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Steven's Amazing Adventures, and the **Future** of the **World**

(**A Story about the End Times**
with Messages from God)

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(This story chronicles the adventures of *Steven O'Neill*, his wife *Sarah*, and their friends during the End Times. Judgment has already struck the U.S., and Steve and his friends have reached the vast continent of Asia. Witness the amazing things God will reveal about the coming kingdom of **the Beast** (or **the Antichrist**), the **Mark of the Beast**, and the **Tribulation period**. This story should keep you fascinated, as a realistic account of the future unfolds in the form of a fictional story.

But, this story is **not just a story**. It contains messages from God and prophecies that actually shall happen. It is written as fiction with fictional characters, but the message of the story is **very real**, and the cataclysmic events, touched on in this story, will actually impact this earth as God's Holy Bible and its prophecies unfold. The world will soon enter a time much like that portrayed in this story. I encourage you to seek God about this to see what He will show you.)

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Since this story is not a short story, I have broken it into two parts. You can print the whole story by clicking on the first part. Once you are there, select the "File" option. On the drop down list, click "Print". You can do the same for the second part on Google Docs.

Here are the sections on Google Docs:

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Chapter Thirty-Two

"Cartel Attack"

"Cartel Attack"

Blam! Blam! Blam! ... 'Odin,' a drug cartel member, fired off another six shots from his *9mm Ruger* pistol until his magazine was empty. All seven rounds were fired toward Steven O'Neill's chest from just inches away. As the gangster emptied his clip, the bullet casings bounced off the concrete patio and some rolled off into the grass below. But, Steve remained standing in his front door, unaffected by the gunshots, except for the fact that he was closing his eyes and clenching his teeth. After the last shot was fired, Steve opened his eyes and felt his heart pounding in his chest. [[Read Chapter 31 here](#). Right click link and select "Open link in new tab."]

Adrenaline was pumping rapidly through his body and he could hear his own breathing. Though he felt fear, he also felt calmness and peace overwhelming the fear. As he looked down at his chest, he noticed it was perfectly fine. There

were no wounds or any indications that a gun had been fired at him from such a short distance. Not a single bullet had hit him, and the hot exhaust gas from the gun muzzle had miraculously not touched his shirt.

There was no natural explanation why he was still alive and unharmed. Also, amazingly, his ears were not ringing or feeling any damage from the loud gunshots.

The would-be assassin back up, with his mouth wide open, in shock. His two, armed henchmen were likewise stunned by the miracle. After a few moments of speechlessness, the criminals turned and walked away from Steve's property. They quickly hopped into a new, shiny, grey Cadillac Escalade, which was parked on the street, and drove off.

Once he was sure they were gone, Steve turned back into his house and shut the door, locking it. His knees felt a little wobbly, but that quickly faded, and he felt strength return to his body.

"I was praying for you the whole time," Jason said as Steve entered the living room. "God protected you! You don't have a scratch!"

"That was really amazing. Praise God!" Steve said before exhaling, releasing his stress.

"You really did well," Jason said, patting his friend on the back. "That was God's Spirit guiding you and protecting you. I am certain you had warrior angels keeping those bullets from hitting you and the muzzle blast from singeing you."

"My ears aren't even ringing," Steve said.

As he spoke, Steve still felt his heart beating fast, but he gave his fears to God, and then turned back to his wife and Jason.

"Steve, are you okay?" Sarah said with concern on her face. "What happened? I couldn't exactly see what you were doing. I was afraid you might have been injured or even...."

"I'm perfectly fine," Steve said. Then, he recounted the whole experience and all that was said. When he arrived at the part about the gunshots, he said, "Then, the crook fired off his whole clip at me from just a couple inches away, but not a single shot hit me, as you can see."

"Praise God!" Sarah said with tears in her eyes as she looked upward. "Thank you Abba God for saving my husband. I almost lost him. I almost lost my Steve."

"I have a feeling those crooks might be coming back or others in their gang might come here, so we need to seek God what to do," Steve said. "Excuse me. I think I'll go into the basement."

He walked toward a door in the side of the living room not far from the front door. Opening it, he descended stairs leading into the basement.

"I'll seek God in my bedroom," Sarah said to Jason as she walked into a hallway adjoining the living room. At the end of the hallway, she slipped through a door and closed it behind her.

Jason remained standing in Steve's living room and quietly sought God.

About thirty minutes later, the door to the basement stairway opened and Steve entered the living room. Jason turned to face Steve and saw his friend looking at him with an expression of peace and great joy.

"What did God tell you about my situation?" Steve said.

"What did God tell you, Steve?" Jason said.

Steve cleared his throat and said, "Abba God told me that three days from now, He will translate us to a certain place in Russia, and will lead us to a group of Christians. He promised to provide for all our needs for the rest of our lives. And, he said you are coming with me and Sarah."

"That is wonderful," Jason said. "I heard God telling me that as well."

"Praise God," Steve said, smiling, as he thought about God's promises being fulfilled in his life. 'Thank you for taking care of me and for protecting me, Abba God,' Steve said silently to God, without moving his lips.

The door at the end of the hallway opened, and Sarah emerged. She walked briskly down the hallway, wearing a smile on her face. Once she was in the living room, she said, "Steve, God showed me that we are going to Russia, and that Jason is going with us. He told me it will be by way of a miracle that He

brings us there. I assume God was speaking of translating us like He did with Philip from Acts 8, like Jason told us about."

"That is what God told both of us too," Steve said, glancing at Jason.

"Praise God for His provision and love!" Sarah said, again lifting her eyes to heaven.

"Steve, Sarah," Jason said. "I just now heard God telling me that He would like me to have you stay at my house."

"But, won't God protect us here?" Steve said.

"He certainly can," Jason said, "but I feel that your house is a place He is moving you from so that you won't be emotionally attached to this area. And, I just moved into my house about a month ago."

"Let me seek God about this," Steve said before walking toward his spare bedroom. He closed the door behind him and sought God for several minutes. Finally, satisfied with what he was hearing, Steve left the bedroom and returned to his wife and Jason.

Steve said, "God is showing me that Sarah and I need to pack up some belongings and purchase some cold weather clothing today. He gave me a list of some items we would need."

"A Conversation About God, in the Jungle"

Hopping from branch to branch in nearby *sea fig* tree, a brightly colored *Mrs. Gould's sunbird* curiously stared down at the five Asian men walking on the rainforest floor below. It was a bright, sunny day, and sunlight streamed through gaps in the dense jungle canopy and caused upper leaves to change from a dark green shade to a light green shade. Furry macaques climbed through the branches of a *maprang* tree fifty feet away, searching for and greedily devouring *maprang* fruit and bugs.

Hu Zheng, a young Chinese man, looked up at the colorful *Mrs. Gould's sunbird* and noticed its brilliant, purple head; red upper body; and yellow belly. It was nice to see one of God's creatures in all its colorful splendor. After a few moments of watching the dazzling bird perched in the tree, Hu returned his attention to his new friends.

"What were you looking at?" Sheng said walking beside him, and still wearing a Chinese army combat uniform.

"Oh, it was just a colorful bird," Hu said.

Some days had passed since Sheng, a newly born-again, former Chinese soldier, had first met Hu, Quang, and Cheng. Hu, Quang, and Cheng had been traveling through the jungle for several days and had encountered Chinese soldiers seeking to either kill or capture them, but God had protected and defended them miraculously. *[Read about that in [Chapter 18](#).]*

"You like birds, don't you?" Sheng said.

Hu Zheng, a 24-year-old, from Yunnan Province, China, met Cheng Yuan while traveling through the Yunnan jungle of southern China. He had fled from his parents and relatives when his aunt and uncle had pressured him to give up his faith, and his aunt had threatened to turn him into the authorities, which she later did. But, God had miraculously delivered him, nonetheless. *[Read about Hu in [Chapter 13](#).]*

Cheng was a 42-year-old married man who had left his wife and children behind because she was not willing to leave China and be counted as a Christian. Later, both Hu and Cheng ran into Quang, while traveling south toward Mainland Southeast Asia.

"Yes," Hu replied to Sheng's question. "Songbirds and colorful birds remind me of God's love for music and beauty."

While Hu walked down the trail, he liked to observe wildlife. Suddenly, Hu's head turned to the right. Rapid movement came from the branches of a nearby *grey ebony* tree, catching his attention. It was some kind of bird fluttering its wings—Hu couldn't tell what kind it was. Then, a *green imperial pigeon* hopped off a branch and rapidly beat the air with its wings, flying overhead. Moments later, it vanished behind a dense network of leafy branches.

Hu chuckled to himself and said, "That bird was afraid of us, but he could see we are on the ground."

Nguyen Duc Quang, whose given name is Quang, was a 44-year-old Vietnamese man who had been sent by God to meet and escort Christians through the jungles of Southeast Asia. He was a calm and soft-spoken man who had great courage and faith, like Hu. He walked directly in front of Hu and talked with Cheng, who also was a man in his forties.

After escaping from Chinese troops, who had been consumed by fire from heaven, Hu, Quang, and Cheng had encountered a 24-year-old Chinese soldier, named Sheng. Instead of threatening them, Sheng had wanted to know the God of the Christians, the God who had destroyed his wicked comrades, who were very hardened against God and His ways, like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Hu and his friends had witnessed to Sheng and showed him from the Bible the truth about Jesus that his country had forbidden people to learn about, and the young soldier had put his trust in Jesus for salvation. After becoming a follower of Jesus, Sheng had many questions to ask Hu, and the young Chinese men had many discussions about Jesus and the Old Testament men and women of faith.

"Speaking of birds... Hu, you mentioned the other day about how Noah had sent out a dove from the ark," Sheng said, looking at his friend, "but it returned to him because the water was still too high for Noah and his family to leave the safety of the boat."

"That is right," Hu said, remembering a conversation about the flood of Noah they had had a couple days earlier.

"Why did the raven leave the ark, but the dove remained longer?" Sheng said.

"The raven is a scavenger bird and could eat carcasses, but the dove wouldn't touch such things. After the flood, there may have been carcasses of some animals, such as dead fish, floating on the water," Hu said. "God has shown me that the raven is symbolic of the devil and people who rebelliously go after sin. Sin is like rotten meat. If properly disguised, it may look okay to eat, but once you bite into it, you will get sick and vomit. God wants us to forsake all sin and look to Him alone to meet all our needs."

"That is an interesting analogy God gave you," Sheng said.

They walked a little further and then he said, "Hu, what exactly is sin?"

"Sin is going against what you know is right to do," Hu said. "It is also going against God's Ten Commandments, which he gave to Moses, a Hebrew man who wrote a number of books of the Bible."

"What is a commandment that you would consider the most important of all the ten?" Sheng said, looking at his friend's face with some concern.

"Jesus taught us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength," Hu replied. "And, He taught us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. He said that there is no commandment greater than those two. That is from [Mark 12:29-31](#)."

"What if I don't keep all those commandments? What if I sin against God?" Sheng said with some apprehension in his voice.

Hu thought of the fire falling from the sky through the trees and consuming Sheng's very hardened, fellow soldiers. 'That event must have terrified Sheng. He must be somewhat scared of God,' Hu thought. 'Sheng needs to know that God only destroys those who will not repent, and who will not ever choose to turn away from their rebellion against God.'

