to be willing to set aside time for daily family devotions. Read from the Bible and teach the stories to your children. Teach them the love of Jesus. Teach them to pray from the heart. Teach them what faith truly is and how it makes a difference in our lives every single day. The joy and peace that comes through knowing God is very intense and once you have it you will never be the same (Colossians 3:1-2). We need to continue to strive for spiritual maturity. Genesis 32:24-29 tells of Jacob wrestling with God. Before Jacob would release his hold he asked for a blessing and God gave the blessing. We need to use this example and ask God for His blessings to come to us. He is waiting for your call. We want to be blessed as a God fearing nation chosen for the inheritance He has prepared for us.

Chapter Seven

The Harsh Judge

We know how harsh God was on the Israelites in the old testament. They never understood God loved them and wanted to take care of them making them powerful. Time after time they saw the awesome power of God's love and protection, yet they refused to follow Him in the manner He demanded of them.

Genesis 22 tells the story of God giving Abraham a test. Abraham realized that God was the judge and He wouldn't do anything wrong. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son, therefore, he passed the test and God provided the ram.

The story of Ananias and Saphira is a sobering reminder of God's violent judgement (Acts 5:1-11). He doesn't tolerate disobedience (Leviticus 26:28, Deuteronomy 8:5, Job 5:17). To God disobedience isn't an option. We will obey or suffer the consequences of our sins (Proverbs 15:10).

Webster's Dictionary defines harsh and judge as the following:

harsh:

- 2 a: causing a disagreeable or painful sensory reaction: IRRITATING
- 2 b: physically discomforting: PAINFUL
- 3: unduly exacting: SEVERE

judge:

- 1: to form an opinion about through careful weighing of evidence and testing of premises
- 2: to sit in judgement on : TRY
- 3: to determine or pronounce after inquiry and deliberation
- 4: GOVERN; RULE
- 5: to form an estimate or evaluation of
- 6: to hold as an opinion: GUESS, THINK.

Romans 1 describes how man chooses to deny the truth. A Christian needs only to read the Bible for an answer to every question. We must praise God and thank Him every day for opening up His Holy Word to us and giving us understanding. He should be first and foremost in our lives. He reveals

Himself to us through passages in the Bible. We need to read, meditate and listen for the whispering thunder of his voice (Job 26:14). We need to be bowed before the great white throne praising Him every time we have an opportunity (Revelation 20:11). Proverbs 3:5-6 says trust in the Lord with all our heart and don't try to understand in our way of thinking and He will lead our every step in life.

The Ten Commandments are a must to live by (Matthew 19, John 15, Romans 12). We are conscious of sin through the Ten Commandments (Romans 3:20). The law is what teaches us right from wrong. It teaches moralistic attitudes. God wants us to live by the law so we can be happy living a life centered around Christ (Deuteronomy 6:2, Deuteronomy 32:46-47, Psalm 119:92). If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full (John 15:10-11). He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him (John 14:21).

How harsh of a judge will Jesus be? The Bible makes it very clear that we are going to be judged by our actions and deeds. We are going to be harshly judged. Revelation 3:16 states God is going to spit them out of his mouth because they are lukewarm. There are only two sides. Those of us riding the fence have to decide if we are going to represent Jesus Christ or Satan.

Matthew 25:1-12 tells the parable of the ten virgins. This story should be enough to frighten us into becoming Bible scholars. The five wise virgins knew they were getting through the door to the wedding celebration. The five foolish virgins thought they were getting through the door to the wedding celebration. The five foolish virgins didn't have enough oil. The door was shut and when they had their oil it was too late. The bridegroom said he didn't know them and didn't allow them into the feast. The oil represents the Word of God. How serious are we about studying and knowing **Believers Instructions Before Leaving Earth**? God is going to be a harsh judge!

The world is heading to a time period known as the Great Tribulation Hour. This is a time so horrific those going through it are going to wish they could die but they won't be able to (Revelation 9:6). There is going to be a judgement period of seven years during which everyone on earth will have to put up with only evil in the world. 1 Timothy 4:1 says in the end times people will leave the faith and follow the teaching of seductive spirits and the doctrines of Satan. We are told there will be a delusion so strong and convincing that people won't even question what is happening (Isaiah 66:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). Whatever this is the people have to be used to it and think of it as a common part of everyday life. Have you noticed how witchcraft is becoming extremely popular? I believe this is part of the strong delusion coming to those who don't love God (2 Thessalonians 2:11). We know the one world government and one world church are in the close future. By this we know the time of the end is close. Witchcraft is reaching our children through the sitcoms on TV, movies and books. Harry Potter has a following larger than witchcraft has had in history. Witchcraft and devil worship are very popular around the world. Revelation 13:13-14 says the antichrist will do great wonders and makes fire come down from heaven. He deceives everyone by miracles. The antichrist will do great wonders and marvels. I believe witchcraft mania is preparing people for this time in history.

The Great Tribulation is a time of judgement upon the world that no one is going to want to go through. We need to know what is going on so we can be ready when the Bridegroom comes. We need to help others find their way to Jesus Christ. We are His vessels and He uses us to spread the gospel (2 Timothy 2:19-21, Revelation 2:26-28). John 21:15-20 tells us to feed His sheep. John 15:16 says if you are bearing fruit and need God's help, ask Him for whatever you need and He will provide it for you. We need to always be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:17-19, Ephesians 5:18-20).

