

A LIFE TO OVERCOME

PROLOGUE

It is declared:

"Behold, He is coming with clouds and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen!"

Just then Michael, the archangel, excitedly replies,

"The trumpet blows! It is time! The kingdom of heaven is ready!"

After six thousand years, the long and difficult course of human history has unfolded. This occurrence has always been God's perfect plan of redemption since the fall of man --- that for 6,000 years, He would prepare a race of king-priests who would fulfill the final destiny of man's purpose -- to rule and reign with Christ Jesus. The Truth is finally revealed and Satan's lie exposed. It is now time for the final accounting of all believers in heaven. For the next seven years, those left behind on earth will go through the greatest Tribulation of all time, such as never before. And then the one thousand year reign of Christ will begin.

"We have been preparing for this moment for thousands of years,"

says one of the seven angels.

"We have constructed the great city according to the Messiah's instructions."

"And what a magnificent city it is!"

says Michael.

"The King Himself specified every detail for the arrival of His bride. What joy He has for those servants who will qualify to reign with Him!"

Suddenly there is a sound that reaches from one end of the world to the other, like the rush of a great wind. The graves open and millions of bodies rise from the dead, all those who are in Christ, to meet the Lord in the air. Then, in a twinkling of an eye, millions of living believers disappear from the face of the earth and appear in the sky following the raised bodies to meet the Lord in the air. The hour has come for all believers to stand before the Judge, at the Judgment seat of Christ, to be tested on all of their works, whether good or bad. The test of works will determine where they will be placed in heaven, either inside the kingdom with Christ or outside the kingdom without Christ for one thousand years. Time has run out and there is no more room for repentance.

No going back.....it's too late.

Michael gazes at the multitudes of people surrounding the city square. The angels reflect brilliant lights, shining in all directions as they play beautiful music and sing,

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

Then a loud voice speaks, as the sound of a trumpet, of One clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair is white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire. His feet are like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. He has on His right hand side a multitude of angels and His countenance is like the sun shining in its strength. And when anyone sees Him, there is much fear, and many fall to the floor as if dead.

The court is seated and books are opened. The Judge is ready to commence, for the hour of judgment has come. One by one the vast



RAPTURE of the Church (above) to the
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST (below)



multitudes are summoned to the Judge's throne. As a person steps up to the platform to be judged, no one except that person and Christ can hear the conversation. How amazing it is to be standing before the King! Yet, how fearful it must be to be judged before the Son of God! One's entire past life on earth will be revealed, including every secret thing. The fire will test everyone's work and then each will receive his verdict.

A man walks up before the Christ. His life had been wasted, centered on the lusts of the flesh and of the world. He had become a Christian at the early age of thirty, but never matured in Christ nor followed the path of righteousness. He had been led by the world and his flesh, trying to become rich and spending the rest of his time in leisure and entertainment. His friends were the same, except one, who invited him often to Bible study and to serve God. But he always refused his invitation. The world of discipleship seemed too difficult and he was not willing to sacrifice his enjoyment of life. He had attended the Church regularly with his wife and family, but his heart was never focused on God. Instead of laying up treasures in heaven, he had chosen to lay up treasures on earth. Bible study was boring, and his prayer life was nonexistent.

"Come closer, servant of Mine,"

thunders the voice from the throne. His face brilliantly shines like the sun and His eyes like a flame of fire, with a serious look and not a glimpse of a smile.

"Yes Lord, I....I...."

The man is speechless. All his excuses to postpone becoming committed to Christ no longer mattered. It is too late now. He reminisces about all the opportunities he had in his life to be a good servant, but chose not to. The world always seemed more attractive. He thought of God's gifts to him throughout his lifetime, a spiritual Christian wife who truly modeled the Christian walk and taught their children the Word of God. He never joined with his family in desiring a true spiritual relationship with Christ. He was a Christian, but he did not know or love God.

"Servant of Mine,"

thunders the King, interrupting his thoughts,

"I warned you often that there is nothing covered that will not be revealed; nothing hidden that will not be known. I know your works and I know your heart. You chose not to heed My call, you did not love Me with all your heart, soul and mind, and you chose not to confess your sins, even though I loved you and died for you. You chose not to watch for Me, therefore I have come upon you now as a thief and there is no room for repentance. Through the test of fire, I have not found your works perfect before God."

"Lord, I am so sorry!"

he cries, realizing the consequence he would now have to face.

Lifting His head upward, Christ Jesus then says,

"Father, I bring this servant of Mine before You. He has denied Me by his life on earth, and now I deny him before You. He will not enter the kingdom of heaven as one of my servant king-priests. He has lost his inheritance!"

Then, with a powerful voice that echoes loudly in the heavenly throne room, the King rebukes the unfaithful servant,

"Depart from Me, you wicked and lazy servant!"

"Please N-o-o-o-o!"

he screams and falls on his knees. But the angels come, bind his hands and feet, and cast him into outer darkness, where he begins to weep and gnash his teeth in utter regret. Then the angels enter back in and lock the gates.



Outer Darkness

(Non-overcomers [Christians] found unworthy to enter the kingdom; they will have lost their soul for 1000 years)

The next man whose name is Jacob is summoned before the Judgment seat. His legs tremble before the King and his eyes display tears of fear, joy and amazement.

"Come, servant of Mine,"

says the King, who is now gleaming with delight and with a voice of compassion. With fear and a hopeful expectation, the humble man gets up and walks closer to the throne.

"My God! How *great* You are! Praise and honor and glory to you Lord. I love you with all my heart!"