"When we sin against God...," Hu said. "The Bible tells us in [1 John 1:9](#) that if we confess our sins to God, He will cleanse the sins from us and make us whole. [1 John 1:7](#), just a couple verses above that one, tells us that if we walk in the light, we will have fellowship with Abba God, and Jesus Christ's blood will cleanse us from all sin."

"What does it meant to walk in the light?" Sheng said.

"Meditate on God's Word and obey it, keeping the truth found in Galatians chapters 3 and 4 in mind," Hu said. The book of Galatians shows how we are **not** required to fulfill all the laws related to feast days, sacrificial laws, and other such things. We only need to keep God's moral laws, the Ten Commandments."

"Hmm. That's interesting," Sheng said as he pushed a low-hanging, leafy branch out of his path.

"There is nothing to be afraid of if we desire to walk in fellowship with God," Hu said. "When we sin, we can confess it to God, repent or turn from it, and He will forgive us. Now, God **doesn't** want us to tell ourselves, 'I can sin now and then confess it later' because that is **not** true repentance. That is false works and it is honoring God with our mouths, but putting our hearts far from Him and from His ways.*" [** Jesus spoke about that in [Mark 7:6-8](#).*]

"How do we live a life where we are having fellowship with God, or Abba God?" Sheng said.

"Meditating on God's word; talking and listening to God's still, small voice; and desiring to know Him intimately or deeply are essential to know God well."

"How do I talk to God and listen to Him?" Sheng asked as he brushed a fly off his face.

"Start by meditating on God's word, the Bible, and asking Him questions about it," Hu said. "Meditating on God's word is thinking about it and having a conversation with God about His scripture and promises. Only God can show us the truth from His word that He wants us to know. And, Jesus Christ told us that the Holy Spirit, who is the voice of the Father God, will speak to us and guide us into all truth."

"Do you remember what verse that was in?" Sheng said.

"That is [John 16:13-14](#). I remember it now. It says: '[13] Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. [14] He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.'"

"Does the word '*speak*' actually mean that God talks to us?" Sheng said.

"Yes," Hu said. "The [original word](#), translated as ***speak***, means to utter words with one's mouth, or to speak. So Abba God literally speaks to us, and we can hear Him if we seek Him and desire to hear His voice. And, this is not work. It is just a desire to hear God that opens our ears to hear His voice. And, we know that God will **never** change His scriptures or contradict His scriptures because He set His Holy Word, the Bible, above all His **name**.*" [** See [Psalm 138:2](#).*]

"That is encouraging. I want to hear God's voice," Sheng said eagerly. "It really is awesome how God actually wants to speak to us personally."

"And, He wants us to be very close friends with Him and receive His great, deep, unchanging love because we are His sons, by adoption,*" Hu said, smiling.

[* See [Galatians 4:6-7](#) and [John 16:27](#). The word for "loveth" in [John 16:27](#) is **phileo**. It is God's affectionate, longing, tender love which speaks of God's desire to kiss and embrace us as His sons and daughters.]

"Steve and Sarah Look at the News, and Are Shocked."

Steve and Sarah were sitting before their computer in the living room of their small, two-bedroom house in Cincinnati, Ohio. Half an hour ago, Jason had left to return to his home, since the shooting, which took place several blocks down the street, had completely stopped. They had all agreed that it was likely that the SWAT team outside the apartment building, where the two shooters were located in, had broken into the building and taken out or arrested the shooters.

Now, the couple was scrolling down a list of current news articles. One caught both of their attention. Sarah, who was holding the computer mouse, stopped scrolling and gasped.

"A pastor was arrested for preaching about Jesus in a sermon! That is ridiculous," Sarah said, surprised.

"The article is titled, 'Pastor Arrested for Preaching Hate Speech in His Church'," Steve said from beside Sarah. "That is crazy."

Sarah clicked on the article and, once it opened, both she and her husband slowly read through paragraphs detailing the arrest of a pastor who had preached on salvation through Jesus Christ at the church he was pasturing. He had preached that Jesus was the only way to salvation, just as the Bible teaches.

But, the news article said this “incendiary” and “provocative” speech is what got him in trouble with the law when some visitors reported his conduct and speech to the police. The visitors had said that the pastor was “violently and angrily” slapping his hand on the pulpit as he emotionally and emphatically spoke of the judgment of the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

After he had set forth how they were burned to ashes because of their great wickedness, the pastor had said: “Those of you who are living in sin, unless you repented, you shall all likewise perish. Turn to Jesus and forsake your rebellion, for God is looking at your hearts.”

The article stated that many people were offended when they read the text of the “incendiary” sermon, which was posted on social media websites. But, according to the article, many Christians were petitioning their representatives and senators to put a stop to the new hate-speech laws. The article also stated that the pastor was in custody, waiting for an impending trial, and that his lawyer had refused to make any comments.

After finishing it, Steve said, “This reminds me of the time when five pastors were arrested for refusing to preach in favor of an unbiblical definition of ‘marriage’. They were imprisoned, and their churches were fined millions of dollars.”

“You’re right,” Sarah said. “We’re seeing more and more persecution against preachers and influential Christians than ever before, but persecution against other Christians is also intensifying. You remember when one Christian family had their children taken from them because the parents home-schooled their children and refused to have them go to public school?”

“That’s right,” Steve said. “I also remembered that the parents were then both placed in prison and given five-year sentences.”

“God told us that these things would happen, but it is a little shocking to see it actually happen,” Sarah said.

“And, you remember how God had told us that Russia and China will both invade the U.S.A.?” Steve said.

“I remember that,” Sarah said. “What about it?”

"Well, after God had told us that, we saw articles about Russia taking Crimea, and then we later saw articles showing the buildup of tanks and troops in Europe. Well, just recently, I saw an article about more U.S. and Canadian tanks and troops being sent to Europe. Many people are concerned that we could go to war with Russia in Europe, but God has shown us that the war will hit the U.S. mainland first."

"I think you might have mentioned that article to me," Sarah said. "But, the war with Russia will cause much destruction to happen to our country."

"That's right. It will be devastating," Steve said. "Sadly, millions of people will die overnight. Millions more will be out of food and water. And, millions of others will die from disease, chemical attacks, and biological attacks from Russia and China. But, this comes, sadly, because most people in this country are unwilling to repent and turn to God."

"That is very sobering," Sarah said, getting very serious. Her eyes were starting to water. Rivulets began running down her face.

"What's wrong, honey?" Steve said, placing a hand on his wife's back.

"I tried telling my relatives..." Sarah said, with deep sorrow, after some moments had passed. "I told friends... I told my parents about these prophecies, but none of them believed me. They thought I was foolish to listen to prophecies, and called it 'foolishness.'*" [* See [1 Corinthians 1:27-28.](#)]

Steve reached over and rubbed his wife's back, and gently drew her closer. And, she began to weep, placing her hands over her mouth as tears flowed down her face.

"I told the wife of our former pastor about these prophecies," Sarah said as she cried, "but she didn't want to hear them. She said that I should just put those thoughts from my mind, but I can't because I see what is happening in our nation. I see what is happening in our country. Some people are beginning to wake up, but most are asleep to the evil that is coming and that is already here. Most are asleep to the fact that this country is being judged, and that the Church has not done what Jesus has desired it to do. It has instead become lukewarm and worldly."

Chapter Thirty-Three

"Winter Chase in Siberia"

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A blue *Yamaha Sidewinder* snowmobile tore through the snow, racing past pine trees in a Siberian forest. The cold air tugged at Sergey's brown, leather ushanka, which was fastened under his brown-bearded chin. The sky was darkening to dusk as Sergey drove his snowmobile through the forest which bordered Medvedski, Russia.* Speckles of snow were beginning to fall, which turned into little, fluttering, ice stars that sparkled in his headlights.

[* *This is a fictional town in Siberia.*]

Fifty yards behind him raced a grey, treaded utility vehicle (UTV) with a 4-person transport trailer attached behind it. The UTV had a small, two-seater cab with a short flatbed behind it, and resembled a *Honda Pioneer* UTV. In place of tires, this all-wheel-drive vehicle had four treads, which gave it excellent traction in deep snow.

Both vehicles zipped around trees and bushes, and avoided logs and rocks, as they reached speeds up to 38 miles per hour. The loud buzzing drone of their engines kept them from hearing the engines of four snowmobiles and two, large, communist Russian army *CHETRA TM-140* all-terrain trucks, which were partially loaded with Russian soldiers, who were in hot pursuit of Sergey and his friends. The Russians were some distance behind Sergey and his friends.

Four people sat in the UTV trailer, gripping onto steel handlebars, on either side of the trailer, as if their lives depended on it. All four, and the two drivers, wore thick winter coats, gloves, and either leather or fabric ushankas.* [**A ushanka is a winter hat with long ear flaps popular in Russia.*]

"Alexei, I hope that Sergey knows where to go," Sarah said to a red-bearded man who was sitting in a seat in front of her.

She and her husband, Steve, were sitting in the two rear seats of the snowmobile trailer, and Alexei and Jason occupied the front seats. Sergey had constructed the trailer years ago using a blacksmith shop he had rented in another part of Medvedski.

Being a blacksmith by trade, the burly, bearded Russian had skillfully produced a metal frame and had fasten wooden boards to it to form a bed for hauling stuff during the winter. He had removed the skis from two of his old, junked snowmobiles, which he had fastened to the bottom of the hand-made trailer so it could travel smoothly through the snow.

Driving the grey UTV, which they were being pulled by, was a new follower of Jesus named Ivan, who had a brown mustache and wore a thick, blue parka and a brown ushanka. When not doing other things, Ivan was often seen reading the text of the Bible on a computer tablet. After hearing Sergey preach in the Russian village of Medvedski, Ivan had had a thirst to know Jesus Christ and to read the Holy Scriptures. After Sergey had asked people he was preaching to if they wanted to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, Ivan had chosen to dedicate his life to Jesus and had trusted in Him for salvation. *[Read about Sergey preaching in Medvedski and being harassed in **chapter 28**.]*

Sergey's blue *Sidewinder* hit a large clump of snow-covered dirt, which jolted him and sent the snowmobile two feet into the air before it landed with a bump and suddenly swerved wildly. Ivan watched Sergey's snowmobile slow to a complete stop. 'What's wrong with Sergey's snowmobile?' Ivan wondered as he slowed the UTV to five mph.

"Sergey, are you okay?" Ivan called out to his friend as he slowed the UTV

The thick-bearded Russian turned around and hollered back, "I'm fine. I just hit a rough spot and landed on a patch of ice."

Then, Sergey accelerated forward, and quickly reached a speed of 37 mph. Once Sergey picked up speed, Ivan accelerated the machine and continued zigzagging through the woodland, avoiding bushes, rotting logs, trees, and rocks.

Shortly after their street evangelism in Medvedski, Sergey and his friends began teaching the new believers from the Bible and explaining to them more about God and His ways. Alexei (a red-bearded Russian), Jason (a normally clean-shaven man), Steve (who had a short, brown beard), and Sarah (Steve's wife) stayed for a week in Sergey's two-story house before trouble was stirred up by some of the locals, and the Russian military began to take action. One night, God had spoken to Sergey in a dream, showing him that Russian soldiers were going to enter Medvedski and attempt to capture or kill him.