Matthew 24:1-51 tells us to recognize the signs leading to the meeting in the clouds. We will know the end is near because it will be like the time of Noah. 2 Peter 2:5 says Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Genesis 6:13 says God's decision to destroy all flesh was because of unbelief. Man had corrupted the earth. Matthew 24:32-35 says we will know the approximate time just as when the fig tree puts on its leaves we know summer is near. So when we see signs of the end we know His coming is soon. We need to be ready with His praises on our lips. We know the time is close to His meeting us in the clouds. We know He is going to be a very harsh judge. Will we be ready when He calls?

Philippians 3:20 says our conversation is in heaven where we look for the Saviour. We need to keep our thoughts on Christ so evil can't edge its way into our thoughts and actions. We need to pray that we will be worthy to be taken when He comes to get us for the wedding and the wedding supper. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man (Luke 21:36).

Chapter Eight

Heaven Will Soon Be Our Home

Romans 8:23 says we wait eagerly for His return and that we groan inwardly with excitement. The meeting in the clouds will be soon and how my soul is truly joyful and excited at the thought.

Philippians 3:21 explains our vile bodies will be changed to be like Christ's glorious body. 1 Corinthians 15:50 says flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom. But we will be changed in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52). Romans 8 describes how we are creatures needing delivered from sin and corruption. It says we will be children of God waiting to be adopted by Christ.

God's gift to us is to live contentedly with happiness being our allotted part in life (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20). The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy (Romans 14:17). The kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit, the meek, those who hunger for Christ, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers and those persecuted for being righteous. Our reward is in heaven waiting for us because we have stood up against Satan (Matthew 5:3-12).

Revelation 21 and 22 explain a little of what heaven will be like. We are told that God will dwell with us and we are His people. God is going to take all tears away. There won't be death, sorrow, pain or any of the problems people face on earth. God says He is going to make all things new. In heaven there won't be unbelievers, cursing, swearing, cussing, fear, murderers, prostitution, pimps, witchcraft, idolaters, liars, cheaters, abusers, abominations or anything that will defile. Isaiah 65:17 says we won't remember the past. We will rejoice and be happy.

The twelve (12) gates of the Holy City will have written on them the names of the twelve (12) tribes of the children of Israel. The wall of the city will have written in the twelve (12) foundations the names of the twelve (12) apostles of Jesus. The twelve (12) gates are made of pearl. The city street will be transparent gold. There will be a pure river of water of life that will be crystal clear proceeding out of the throne of God. The walls of the city will be made of jasper. The twelve (12) foundations will be:

- 1 jasper
- 2 sapphire
- 3 chalcedony
- 4 emerald
- 5 sardonyx
- 6 sardius
- 7 chrysolite
- 8 beryl
- 9 topaz
- 10 chrysoprasus
- 11 jacinth
- 12 amethyst

The tree of life will bare twelve kinds of fruit and have fruit every month. Its leaves will be for healing all people in every nation of the world. The sun won't be needed when we are in heaven because the glory of Jesus will light it.

We will dwell together in unity and receive blessings from God (Psalm 133:1-3). We will praise Him in His courts and sing to Him (Psalms: 108, 135, 137, 138, 144, 145, 146, 147, 149; Revelation 5:9, Revelation 15:3). We will never be spiritually thirsty or hungry. Whoever drinks the water of Christ shall never thirst but God will give him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:13-14, John 6:35, John 7:37, Revelation 7:16).

The Holy City or The New Jerusalem will be breathtaking. Once we see it we will never be the same. In Acts 14:19-20 after being stoned to death Paul went to heaven. He was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words which man couldn't talk about because of the glory. He was astonished at what he saw (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). This lets us know we are going to be in awe of God and the heavenly kingdom He has prepared for us. 1 Corinthians says we can't even imagine the things God has prepared for us.

Jeremiah 10:10 says the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king. Proverbs 10:25 says as a whirlwind passes so is the

wicked no more but righteousness is everlasting. Verse 30 says the righteous shall never be removed but the wicked won't inhabit the new earth. This is a wonderful promise of happiness and peace. We can **Believe In Beautiful Life Everlasting**.

Philippians 2:10 says at hearing the name of Jesus every knee should bow that is in heaven, earth and under the earth. Now we understand only part of the Bible and the Trinity. In heaven when we are face to face with Jesus He will teach us everything about the Bible, Himself, His Father, His kingdom and the future (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Revelation 3:12 says if we reject evil and go to heaven we are pillars in the temple of God. Matthew 5:12 states our reward is righteousness. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 makes it very clear if we don't know God and obey his Holy Word, we will have the ultimate punishment. This punishment is unthinkable. It is banishment from the presence of Jesus Christ and the glory of His power. 1 Corinthians 4:20 says the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. He will come for us in love with the spirit of meekness. We need to be waiting with inward excitement and uncontrollable joy constantly praising Him and bowing before the emerald throne. We want to be ready when the bridegroom arrives. We will then know hope has survived.