Jacob had been a faithful steward of the Word for forty years. His passion and delight in life was in serving God. He took God's Word very seriously and committed his life to it, allowing the Spirit to use him in ways to glorify God and spread His Word. God used Jacob as a powerful witness to His plans and purposes. Jacob suffered greatly throughout his life with poverty, sickness and attacks from Satan. But Jacob kept the faith and persevered. His humble and holy countenance reflected his Christian walk, and his sufferings made him even stronger in the faith.

Because Jacob was diligent to seek the truth of His Word, God gave him knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom. By faith, Jacob ran the race with strength all of his life, having the hope of His return and of entering His rest. Jacob devoted his ministry in spreading the kingdom message, speaking of Christ's imminent return.

And once, when an unfaithful Christian was provoked by Jacob's trials, pains and suffering in order to doubt the gospel of the kingdom, Jacob joyfully responded,

"Could it be that God allowed all of these trials and tribulations so that I would have the privilege of telling you and others that by faith in God we are able to deal with any tragedy, knowing that He is with us and will reward us?"

Yet Christians rejected his message of Jesus' return and the kingdom to come. Rather, they believed the false teachers because they were

considered great seminary scholars who taught that the kingdom is already here. But Jacob responded, "If you open your ears and eyes to God's Word and not man's word, then the truth will set you free. Lay aside all teachings from man and start anew from the Spirit of truth." Truly, Jacob was an overcomer.

And as he stands at a distance before his Judge, he suddenly falls on his knees as if dead.

Once again the Judge summons Jacob,

"Do not be afraid. Come here, servant of Mine."

Jacob walks up to the throne. He is short of breath and his legs are weak, overwhelmed by the presence of the Lord.

"Jacob,"

says the Judge,

"I know your heart and I know your works. You bring me delight for fulfilling the purpose I have designed for your life. You have been faithful in a few things. I will now make you ruler over many."

The Judge continues,

"Thank you for giving me food and drink when I needed it."

Jacob replies,

"But Lord, when did I ever give you food and drink?"

The Judge answers,

"Do you remember when you ministered the milk and meat of My Word to the poor in spirit in the prisons? Do you remember when you gave your tithing to your fellow ministries and churches?

Do you remember all those people, young and old and especially the widows whom you gave wise counsel and love, attending to their needs? Do you remember going to the hospital and ministering to the sick? You let your light so shine before men that they saw your good works, and glorified your Father in heaven. Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."

Jacob's life, now put to the test, produces quiet yet exuberant joyfulness that Christ is pleased with him.

Jacob replies,

"Thank you, Lord, but I have only done my duty as Your servant."

Then the Judge proclaims,

"Because you have honored Me on earth, I will honor you in heaven. Your new name will be 'Brave Heart' and I will give you a white stone with this new name written on it that no one except you will know. You have been brave in faith in the midst of personal difficulty. You have fought a good fight. You have kept the faith. You have now finished your course. You have longed for My return. You have earned the crown of righteousness, the crown of life and the crown of rejoicing. The crown of righteousness will be given to you because you have kept the faith, the crown of life will be given because you have endured temptation, and the crown of rejoicing will be given because you eagerly hoped for My return. Enter into My rest and into the kingdom of the heavens."

With joy in His eyes the King announces to His faithful servant,

"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord. You will now inherit the kingdom."

Meanwhile, many left behind on earth are terror-stricken as their loved ones vanish before their eyes. Some blame the occurrence on space aliens. Others claim mother-nature as the culprit. Still others blame the incident on a world-wide attack from radicals. Yet, in the midst of global chaos, many do not realize that this was the rapture of the Church and that Jesus Christ had returned. But soon every created being that is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them will be heard saying:

"Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"

Soon after the seven year tribulation has come to a close, Christ will return with His angels and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. It will be then that all of the tribes of Israel will mourn because of Him. And every individual on earth will at some point in time have to face the Lord's judgment.

Two of the angels walk towards Jacob and escort him into the gates of the Kingdom to await the wedding ceremony, the marriage feast of the Lamb. His spiritual body has become enswathed in glory, incorruptible and immortal. His garments are white as snow, reflecting purity and righteousness. What a glorious day it is for Jacob! The Day of the Lord has come!

(The above presentation will be continued in Chapter 3)



BRIDE OF CHRIST

(Overcomers [Christians] found worthy to rule and reign with Christ for 1000 years)

What if we are raptured today? Would we be prepared to face our Lord Jesus Christ? Would we be prepared to show our good works and faithful stewardship before Him?

It is evident in the Scriptures that we do not have much time before the Son of God returns for His bride. The reenactment just given of the rapture and Judgment seat of Christ is a similar picture of what will soon take place. If we are not prepared, we will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven for one thousand years. Satan has succeeded in twisting and hiding the truth of Christ's return and the coming kingdom since the fall of man. The manner in which he has accomplished this deception within the Church was by placing false teachers to corrupt the Word. Satan's goal is to derail the lives of all Christians. And his purpose for doing this is because he realizes his end is near and he does not want to surrender his rule over the earth.

Regardless, the Scriptures confirm that each of us will one day face an accounting for the stewardship with which we have been entrusted. For those who have been faithful to their Lord throughout life, it will be a day of rejoicing and of reward. However, a different fate awaits those Christians who have failed to persevere, who have not remained faithful to their Lord and Savior. There can be no greater tragedy than to hear the words, "*too late.*" They will have lost their inheritance and will not be able enter the kingdom of heaven or rule and reign with Christ Jesus.

I challenge you today, whether you are a babe in Christ or a minister of the Word, to open up your heart to what the writer is about to disclose. The purpose of our journey is to prepare us for what is to come, and we can only do this by our own will and choice. Let us begin with the foundation, which is Jesus Christ, and allow the Spirit to guide us into all Truth. God has a purpose for you, which is why He gave His Son to die for you.

Would you like to know what God's purpose is for you?