God had shown Sergey that it was time for him and his friends to leave and travel to the small village of Gryaznov, located 100 miles (or about 160 kilometers) from Medvedski, as the crow flies. He would have to travel through a practically untamed forest because the only road connecting the two towns was going to be watched by Russian soldiers. [* This is a fictional village, but it is a real Russian surname.]*

A few more minutes passes before Sergey spotted a large hill rising out of the relatively flat ground. Covered with trees and bushes, it offered a perfect place to find concealment from communist Russian troops, in Sergey's mind. Sergey steered his *Yamaha Sidewinder* toward the densely wooded, somewhat steep hill, and the grey ATV followed. Hopefully, the Russians pursuing him through the forest, on tracked winter vehicles, would not be able to spot him and his company among the snow-caked bushes and trees, which covered this particular hill.

When God had showed Sergey to leave, he had packed some gear into rucksacks, with the help of his five friends, and had put them on two winter vehicles. To make sure he had plenty of fuel, Sergey had attached some petrol (or gasoline) containers to his blue Yamaha Sidewinder. Being an enterprising

handyman, he had modified a snowmobile utility trailer (which he had built years earlier) to carry his friends in.

Sergey had visited an abandoned factory building, which was overgrown with pine trees and weeds. There he had found some old cars which were slowly rusting away. He had removed four front seats from the cars and had bolted them to the 11-by-5.5-foot trailer bed. On the day they left for the woods, Sergey and his friends had loaded the trailer with some supplies and equipment they would need, such as backpacks and sleeping bags.

Three days after the day that God had told them to prepare to leave, the group had set off into the forest, but had soon lost their way. Sergey had been confident that he knew the best route to the nearby village of Gryaznov, but his confidence had been shattered when he realized that he was taking the group in circles through the forest.

That same day, about an hour later, they had realized they were completely lost. The group had begun seeking God regarding what way to go. After a couple minutes had passed since they had started seeking God, Alexei had told them that God had given him the answer and had shown him to simply follow God's voice as they drove. They didn't need any map because God would guide them.

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Now, Sergey's blue *Yamaha Sidewinder* began climbing the densely wooded hill he had set his eyes on just moments ago. Spitting out showers of snow behind its rubber tracks, the snowmobile cut a path up the hill and squeezed between some snow-laden bushes. The grey utility vehicle (UTV) with Sergey's friends followed in his wake.

A male *Oriental cuckoo* leaped from a branch and took off flying as Sergey's machine approached its tree. As he climbed the hill, Sergey noticed an unusual sound coming from down the hill behind him. He turned his head to gaze back down the slope below but Sergey couldn't make out what the source of the strange sound was.

Suddenly, in the area below the base of the hill, tearing through the snow, a white snowmobile, carrying two Russian soldiers, came into view between the trees. The charging vehicle rapidly approached the tracked UTV, which was just

starting to climb the base of the hill. And, the rearmost soldier on the white snowmobile was preparing to fire his *AK-74M* at Sergey's friends.

Worse still, the UTV was having a little trouble climbing the hill, due to weight of the four people in the trailer, and was moving slower than Sergey wanted it to. It would be an easy target for the communist soldiers. Sergey knew God had the power to stop bullets, but fear attacked him, nonetheless. He wondered if God would truly protect his friends now.

As Sergey's snowmobile passed through a cluster of snow-coated evergreen bushes, he flinched as he saw what lay ahead of him. Up the hill a little ways, another snowmobile with two Russian soldiers had just emerged from a dense stand of bushes, and the rearmost soldier was training his machine gun at Sergey's torso. This new threat was blocking his path ahead, and the Russians near the base of the hill were cutting off retreat from his friends in the UTV. Sergey and his friends were now caught in a trap for which there was no human way out, seeing they were unarmed and alone.

That's when Sergey stopped the *Yamaha Sidewinder* and began to pray like he hadn't prayed before. He had seen God do miracles, but now he felt fear attack him strongly. A thought began to pester him like a pesky insect: 'Will God actually deliver me now? Or, will God abandon me now?'

"Dear God, Abba Father, please deliver us like you did those other times. May we, your children, see your power at work again to rescue us from this dire situation," Sergey prayed silently while his heart throbbed in his ears.

"Stop where you are and raise your hands now!" The rearmost Russian soldier in the snowmobile (up the hill) shouted at him. He was menacingly training his gun on Sergey.

Sergey raised his hands in the air and continued praying silently.

The soldier barked at him: "Stand up and leave your snowmobile!"

Sergey stood up and walked away from the snowmobile.

Behind him, the grey UTV with his friends stopped, and Sergey heard the soldier behind them shouting for them to raise their hands and slowly stand up.

At the base of the hill, Ivan reluctantly opened the door of the UTV cab and stepped into the snow. His winter boots sunk in a couple inches. The snow was too deep for him to attempt running away, but Ivan knew that was not an option. He wouldn't leave his new Christian friends, even if he could safely escape the conundrum they now were facing.

The four people in the trailer stood up and stepped out into the snow, wondering what God would do to answer their prayers. The UTV engine was still idling, sending up small clouds of vapor into the winter air. A couple rucksacks occupied the passenger seat, and more luggage was strapped to the small flatbed behind the UTV cab, but none of it was useful now.

The Russian soldier on the rear of the snowmobile hopped off and kept his gun trained on the small group before him. He was dressed in a white camouflage uniform and was equipped with a communication headset and four grenades.

"Dear Abba Father God," Steve prayed quietly, "we need you to do a miracle like you did for us when the Chinese soldiers were seeking to destroy us. Or, do something else to deliver us, I pray. Let your name be glorified."

"My son, Steve," Abba God said, "command that his gun will jam in Jesus Christ's Name."

"Should I speak loudly?" Steve said quietly as he kept his eyes on the AK-74M in the soldier's hands.

"Yes, My son," God said.

Then, Steve gave his fears to God and stepped forward. With boldness that he knew was from God, Steve said firmly in Russian, "In Jesus Christ's almighty name, I command that your gun will jam and will not be able to fire."

Ivan looked toward Steve, startled. 'What is Steve doing?' Ivan thought. 'Does he want to get us killed?'

Sarah closed her eyes and prayed silently.

The Russian soldier stared coldly at Steve and then began to chuckle. "You think that Jesus will save you from your fate?" the soldier said mockingly. "I'm guarding you until my comrades come to take you away to a prison camp. There, you will learn why your beliefs are foolish."

Just then, Steve heard a droning hum come through the trees behind him. He turned to see a *CHETRA TM-140* tracked, all-terrain truck, with winter camouflage, churning through the snow and snapping fallen branches as if they were toothpicks. Behind a wide control cab, it had a large box-like enclosure for protecting soldiers or equipment from the weather. The big machine somewhat resembled a tank, and its approach seemed foreboding.

"My son," Abba God said to Steve, "get back on the snowmobile.* You may drive it. But, have the others get onto the snowmobile, for I will do a miracle in your midst. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken."

[The grey UTV is a type of snowmobile since it has treads for handling snow.]*

"Thank you, Abba Father," Steve said silently. "I choose to believe you."

Then, Steve said to his friends, "Everyone, God showed me He is going to work a mighty miracle. Let's get back on the UTV trailer."

"You are a fool. I will shoot you if you move or try to escape," the soldier said.

"In the name of Jesus Christ, I command your gun to jam," Steve said. "And, in Jesus Christ's name, I have authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt me. Luke 10:19."

"God showed you something," Sarah said.

"He did," Steve said as he hurried toward the idling UTV.

The Russian soldier pointed his gun at Steve and pulled the trigger. But, the gun didn't fire. It was jammed. The soldier angrily tried cycling the bolt and attempted to get it un-jammed.

Steve was now seated in the UTV cab. He revved the engine and his friends hopped onto the trailer behind him. The other soldier got off the snowmobile and whipped out his machine gun, which was slung across his back on a sling. Aiming, he pulled the trigger, but his gun also jammed.

Furious, he tried to cycle his bolt, but the grey UTV, with the hand-made trailer, began to move and churn up the snow. It didn't move far before Steve realized

that the weight of his passengers would prevent it from going up the hill that rapidly. 'What do I do now?' he thought. The lowest gear didn't help.

He glanced back at the two Russians behind him. They were cursing and trying to un-jam their guns. Then, Steve turned his head forward and looked up the hill to a white opening in the trees where Sergey's blue snowmobile was parked. A Russian snowmobile was blocking Sergey's path and a Russian soldier was slowly walking toward Sergey. The soldier's snowmobile was idling a short distance away.

"Sergey, come down to me," Steve shouted with cupped hands. "God is protecting us."

Sergey had been distracted by a Russian soldier who was slowly approaching him. But, as Steve called out to him from the base of the hill, Sergey turned in his snowmobile and saw that Steve and his friends were a short distance from where the Russian soldiers had stopped them. To his surprise, Steve was starting to drive off, heading toward more level ground some distance away from the hill.

The Russian soldiers in the snowmobile at the base of the hill were working with their AK-74Ms, trying to get them to un-jam. 'That is strange,' Sergey thought. 'God must have caused their guns to lock up.'

"What should I do, Father God?" Sergey said quietly.

"Follow your friend," came God's gentle reply.

With that, Sergey revved his engine and applied the throttle. The soldier, who was slowly approaching him on foot, cried out in anger as Sergey took off.

"Stop!" the soldier shouted as he raised his rifle to a shooting position.

Now, Sergey's blue *Yamaha Sidewinder* was moving. The Russian soldiers just a short distance up the hill both took aim and pulled their gun triggers, but like the other soldiers below, these also found that their guns were jammed.

Sergey accelerated his machine to 20 mph and roared off toward the bottom of the hill, on a course away from the Russian soldiers who were threatening Steve. Sergey could see his friends on the grey UTV making a beeline through the trees in the forest below the hill.

As Sergey raced to reach them, his snowmobile hit a large, snow-covered object and was catapulted four feet into the air. The snowmobile landed hard onto snow-covered ice, and swerved. To keep his vehicle stable, Sergey increased his throttle a little and steered the machine on a zigzagging course through the trees near the base of the hill.

Soon, he was on level ground and the hill he had driven down now rose up to his left. While he was preoccupied with driving and zigzagging, Sergey didn't notice a large *CHETRA TM-140* all-terrain truck lurking behind a thick stand of pine trees a short distance from the base of the hill.

As Sergey headed across flat ground in the direction his friends had driven, the large, tracked vehicle suddenly roared out in front of him, from behind the stand of trees, and blocked his path. The forest on either side of him was fairly dense with bushes and closely spaced pine trees. So, there was no escape to the immediate right or the left. Sergey glanced back. Right behind him, the two snowmobiles he and his friends had escaped were fast approaching him.

Ahead of him, doors in the rear of the large, tracked truck flew open and Russian soldiers poured out. As soon as they hit the ground, they aimed their machine guns at Sergey. The roar of the pursuing snowmobiles was buzzing through the air and getting louder. Sergey turned his head around and saw that now not two, but four military snowmobiles were closing in on him. Two *new* Russian snowmobiles had joined their friends.

And *another CHETRA TM-140* was following in their wake. 'Where did those come from?' Sergey wondered as he spotted the second *CHETRA*. It seemed that he only had a couple moments to make a decision where to go. Again, the forest on either side of him did not look very open or promising for an escape, since fallen trees, densely packed trees, and thick bushes formed obstacles on the left and right hand, just ten yards ahead.

"Abba Father, what do I do?" Sergey said.

"Go up the hill, My son. I will protect you," God's kind voice said to Sergey's soul and spirit.

Not waiting a second longer, Sergey turned to the left, toward the slope of the hill, and toward the general direction he had come from. He throttled his engine and accelerated, tearing up the snow with his thick, rubber tread. Bushes and

trees raced past him at 40 mph. He had to duck to avoid low branches, which could hit him in the head.

Russian soldiers in the rear seats of two of the closest approaching snowmobiles opened fire. ***Rat-tat-tat!*** Bursts of machine gun bullets erupted from their muzzles, but since aiming them was a bit tricky, none of the shots hit Sergey. As Sergey began to climb the same hill again, the closest snowmobile closed the distance to just twenty-five feet, and the soldier at the rear took aim with a steady hand, and fired. ***Rat-tat-tat!***

Plunk. Plunk. Plunk. It was the sound of metal and plastic being hit by bullets, and it came from behind Sergey, causing him to shudder. He glanced at his machine and noticed bullet holes in the rear end of the running board near the snow flap, which was just above the wide snowmobile track. 'That's not good,' Sergey thought.

"Dear God, I'm trusting you to protect me and to keep this machine running," Sergey said as he increased his speed to fifty miles per hour.

Rat-tat-tat! A machine gun sent a wall of bullets toward Sergey, but not one of them hit him as he raced through the snow, zigzagging up the hill. The slope of the hill was now at a 30% grade. (Every 100 feet traveled in the horizontal plane equaled thirty feet of elevation.)

The Russians, who had come from the forest below the hill, were on his tail now and were rapidly climbing the hill, trying to flank him. One was trying to reach his left side and the other was just twenty feet from his snow flap.

Rat-tat-tat! An AK-74M roared from behind him and echoed through the forest, causing Sergey to flinch. Again, no bullets hit him, even though he knew they naturally should have. Then, the snowmobile to his left side gained speed and ran almost parallel to him. The rearmost soldier swung around and fired of some shots, but they again missed Sergey. Some bullets slapped into tree trunks in positions just five inches from his head.

Momentarily distracted by the snowmobile to his left, Sergey didn't see the large, wide stump of a dead tree poking up seven feet through the snow, until it was too late. In a fraction of a second, his snowmobile closed the distance to the large, threatening stump and was about to crash into the solid wood at a speed of 45 miles per hour.* There was no time to think. There was no time to pray. 'This is it Sergey. You're history,' a thought came to him.

[* 72 kilometers per hour]

Before he could say "Mississippi," the bark of the large stump filled his vision, and Sergey closed his eyes. But, instead of hitting the solid tree trunk at 72 km/h, Sergey found himself still seated on his snowmobile and tearing up the hill. He blinked and slowed his vehicle to a stop, breathing hard and hearing his heart pound in his chest. He should be dead right now. What was happening? He turned around in his seat and looked back.

The large stump was behind him a number of yards down the slope and, strangely, his snowmobile tracks traveled up from the base of the stump on the side facing uphill. On the downhill side of the slope, behind the stump, his tracks continued. 'This is bizarre,' Sergey thought, amazed. 'Am I dreaming? Crashing into a tree stump at 72 km/h should kill me.' It seemed that he had passed through the solid tree stump as if it were made of air.

"Did you see what just happened?" a Russian soldier driving the snowmobile to Sergey's left said to his comrade. They were 25 feet from Sergey and had come to a stop, having seen a miracle take place.

"He went right through that stump like a ghost going through a wall," the man on the seat behind him said. "He must be stopped."

Then, the soldier took aim at Sergey with his automatic rifle.

Before he pulled the trigger, Sergey throttled his engine and roared off up the hill.

Rat-tat-tat! The AK-74M poured out another blast of deadly rounds but an invisible barrier kept them from hitting Sergey as he made his escape. The bullets just stopped in mid-flight and dropped straight down into the snow, plunging into the white powder.

A loud crack suddenly cut through the air as a large, dead tree suddenly snapped in half and fell to the ground, supernaturally fast, pounding into the snow with enough force to shake the snow off nearby tree branches. It seemed as if invisible giants – angels – had broken the large, dead tree and shoved it over with great force. It now formed a barrier between the Russians army snowmobiles and Sergey, who was racing up the hill on the other side of this new barrier. Dense bushes and younger pines on either side of the fallen tree

made it impossible for the army snowmobiles to go around the fallen, woody pillar.

Before fifteen seconds had passed, Sergey was gone from view behind a dense cluster of young pine trees. Three of the Russian soldiers cursed their failure to capture or kill the escaping Christians, but the fourth one kept staring at the stump Sergey had miraculously passed through and began to have second thoughts about non-conformist Christians and their God.

As the soldier thought about this, the two civilian winter vehicles, separated by some distance, continued charging through the Siberian forest, heading toward the location God was guiding them to by His Spirit. Before long, night would fall on the woodland and vicious wolf packs would come out to hunt. But, the Russian soldiers had orders to hunt down and either capture or kill the non-conformist Christians. And, the soldiers were determined that they would obey their orders.

"Continued Pursuit"

Steven, in the driver's seat of the grey utility vehicle (UTV), was faced with more challenges to his faith and to his life as he zigzagged through a Siberian forest miles from the town of Medvedski, Russia. While Sergey was being pursued by two snowmobiles up a hill, Steven, and those in the trailer behind the UTV, were being pursued by two other snowmobiles and two CHETRA TM-140 tracked trucks, which were some distance behind the snowmobiles. These slower-moving tracked trucks were following in the woods several hundred yards back. Each CHETRA was loaded with many communist soldiers, in the troop compartment, who were itching to either arrest or kill the fleeing Christians.

The Russian army snowmobiles pursuing Steven were already surging forward at high speed and closing the distance between themselves and the grey UTV, and Steven was facing new challenges, which were greatly trying his faith.

While Steve's UTV was high-powered, tracked for handling snow, and fast, it was a little slower than its top performance speed due to the added weight of the utility trailer and the people and gear inside it. There was no way he could

outrun the snowmobiles. And, his friends in the trailer were completely exposed to machine gun fire.

"Steve, can this go any faster?" Sarah said from the trailer behind him.

"I wish it could," Steve said, "but I am going as fast as is *reasonably* possible."

"Father God, please send your angel and deliver us," Ivan said from his seat near Sarah.

The roaring drone of the approaching snowmobiles caused Steve to gulp and utter some more prayers for protection.

Rat-tat-tat...! Echoing bursts of machine gun fire caused Steve to flinch and the people in the trailer to instinctively hunch down in their seats. He heard a bullet zip past his head. A small branch on a tree ahead of him ripped off as another bullet struck it. ***Rat-tat-tat...!*** Holes suddenly appeared in trees directly ahead as the incoming bullets reached the Christians in a furious, lethal stream of metal. But, not one of the bullets hit the fleeing Christians.

Alexei turned his head back toward the pursuing communist soldiers and swallowed hard. He saw a machine gun aimed directly at him. It was in the hands of the rearmost soldier on a two-person snowmobile. Before he could blink, the gun muzzle erupted with orange exhaust as the AK-74M was fired.

Rat-tat-tat...! There was no way it could miss since it was just twenty-five feet away and the gunner was holding it steady.

But, when Alexei looked down at his torso, he didn't see any evidence he'd been shot at. He was fully intact and unharmed by the withering spray from the machine gun. 'Glory to God!' Alexei thought as he looked up toward the darkening sky and smiled.

Then, a snowmobile boldly roared up to within fifteen feet of the utility trailer. A soldier seated in the rear seat tossed a grenade into the air directly above the heads of the people in the trailer. Then, the Russian snowmobile slowed, to distance itself from them.

Alexei saw a small dark object sail over his head. A question flashed through his mind — 'What is that?' — just before the grenade exploded directly overhead — ***ka-boom!*** — , sending a deadly blast of shrapnel toward him and his friends.

The explosion echoed through the trees and caused all on the trailer to flinch and wonder if they were dead or wounded. There was no human way that they would all miss being killed or badly injured by the blast. The grenade had exploded within just a couple yards from their heads. Alexei felt over his chest and head to see if he had any wounds, knowing that adrenaline could prevent him from feeling pain. He could not find any wounds whatsoever. And, the same was true for the rest of the group.

Vroom! A snowmobile with two Russian soldiers charged forward and drove up toward Steve's right side. It avoided bushes and trees as it came to within fifteen feet of his right side. The rearmost soldier swung toward Steve with his AK-74M and aimed it at him from nearly point-blank range.

He quickly changed his magazines, loading a fresh one in seconds. Then, he cocked the gun and took aim at Steve's torso.

'There is no way that I could miss this,' the soldier thought as he moved his finger toward the trigger.

"Lord, keep that man from hitting me," Steve whispered as he drove.

Wide-eyed, Sarah placed a hand over her mouth and prayed for her husband and for all on the trailer.

As the soldier pulled the trigger, his snowmobile hit a hidden dip in the ground and the vehicle bounced violently, but the gun went off, firing several shots.

Rat-tat-tat...! None of them hit Steve and many simply hit trees high above.

Suddenly, the Russian army snowmobile began to sputter and slow, and it fell behind Steve. The driver cursed and pulled his machine to a stop while his comrades on the other snowmobile continued the chase. He looked at his fuel level and saw that it was empty. Leaving his seat, the driver crouched in the white powder beside the snowmobile. A hole appeared in the side of his gasoline tank.

He cursed and placed a finger in the hole and noticed fuel dripping from it. 'How did this get here,' the soldier thought with deep frustration. Then, it dawned on him that a bullet could have ricocheted off a rock and hit his machine. But, the chance that a bullet would hit his vehicle was extremely low to be unlikely. But, it must have happened, however unlikely.

Meanwhile, Steve continued to drive and zigzag through the forest, followed by a single snowmobile. The Russians were getting increasingly frustrated, but they were not about to give up. They had backed up and let some distance come between Steve and them.

Thick snow began to fall and wind began to blow through the trees, sending showers of snow flakes sparkling through the air, illuminated by the UTV headlights. Steve squinted to avoid getting the snow flakes in his eyes since the UTV cab had no windshield. The light was starting to get dimmer as the sun dipped lower in the sky and night was approaching fast.

Then, Steve noticed something very concerning to him. His fuel level was getting very low, according to the digital display on his instrument panel. He hadn't checked it in the heat of the chase, but now he could tell that he only had about a couple miles left before it was completely empty. Was it possible that the engine was leaking? He hoped not.

Vroom! The army snowmobile was now fast approaching from behind a thick stand of trees. The distance was closing fast as the Russians raced up to their target. Sarah turned around and looked back to see a communist soldier holding a grenade in his right hand. His face was full of frustration and hatred.

Suddenly, a huge bough snapped off a dead tree – **Crack!** – and crashed to the ground directly in front of the Russian army snowmobile. It pounded into the ground as if an invisible person (or an angel) was shoving it down faster than the speed of gravity. The bough had landed just yards behind the ATV and just feet in *front* of the communist soldiers. They didn't have time to steer out of the way or put on the breaks. Their vehicle smashed into the fallen bough at sixty miles per hour, and the soldiers were catapulted into the air, landing into deep piles of snow.

Miraculously, neither was severely injured or dead, but their prey was now gone from their grasp. Slowly and painfully, they pulled themselves out of the deep snow. One man tried to move his leg to get back to his feet, but he felt pain shoot up his spine, which caused him to wince.

Neither soldier could walk, having received back injuries from their collision with the bough. By now, the ATV they were pursuing was gone from view. Only its tracks remained in the snow as snowflakes fluttered to the ground, beginning the process of covering up the tracks. Both soldiers cursed their "bad luck," as they called it.

Five invisible, angelic beings watched them with deep sorrow, saddened to see the suffering the communist soldiers had brought upon themselves by their relentless pursuit of the escaping Christians. The angels had orders from God to protect Steve and his friends, and they were not going to allow bombs, bullets, or anything to harm the fleeing Christians, because the Christians were putting their trust in God.

Invisible demonic creatures, which lurked around the communist soldiers, continued attacking them by sticking their fingers into the souls of the men and, using technology designed by the devil and his high ranking principalities, the demonic entities began planting thoughts of revenge into the minds of these men. Since the men were unwilling to yield to God's Spirit, they began to succumb to the demonic thoughts and began to foster plans of exacting revenge on the Christians. [See "Footnote"]

'Once I am well, I will seek to kill Christians and watch them suffer,' corporal Konstantine Yerokhin, the snowmobile driver, thought to himself, not knowing he was only repeating the thoughts planted in his mind by the evil, invisible entities attacking him.

The other communist soldier, corporal Kirill Bezrukov, thought, 'I will not capture Christians anymore, even if I have orders to. I will just kill them once I find them. The more suffering they have, the better.'

Deep inside their hearts, both communist soldiers knew that God had miraculously protected the fleeing Christians. But, both men determined right then and there that they would fight the God of the non-conformist Christians and make His children suffer as much as possible.

In a short time, one of the *CHETRA TM-140* tracked trucks arrived and spotted the damaged snowmobile. It stopped, and soldiers disembarked from the troop compartment. Hearing the cries from their injured comrades, they spotted the wounded soldiers lying on the ground. Quickly, two medics carrying a stretcher emerged from the *CHETRA* troop compartment.

While they attended to the wounded, a second *CHETRA TM-140* drove past them and two snowmobiles followed. The two army snowmobiles had come from the hill where they had failed to apprehend Sergey on his *Yamaha Sidewinder* snowmobile. They had a mission and they were not going to let it completely fail.

As the daylight faded into night, the Russians activated their night optics and began searching the forest for the Christians. Sooner or later, the communists were bound to find their prey, and their resolve to kill was much stronger now, since the Christians had attempted to escape even while guns were trained on them.

*[Footnote: See **1 Peter 5:8** and **Ephesians 6:10-18.**]*

Chapter 34

■ "Surprise in the Dark" // ■ "Gunmen"

"Surprise in the Dark"

"Dear God, please keep this UTV running for as long as we need it," Steven O'Neill said as he drove a tracked grey UTV through the snow-covered ground of a dark, untamed forest many miles from the village of Medvedski in Siberia. The fuel indicator on the digital display screen revealed that he had very little fuel left.

'Could one of the bullets fired at us have hit the fuel tank? Or, does the fuel display have a glitch or an electrical problem?' Steve wondered. He was hoping it was just a glitch because his enemies were still pursuing him with the intention of killing him and those with him.

They were many miles from their destination, which was the town of Gryaznov.* Running out of fuel now was bad because it would mean they would likely have to go on foot through miles of wilderness, which was infested with hungry wolf packs and freezing temperatures. And, the communist Russian military was not far behind.

[This is a fictional village, but it is a real Russian surname.]*

Somewhat resembling a *Honda Pioneer* UTV, the tracked vehicle pulled a hand-crafted utility trailer, which contained car seats bolted to the bed. Sergey Ulanov had constructed it using his skills as a blacksmith. In the seats sat four people: Sarah O'Neill, Steve's wife; Alexei Khlebov, a red-bearded Russian; Jason Harper, a clean-shaven American; and Ivan, a mustached Russian who had recently gotten saved.

"Guys," Steve said as he turned back toward the people in the trailer, "we are running very low on fuel or we have an electrical problem. Let's pray for God to do a miracle. He's already protected us from the machine guns. So, surely He will continue to take care of us."

Even while he said those words, Steve felt some fear gripping at his heart.

Sergey Ulanov, the owner of the tracked utility vehicle (UTV), had been separated from his friends when communist Russian soldiers on snowmobiles had suddenly appeared out of the forest in pursuit of the Christians. Sergey had taken his blue Yamaha Sidewinder snowmobile up a hill, while the UTV with the trailer had driven on level ground through the evergreen woodland. [Read about these events in [Chapter 33](#). Right click link and select "Open link in new tab."]

Bushes and trees passed by the UTV on either side as dark and gloomy shapes in the night. Only the headlights of the UTV illuminated their path directly ahead. Without those lights, they would be lost. None of the members of the group had GPS devices due to the fact that the Russians could use it to track their location.

"How much fuel do we have left?" Sarah said with concern on her face, leaning forward. Vapor came out of her mouth in the cold air, which was -20 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Just enough for about a quarter of a mile," Steve said after making a calculation in his head based on the fuel efficiency of the UTV and based on the amount of fuel left in the tank.

Russian soldiers on snowmobiles and large tracked trucks had been pursuing Steve, Sergey, and their friends, seeking to either capture or kill them because they had been evangelizing in the town of Medvedski, Russia. In the new Russia, evangelism was illegal and punishable by imprisonment in concentration camps, or death. But, God had miraculously delivered them from the Russians, so far.

"Sergey has some extra petrol containers fastened to his snowmobile," Alexei said.

"But, we don't know where Sergey is," Steve said as he briefly turned his head back toward the people in the trailer.

"Let's pray that God leads him here," Jason said. His normally clean-shaven face was beginning to grow some stubble.

"I hope Sergey's safe," Ivan, who was in his mid-forties, said, before brushing some snowflakes from his brown mustache. (A leather ushanka covered his bushy hair and protected part of his face from the cold. Ivan's ushanka, which somewhat resembled a leather pilot's hat, and mustache reminded Steven of a World War I fighter pilot.)

Jason began praying earnestly for Sergey to show up. As he did, it began to snow more heavily and the dancing flakes began to cover his fabric ushanka with cold powder.

Put, put, put. The UTV engine suddenly coughed pathetically before it shut off.

The headlights, which had been guiding their path through the woods, dimmed and switched off, leaving them in the dark as snow continued to pile up on their coats, hats, trousers, and gloves.

In the UTV cab, Steven sighed and leaned against the steering wheel as snow swirled in through the open side windows. 'Is this where we die?' he thought gloomily. Seeing the falling snow quickly coating their clothes made Steven wonder if they were going to either perish of the cold or die at the hands of the pursuing, communist soldiers.

"My son," God's gentle voice spoke to his spirit and soul.

"Yes, Abba Father?" Steve said, looking up.

"I am with you," Abba God said. "You are not alone. You may feel alone, but you are in My hand of safety. Truly, if you and your friends had sought Me about where to go and when, first of all, you would not have had the Russians pursuing you so close to your tail, but I am here to watch over you, and to provide for you, and to protect you. The Russians are searching for you right now, using night-vision binoculars, scopes, and optics, but I will keep you hid from their eyes. And, I will bring Sergey to you very soon. Pray for Sergey to trust Me and follow My guiding hand. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken."

"Thank you for that encouragement, Abba Father," Steve said before lifting up a prayer for Sergey to trust God and follow His guidance.

Then, he turned back toward the people in the trailer and relayed to them what God had just told him.

"That's encouraging, Steve," Sarah said. She could feel peace starting to settle into her soul as she thought about God's protection.

Suddenly, a buzzing sound came from the trees dozens of yards behind them. Then, after a few seconds, dark shapes came into view. Sarah gasped when she realized what they were. Russian snowmobiles were approaching them without their headlights turned on. But, according to what God had shown Steve, they had night vision optics and should be able to see the heat signatures of five people and a very warm snowmobile engine.

"Dear God," Ivan said anxiously, "protect us from the soldiers and don't let them see us, like you said you would do. We count on you."

The buzzing drone of two snowmobile engines grew louder and the white spray of snow could almost be seen behind their dark forms as they raced through the pine trees. Two soldiers occupied each snowmobile. The rearmost soldiers were ready to fire their scope-mounted AK-74M automatic rifles at any time.

Steve felt his heartbeat increase as the machines drew near. Now, they appeared to be only fifty feet away. That was too close for comfort. But, the machines suddenly veered toward the left and zoomed past the parked snowmobile with its trailer. They had kept at least twenty feet between them and the Christians. 'That is very strange,' Ivan thought at first. As what had happened sank in, he thought, excitedly, 'Wait, they didn't see us. They didn't see us! God protected us!'

Then, Ivan exclaimed out loud, "The soldiers didn't see us!"

Right after exclaiming, he stopped himself and gulped. "Oops. I didn't mean to be so loud."

"That's okay, Ivan," Steve said. "With their loud engines, the soldiers never heard you. Plus, they are now well beyond earshot."

"Should we start a fire or at least grab some cold food to eat?" Jason said. "I'm feeling a bit hungry."

"Why not?" Alexei said as he stepped off the trailer, into the snow, and walked toward the rear of the trailer.

Jason reached over to a rucksack strapped to an area of the trailer behind the back car seats. Opening a flap, he reached inside and grabbed a can of soup. As he did, a loud buzzing sound came from the trees to the left. Jason instantly let go and whirled toward the sound. Headlights were coming through the trees and splashing light onto tree trunks and bushes not far from the tracked, grey UTV.

Then, a snowmobile tore through a cluster of bushes and emerged, churning up snow as it approached. It was headed straight toward the small group. Suddenly, it slowed and pulled to a stop just fifteen feet from the Christians. Steve and the others shielded their eyes from the glare of the headlights.

Then, the snowmobile slowly crept forward toward the group. Steve could now see that it was operated by just one man and that it had a blue color pattern different from the white snowmobiles, which the communist soldiers had driven. It was Sergey and his blue *Yamaha Sidewinder*, Steve realized. Excited to see his friend, Steve walked through the crunchy snow toward the burly, bearded, Russian blacksmith and greeted Sergey as he shut the engine off.

"How did you find us?" Steve asked even though he was certain he knew the answer.

"You do not know what I've been through to escape those soldiers," Sergey said, breathing in deeply, as he pulled an LED flashlight from a pocket in his brown winter coat and clicked it on. "In a nutshell, I found you because God supernaturally protected me and He showed me where to go. Otherwise, I would be lost."

"It is good to see you, my friend," Alexei said as he approached.

"Alexei," Sergey said, "you and your friends are blessed not to have gone through what I just went through."

"What happened?" Alexei said as he neared the 54-year-old Russian blacksmith. "I was pursued by two snowmobiles up a wooded hill," Sergey said, "and the soldiers seemed to get a lot of pleasure out of shooting at me. I was distracted by them until I turned to see that a large tree stump was just feet away from hitting me. I didn't have time to react."

All eyes looked his way as he continued to speak.

"I should have been killed as I reached the stump, going 72 kilometers per hour,* but somehow I passed straight through it as if it were made of air," Sergey said as he held his left hand up vertically and quickly moved his right hand past it to illustrate his true story. "Then, God must have sent His angels to put an impediment between me and the Russians because a large, dead tree suddenly snapped in half and crashed down in front of the Russian snowmobiles, blocking their path so that their only way off the hill was back the way they had come." [* *This speed is about 45 mph.*]

"That is amazing," Jason said, whistling low as he pulled an LED flashlight from a pocket to see better in the darkening forest.

"After leaving the Russians behind," Sergey said, "I drove along the hill, but I heard more gunshots in the woods below the hill, so I drove away from them to put distance between them and me. I had no idea if someone were shooting at me, or not. Then, I drove a couple miles before I stopped to take a rest, get a drink of water, and some food from my pack, which you see strapped to the end of the *Sidewinder*." Sergey indicated his backpack with his gloved hand.

"When the darkness had settled, twenty minutes later, I started up the snowmobile and headed off in the direction God was showing me to go. After driving some time, I was led to go a certain direction, and here I am. So, what happened to you folks?"

Steve related the events that transpired since Sergey was separated from them. As he told the burly Russian about the miraculous protection from a grenade and from machine guns at close range, Sergey let out a low whistle. He gasped when Steve told how a large limb had been snapped off a dead tree and had crashed to the ground directly in front of a communist Russian snowmobile, causing the occupants to be catapulted into snow banks, and the machine to be wrecked.

"God was defending you just as He was me," Sergey said when the account of the recent, harrowing events was finished.

"I remember Psalm 91," Alexei said. "Let me get my Bible."

Alexei ran back to the trailer and reached into his pack to pull out a Bible, which was protected by a zippered case. He removed his gloves and unzipped the Bible case before he flipped through the book. The cold air stung his skin as he quickly worked with the pages. When he came to Psalm 91, Alexei said: "**Psalm 91, verses 1 through 6**, says:

'[1] He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2. I will say of the Lord, **He** is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in **him** will I trust.

3. Surely **he** shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

4. **He** shall cover thee with **his** feathers, and under **his** wings shalt thou trust: **his** truth shall be thy shield and buckler. 5. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; 6. Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday."

"Wow," Jason said. "That is how God defended us. The arrows that were shot at us were bullets. And, God protected us as if we were in a castle or a tank."

"Amen," Alexei said in agreement. "We are abiding under Abba Father God's sheltering wings, and He is protecting us like His Holy Scriptures promise."

A few moments of quiet passed before Sarah stretched out her left arm and pointed toward the dark trees to the right side of the grey UTV.

"I see something coming toward us through the woods," Sarah said. "They are dark objects that seem to be slowly moving forward."

All heads turned toward the direction Sarah indicated and her friends listened closely.

While a light breeze sent snowflakes fluttering through the forest, Steve squinted at the dark shapes of bushes and evergreen trees, which stood out against a dim backdrop of snow-covered ground. Then, he noticed movement. Something that he first took for a rock or a bush had just moved a couple feet. It had been near a cluster of bushes beside a large pine tree. It continued to move slowly. As the moving object got closer, he noticed it had four legs and a tail.

"Is that a wolf?" Steve said, pointing toward the dark object.

Sergey stepped up close to Steve and looked in the direction he pointed.

"It is a wolf," Sergey said tensely after a few moments. "It could be a hungry male wolf. I see others around it. They appear to be on the hunt and we appear to be their target."

"But, is it true that wolves actually want to kill people?" Sarah said. "I thought wolf attacks were very rare."

"They are very rare in Europe and in Siberia, but they can sometimes happen," Sergey said.

"Does anyone have a gun?" Sarah said.

"Guns are outlawed for civilians, in my country, since they turned it back into a communistic empire," Sergey said. "So, we don't have guns, but we have prayer."

Then, a dark figure emerged from the shadows and a large, male *Eurasian wolf* came into view in their bluish flashlight beams. It had thick, tawny* fur and a white mouth, which was filled with sharp teeth and strong jaws. Soon, other wolves appeared in the LED light. Something in their faces looked unnatural and evil to Steve as he watched them slowly approach.

He didn't have time to think much about it because several wolves suddenly broke off from the pack and suddenly charged toward him, with a demonic glare in their eyes. With feet rapidly pounding the crunchy snow, their sharp teeth were bared and ready to kill. There was no time to think. In moments, they would be on top of Steve and his friends, and the humans could not outrun them.

[* Tawny fur has a light brown or brownish-orange color.]

"Gunmen"

Mark Mzembi, a 32-year-old Zimbabwean, was driving a borrowed silver *Toyota Corolla* down a highway in South Africa with his dad, Jonathan Mzembi, who sat in the front passenger seat, to Mark's left. Mark had picked up his dad from an apartment in Johannesburg and was taking him to stay with some Christian Zulu friends, who owned a prosperous South African farm.

[Read about Mark and Jonathan Mzembi's encounter with a police barricade in [Chapter 29](#). Right click link and select "Open link in new tab."]

While driving down the highway, twenty minutes earlier, Mark had been forced to pull to a stop before a police barricade, which crossed the width of the road. Beyond it, the mangled wreckage of a bus was strewn across the asphalt. A terrorist bomb had gone off and had killed all the passengers and the driver. Mark had understood from God that terrorist attacks would increase and that

South Africa and Zimbabwe would soon be completely under the control of radical Muslims, who would operate communistic-style governments.

Just a few days ago, terrorists in several cities of South Africa had unleashed destruction on some factories and malls in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, and East London. The destruction was extensive throughout each South African city, and many lives were lost. SWAT police teams had to battle with the terrorists. And, the South African Special Forces Brigade had been called in to stop the terrorists.

Over the last few years, terrorists and criminal gangs had gained much territory within many South African cities. Street fights were becoming more commonplace, and Jonathan Mzembi had been more and more nervous about staying in Johannesburg.

"Mark, why do you think God is allowing all this chaos to be unleashed in South Africa?" Jonathan said as farmland rolled by.

"Well, dad," Mark said, "God is calling out to the people in South Africa and He wants people to repent and turn to Him because God knows that if they continue living their lives for themselves, and away from Him, they will eventually die... and the question is: 'are they going to be in Heaven or Hell?'"

"I don't know," Jonathan said, rubbing his clean-shaven chin, as he watched the fertile South African farmland pass by the windows.

"God doesn't want people to go to Hell," Mark said. "Hell is a horrible place. The Bible says in Revelation 14:11 that the torment of souls in Hell is eternal. So, God is allowing evil men to kill and attack others to get them to realize that mankind is not going to solve its own problems. God is showing us that we need a Savior, and His Name is Jesus."

"Mark, watch out!" Jonathan suddenly shouted, pointing out the front window.

A large silver *Nissan Titan* pickup truck had suddenly slowed down and swerved toward the right to block both lanes of traffic.

Mark put on the brakes hard to slow the *Toyota Corolla* to a stop. The four cab doors of the pickup truck flew open and four men stepped out, dressed in forest

camouflage military uniforms and armed with AK-47 automatic rifles. They wore green scarves over their faces, below their eyes.

"This is where we die," Jonathan said fearfully as he eyed their weapons.

"Dear Father God, deliver us from these men like you did for me in previous times," Mark said quietly as he watched the scene unfold before him.

Two armed men approached the silver *Toyota Corolla* while two remained at the truck. Already, cars were starting to pull to a stop on the other side of the *Nissan Titan*, forming a lengthening line of idling vehicles. Drivers stepped out of their cars and angrily looked at the Nissan Titan as it rested across the road with its engine idling. But, some recognized that the men were terrorists, and quickly returned to their automobiles.

A terrorist approached the driver's side where Mark was seated, which was on the right side of the car. He was a tall, muscular man and walked with an arrogant strut. He trained his gun on Mark and tapped the barrel a couple times on the roof of the car.

'He must have noticed the "I love Jesus" bumper sticker on the front bumper,' Mark thought.

Mark lowered the electric window and swallowed. The muzzle of an AK-47 was pointed right at his chest and a man with cold eyes stared at him intensely for several seconds before he said, "You're a Christian, aren't you?"

From just a few feet away, Jonathan whispered to Mark, "Tell him *no*."

The man's nose and lower face were covered by a green scarf, concealing his identity, but his eyes were filled with hatred.

Mark remained silent and prayed.

"This country is no longer a Christian nation," the terrorist said with a sinister, calm voice. "So, you will now convert to Islam or face the sword. What is your choice?"

"Let's just play along with them, Mark. Say that you will convert," Jonathan whispered as he leaned slightly toward his son.

But, Mark knew that lying was wrong. So, he looked to God for guidance instead of listening to what made sense to his mind.

God's gentle and resolute voice spoke to Mark's soul and spirit: "My son, Mark, tell this man that Jesus Christ is Lord and that he* has no power over you because I am greater than the one who is inside him. Tell him that, and I the LORD your GOD and Abba Father have spoken." [* Note: The "he" refers to the terrorist.]

"What is your choice, Christian?" the terrorist said louder, while still pointing his gun at Mark's chest.

Mark took a deep breath and cleared his throat. Then, he said, with a supernatural boldness, "Jesus Christ is Lord, and you have **no** power over me because greater is He that is in me than he that is in you! 1 John 4:4."

The terrorist was taken aback. He stepped back a couple feet and blinked his eyes several times. After a few seconds, he lowered the machine gun and gazed at Mark with a curious expression in his eyes. But, his curious expression changed back into hatred.

A tense moment passed as the terrorist coldly stared at Mark with a look of intense hatred, which was stronger than before. Mark prayed silently as the man stared at him.

Something *inside* this man really hated Mark, even though the man himself never had seen Mark Mzembi before. And, Mark could tell that it was an evil spirit which had latched onto the man's soul that drove this man toward hatred and terrorism.

At last, the masked man turned around and walked back toward the silver truck. He climbed into the driver's seat and shut the door. Then, the three others on his team followed him into the cab and slammed their doors shut. The truck pulled out and roared off down the highway, and quickly passed the string of parked cars. In a few seconds, the silver *Nissan Titan* had vanished around a hill.

"What just happened, Mark," Jonathan said. "That is... that is ..."

"A miracle," Mark said.

"Yeah," Jonathan said, "that is a real miracle. We should have been dead."

After a few seconds pause, Jonathan said, "Why didn't you listen to me and just play along with the terrorists? You almost got us killed."

"Dad, telling a lie is a sin. God does not bless lying," Mark said as he shifted the car into drive and accelerated it down the road. "Besides, God showed me exactly what to tell that man."

"You must be crazy or I must be crazy," Jonathan said, "but I am certain we should have been shot. We should be dead right now. Why did he just run off like a dog with its tail between its legs?"

"It was God's Spirit that overpowered the evil spirits attacking that terrorist," Mark said. "1 John 4:4 says: '**Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.**' God is far greater than the devil and God is far greater than bullets, or guns, or even the mind of man."

"True, but does God really protect Christians like what you are saying?" Jonathan said.

"God protects those who put their trust in Him and who desire Him," Mark said.

Hearing that, Jonathan went silent and became contemplative. He had claimed to be a Christian, but he had never truly wanted Jesus to be the Lord of his life and be his best friend. He read the Bible from time to time but it didn't really make sense to him, and he didn't care about understanding it. He just wanted to be comfortable and live life how he wanted. God seemed far off and distant to him anyways. But, as he thought about the events that had just occurred, Jonathan began to have second thoughts about his beliefs about God.

'Perhaps, God isn't so far off as I think,' Jonathan thought, 'and perhaps He even wants me to have a close relationship with Him. But, if I let Him be my Lord, how can I be my own man and do what I want to do? Does God want me to be a monk or something?'

But, a quiet thought came to his mind that God wanted Jonathan to know Him in a deep relationship of best friends or very close friends. A sense came to Jonathan that God did not want him to be a worker, but to be a friend of God,

and a son of God. But, Jonathan resisted that thought and tried to get his mind onto something else. He could not see the sinister, invisible beings which were attacking his mind and heart.

Chapter 35

"Wolf Attack"

- Russia -

Having been chased by communist Russian snowmobile troops through a forest miles from the Siberian town of Medvedski, Sergey and his friends had, by God's miraculous protection, been able to avoid capture and death. Now, the night had come and the Russian soldiers were still searching for them on snowmobiles through the dark forest. Two snowmobiles carrying two soldiers each had come out of the forest and had rapidly approached the Christians, but God had blinded the soldiers' night-vision optics so that they did not see the group of six Christian fugitives. The snowmobiles had roared off into the Siberian night without paying any attention to the fugitives, and Sergey's UTV with its attached trailer, and his blue *Yamaha Sidewinder* snowmobile.

Standing near the UTV and the blue snowmobile, the group had discussed God's awesome power to deliver them from enemy bullets and grenades. As the friends began to think of having supper, a group of dark shapes began to move toward them through the snow-laden pine trees. In the light of the Christian's LED flashlights, a pack of tawny-colored Eurasian wolves appeared. Suddenly, twelve vicious wolves broke off from the rest of the large pack and ran straight toward the Christians.

Sarah felt fear rush through her body and the urge to scream, but something kept her from opening her mouth as she watched the wolves charge toward her friends.

A demonic gleam seemed to appear in the wolves' predatory eyes as they charged forward with exposed teeth. Their wide paws quietly thumped against the snow as they closed the distance. Some wind stirred the pines, sending showers of sparkling snow through the surreal air. Having jaws and teeth strong enough to take down male elks, the canine predators were a fearsome sight to behold. Vapor rose into the air from their hungry mouths and their amber eyes sparkled in the LED light.

One wolf was fast approaching Steven, and closing the distance to forty feet. He felt fear attacking him, but he gave it to God.

"I rebuke you in Jesus' Name!" Steven shouted as he pointed a finger at the approaching wolf.

The creature continued to run, pounding the snow with its four paws. Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump. ... Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump.

Something supernatural had started inside Steve when he first noticed the wolf pack in the dark, snowy forest. He knew that animals were supposed to be afraid of people, even if they were carnivorous animals.

As Steven shouted those six words of rebuke--words which made no sense to the limited human mind--, the wolf began to slow its run to a walking pace. Then, it stopped in its tracks just twelve feet away from Steve. The other wolves slowed to a walk and came to a stop a few seconds later. They looked at Steve and the group with curiosity mixed with apprehension--a radically different set of feelings than their status just a moment ago. Amber wolf eyes studied the group for half a minute of tense silence. Sarah and a few of the men prayed while the predators sized them up. After what seemed to be a long time (due to the apprehension the group felt), the wolves finally turned around and suddenly sprinted across the snow toward the night-cloaked depths of the forest, where they vanished into the shadows.

Sarah, Steve's wife, gasped. "I can't believe what I just saw. Those vicious wolves just turned around and ran off as if they were afraid of us."

"How did you do that?" Ivan, a new believer in Jesus, said.

"I remembered Luke 10:19," Steve said.

"What does that say?" Ivan said, placing a hand on his brown mustache to wipe some snowflakes off it.

Steve said, "It says: 'Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.' Jesus taught us that nothing shall by any means hurt us, and that we have power over **all** the power of the enemy."

"But, Steve, a wolf is just an animal," Ivan said.

"Notice how Jesus included animals in the verse, though? Serpents. Scorpions. And, Jesus said 'nothing shall by any means hurt you.'"

"That reminds me of Mark 16:17-18," Alexei, a red-bearded Russian, said. "In Mark 16:17-18, Jesus said: "[17] And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; [18] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'"

"Didn't Paul, the apostle, get bitten by a poisonous snake and had no harmful effects from it?" Sergey said.

"That's right," Alexei said, grinning. "I'm pretty sure that in Acts 28, Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake while picking up wood for a fire on the island of Malta.* Yeah, and he had no harmful effects. The people of the island were certain that Paul would drop over dead, but when they saw him still standing, they were shocked. Some of the pagans of the island thought he was a supernatural 'god,' which is nonsense. It is Almighty God's power which kept Paul from being harmed by the venom."

[The island of Malta was also called 'Melita.']*

"Speaking of venom, why is it that communists both in Asia and Europe hate us Christians so much?" Ivan asked. "They've been hunting us through this forest as if we are rabid dogs."

"The enemy, who is Satan himself, hates all people, but he especially hates Christians who are truly following God and His Word," Alexei said. "The devil put

it into the hearts of ungodly men to seek after and kill or capture Christians because the devil wants to stamp out the Gospel and remove God's people."

"I used to think," Ivan said, "that non-conformist Christians were a cult or a weird religious group, but I have seen that God really works miracles through true Christians, and that Jesus Christ only is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, like He said in John 14:6. Christians have life in them and love. The world needs to receive God's light and love."

"God's Word, the Bible, says that God is love in 1 John 4:16," Jason, a 34-year-old American with short, brown stubble, said.

"But what about the wrath of God?" Ivan said. "Does the Bible speak of the wrath of God?"

"It does," Jason said, "but we need to understand God's wrath from the point of view of His love."

"Hmm," Ivan said. "What do you mean?"

Jason was holding a Bible in his hand, which he had removed from his pack. He removed his gloves and began flipping through the pages until he came to John chapter 3.

Then, he said: "It says in John 3:16-18: '[16] For God so loved the world, that **he** gave **his** only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in **him** should not perish, but have everlasting life. [17] For God sent not **his** Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through **him** might be saved. [18] He that believeth on **him** is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.'"

"So, if people know that God is calling out to them, but they refuse to believe on Jesus Christ, they are condemned," Ivan said. "What about people who have never heard the Gospel before?"

"People who have never heard the Gospel will still know that God is calling out to them," Jason said, "and that God is showing them that they need Him and that He is indeed the Creator of the Universe. If they seek Him, they will find Him, and He will reveal the Gospel to them. After all, Paul told the idolatrous Greeks in Athens this truth in Acts 17:27: '[27] That they should seek the Lord,

if haply they might feel after **him**, and find **him**, though **he** be not far from every one of us:"

Jason continued: "After speaking to them about their idolatry, Paul says this in Acts 17:30-31: '[30] And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: [31] Because **he** hath appointed a day, in the which **he** will judge the world in righteousness by that **man** whom **he** hath ordained; whereof **he** hath given assurance unto all men, in that **he** hath raised **him** from the dead.'"

"So," Ivan said, scratching his shaved chin, "Jesus will judge the world because they rejected Him? And, they rejected Him even though He continuously called out to them and pleaded with them, right?"

"That is right, Ivan," Jason said. "In fact, Jesus told us in John 16:7-11 that the Holy Spirit's role is to convict or reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. I know this verse by heart. Let me read it for you."

Jason flipped through his Bible until he came to John chapter 16. Then, he said, "John 16:7-11 says: '[7] Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send **him** unto you. [8] And when **he** is come, **he** will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: [9] Of sin, because they believe not on me; [10] Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; [11] Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.'"

"Wow," Ivan said as he thought about those words about the Holy Spirit.

"The Holy Spirit convicts or shows all the people of world that they need the righteousness of Jesus imputed to their personal account," Jason said. "And, He convicts or shows the world that they have a sin nature, and that they will be judged according to their thoughts and actions."

"What does impute mean? I'm not familiar with that word." Ivan asked.

"It means to set to someone's account or put onto someone's account," Jason said. "Jesus put onto our account His righteousness, after we received Him as our personal Savior and Lord. Our account had no righteousness before Jesus Christ's righteousness was imputed to it."

"That is amazing," Ivan said.

"It would be like saying your credit card account shows that you are in debt by 15 billion rubles," Jason said. "You can't pay off the debt or even the monthly interest on the debt. So, when you trust in Jesus, He pays all of the debt and the interest for you. You have no money of your own to pay. His 'money,' or righteousness, was imputed to your account."

"Praise the Lord," Ivan said, looking up at the night sky. Snowflakes gently fluttered through the trees and settled on his face. Ivan brushed them off and prayed silently to his Creator, thanking Abba Father God for all the blessings God has freely given him through Jesus.

Through the woods, a rumbling diesel engine filled the air with its droning hum. The group of six turned toward the sound and noticed white headlights shining through the trees 120 yards away. Steve swallowed hard and began praying. He had heard that sound before and he had caught a glimpse of its source earlier.

Through the trees, a large *CHETRA TM-140* tracked truck advanced at a speed of at least 40 miles per hour. It could move faster, but the Russians were hunting for Steve and his friends, and they were closing in fast on the small group. A couple seconds passed and the bright headlights reached the Christians, causing them to shield their eyes. They had been spotted.

We will now leave Siberia and turn our attention to a time a few years earlier when America was still called the United States of America, prior to the invasion of the U.S. by a Russian and Chinese coalition. (Other nations will also be involved in this coalition.) God has been warning many people about this invasion for many years, even going back to at least the '90s and '80s.

And, God has been warning people in this current decade (2011 and on) with dreams and visions about this coming invasion by Russia and China. Now, our story will take us to Cincinnati, Ohio where Steven and Sarah O'Neill live. We have wound the clock back a few years for this part of the adventure.

"Cincinnati, Ohio -- Crime in the City"

- Ohio, U.S.A. -

Blam! Blam! Blam! Three powerful gunshots echoed through the neighborhood where Jason Harper lived, waking the 34-year-old from sleep. Jason sat up in his bed and blinked several times. The room was dark except for the dim, green light which emanated from the digital clock on his bedside chest of drawers. The time displayed was 3:00 AM.

Jason snapped his fingers and the room light turned on by way of a sound-activation sensor.

He stood up and sighed. He was wearing warm pajamas and socks, but something swept through his body, making him shiver momentarily. Something very evil was at work in his neighborhood.

'Were those gunshots I heard? Why would a shooting take place in my neighborhood? It's normally crime free,' Jason thought as he walked toward the only window in his small bedroom. Pushing the drapes aside, he stared out into the night. His window faced a street which connected perpendicularly onto the street running past his house. Both streets formed a T-intersection with each other.

On the perpendicular street, which formed the lower line of the "T", he saw activity. Squinting and rubbing his eyes, Jason tried to make out what was going on. Then, he hurried back to his small chest of drawers and slid open the top drawer. From it Jason retrieved a pair of binoculars and shuffled over to the window. He removed the lens caps as he walked.

Once he stood before the window, Jason placed the binoculars to his eyes and began focusing them. As his eyes adjusted, he saw men with guns smashing front windows in four different homes and entering through the windows. Other men stood outside armed with pistols and shotguns.

A short time later, they intruders emerged through the front doors with lamps, small furniture, and knickknacks, which they tossed into the front yards. Women wearing warm pajamas were screaming as they were pulled out of their homes by the crooks. A short time later, men in pajamas were shoved out onto their lawns, and thugs began beating them unconscious with their fists and with wooden clubs.

Blam! Blam! Blam! A gun went off somewhere inside one of the houses and a woman outside, in the yard, screamed. A couple gangsters watched her with wicked expressions on their faces and appeared to be laughing.

A knock came at the door of Jason's bedroom. He turned away from the window and said, "Who is it?"

"It's me," Steve said through the door.

"Oh, come in, Steve," Jason said.

The door opened and Steven O'Neill entered quickly before shutting it behind him. He had been staying with Jason since his own neighborhood had gotten very dangerous and since a gang had threatened to kill him if he didn't leave his house. And, he had felt God leading him and Sarah, his wife, to stay in Jason's spare bedroom.

"I hear shooting. Do you know what's going on?" Steve asked his friend.

He was wearing carpenter jeans and a brown T-shirt with a logo of the bakery he used to work at displayed across the chest.

"It looks like gangs are pillaging my neighbor's homes and beating up the men," Jason said. "This is bad. I wonder if the police have been called. I think I'll call them now."

Just then, a loud siren came down the street. Jason turned back to the window and raised his binoculars. He could see several police cars and one armored truck pulling up on either side of the street segment, where the crimes were being committed, to cut off the crooks from escaping. In seconds, police officers were emerging armed with bullet-proof vests, Kevlar helmets, and AR-15 automatic rifles.

The gangsters fired off several wild shots toward the police before they ran through yards, trying to escape the police presence. Jason turned away from the window and shut the drapes. He sighed and set the binoculars on the chest of drawers.

"This is crazy, Steve," Jason said. "I thought when I invited you to stay with me that you would be safer in this house, but it looks like my neighborhood is just

as bad as yours was becoming. It seems that there is no safe neighborhood in town."

"Jesus is our solid **Rock of Refuge** and **Fortress**," Steve said. "But, you're right. Cincinnati and many other cities in this country are not safe to live in for most people. Crime is going through the roof, and the police cannot handle all the violence."

"Also, the wickedness of this country is only increasing. It reminds me of Sodom and Gomorrah," Jason said.

"You're right," Steve said, nodding with sadness. "But, God is our hope and our Fortress, like Psalm 46:1 says."

"What does it go like?" Jason said, looking at his friend's face.

Steven said from memory: "Psalm 46:1-2 says: '[1] God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. [2] Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;'"

"That is comforting," Jason said. "I look forward to the day when we will leave this country, but I am saddened by how it has become so evil and rebellious against God. They've passed laws making it illegal to preach the Gospel in public locations and on the radio waves, calling it 'hate-speech.'"

"It is sad," Steve said. "Just a few years ago, Christians could freely preach the Gospel and witness in public and on city streets. Now, we have to do it more covertly."

"China has been threatening America too, did you hear?" Jason said.

"I've heard them threatening America. Is there something you've heard recently?" Steve said, looking at his friend with curiosity.

"China recently launched a missile that landed in the Pacific Ocean just 500 miles from the west coast," Jason said. "It wasn't armed with any warhead, according to the Chinese. Rather, it was a warning shot."

"That's too close for comfort. What did we do to provoke China?" Steve asked.

"The U.S. has been sending ships close to Chinese territorial waters and challenging their claims to certain islands, which they have built up," Jason said. "The Chinese are very upset with this country right now, as you can see."

Suddenly, a machine gun blasted through the night air, and Steven and Jason instinctively flinched. The gunfire was very loud and seemed to come from a block or two away.

"I feel like praying," Jason said as he glanced at the window drapes. "Dear Father God, we pray that this violent person who fired the gun would set it down and turn in himself to the police. We pray that his nation will repent before you or that at least many people across America will repent from their sins and turn to you. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

"Amen," Steve said. "I feel that I need to check on my wife and see how she's doing."

He left the room, closing the door quietly behind him.

Jason remained in his bedroom and walked up to the window. Pushing the drapes apart, he stared out at the street. The police were still blocking access to the perpendicular street at the T-intersection.

He moved the drapes back over the window and sighed. "Lord," Jason said, looking up, "I need you to work a miracle and put an end to this violence."

"My son, Jason, I love you very much," God's tender, whisper of a voice spoke. "You are precious to Me, and all Christians are precious to Me. I want you to know that very, very soon, you and the O'Neills will be translated to Russia where I will start you on a new leg of your journey on this planet. You will see miracles take place like you couldn't imagine. You will see lost souls being saved and mighty works of My Spirit happening on a regular basis. Now, watch what I will do."

That moment, a miracle happened which would forever change Jason Harper's life and the lives of his friends.

Chapter 36

"Angelic Encounter"

- Russia -

Like a lion slowly stalking its prey, the Russian army *CHETRA TM-140* tracked truck rolled toward the group of six Christians who stood around a tracked UTV and a snowmobile. Fumes and vapor rose into the air from its exhaust pipes like smoke from a dragon's nostrils as the mechanical beast snapped its way through fallen branches and twigs.

Having just been delivered by God from a pack of hungry, vicious wolves, the Christians were now faced with a new and equally deadly foe: communist soldiers who were determined to either kill or capture the Christians. And, the *TM-140* was full of them.

Steve O'Neill stared at the approaching truck with concern and a sense of feeling overwhelmed. But, he quickly began giving it to God as he watched the *TM-140* pull up to a stop just forty feet from him. Its headlights mercifully were aimed to the side and illuminated the forest beyond the small group. The rear doors in the troop compartment swung open and communist soldiers poured out. Each soldier wore snow camouflage and helmet-mounted infrared optics which took the form of a black device lowered over the right eye.

The infrared optics allowed the soldiers to see wavelengths of light given off by warm objects. Human shapes were no longer cable of being hid in the dark due to this technology. Armed with grenades and AK-74M automatic rifles, the soldiers were a threat which was a test to the Christian's faith. Would God allow them to be captured or killed? That was a thought rushing through Steve and his friend's minds as they saw the enemy soldiers drop into the snow and quickly take up positions.

They took aim at the small group of Christians and some cycled their bolts to load fresh bullets into their gun chambers while falling snow gracefully fluttered to toward the ground and slowly coated their helmets with a dusting of powder.

"Raise your hands!" a soldier shouted at them as he pointed his gun at Sergey.

Sarah, Ivan, and Alexei quickly raised their hands. But, the three others didn't.

"Dear God, come through for your children and deliver us like you did all those times before. We trust you," Sergey, a burly, bearded, middle-aged Russian, said. As he spoke, he felt his heart beating fast, but peace began to fill his chest where fear had once been strong.

"Raise your hands!" another soldier shouted louder than the first as he glared at Steve, Sergey, and Jason.

"I command blindness to fall on your eyes in the matchless Name of Jesus," Steve said calmly and with confidence that God was giving him.

The words were loud enough to be heard by the soldiers, but gentle, having no bitterness behind them.

The soldier took aim and Steve and said, "Shut up and obey my orders, or you will die!"

"Steve," Ivan said quietly, "why don't you just do what he says? He has a gun."

Just as he finished his sentence, a burst of gunfire erupted from an AK-74M and a stream of bullets shot toward the group of Christians. A trigger-happy soldier had determined that he was going to make an example of the Christians. There was now no time to think. In milliseconds, the lethal projectiles would reach their targets.

Just as the closest bullets were ten feet from Steve, a supernatural event occurred which would forever remain in Steve's mind. In that tiny fraction of time, an angelic being dressed in shining, golden-like armor appeared. The bullets struck his giant, round shield and ricocheted off with a series of rapid "pings". From head to foot, he was 12 feet tall and muscular. He wore a white robe that went to his ankles. Underneath his robe he wore trousers which were covered with leg armor plates. He wore metal-plated boots over his feet and

these created large impressions in the snow. On his head was a stately helmet resembling the Corinthian-style helmet of ancient Greece.

From his back, large, white wings were tucked up behind him like the wings of a resting eagle. On his left arm was fastened a large round shield that had a golden luster. In his right hand he carried a giant broadsword which was five feet from the pointy tip to the pommel.*

[The pommel is a weighted knob at the end of a sword hilt (handle).]*

Light emanated from his skin, face, and armor, causing the trees, falling snowflakes, and bushes nearby to be lit up in its brilliance. The Russian soldiers' jaws dropped as they beheld this miraculous spectacle. Guns began plopping into the snow as the soldiers dropped them, one after another. They had not been trained to fight a supernatural warrior from God's angelic armies.

The angelic warrior lifted up his sword and jammed its sharp point into the ground. As he did that, the shocked men turned and ran for their lives, fleeing into the dense woodland undergrowth. Some threw off their helmets and combat belts to help them run faster. The men in the *CHETRA TM-140* tracked vehicle popped the cab doors open and leaped to the ground. Once their feet connected with the crunchy layer under the fluffy top layer of snow, they sprinted off into the darkness beyond the angel's light, leaving trails of footprints behind them.

The AK-74M guns were scattered all around, partially hidden in the deep snow where they were dropped. Some abandoned helmets, scattered here and there, resembled fallen acorns, in Steve's mind.

Just as Steve was returning his attention to the angelic warrior, the supernatural visitor vanished from sight, taking the light with him. But, Steve knew that the angel's presence was still there among the group, even though he was invisible. And, most of all, Steve knew that God's Presence was in his heart and that God was fulfilling His Scripture from Psalm 91 to divinely protect His children who trusted in Him.

While Steve pondered what had just happened, he heard a still, small voice speak to him. It was the familiar voice of God that he knew.

"My son, Steve, I love you very much," God said to his spirit and soul. "I have protected you from the onslaught of the enemy and I will continue to keep you

and to protect you. I will now have you and your friends leave this place, and go where I send you. You will head over to the village I told you about earlier, where I will guide you in ministering. I will keep you safe and protected.

"These Russian soldiers will not present a threat to you because they have witnessed a great miracle, and they will be changed forever. Some of them will become hardened against Me because they are turning their hearts further away from Me as I call out to them. But, others will be more open to the Gospel message. I will now have you drive this machine away from the main road and have your friends and you rest for a few hours before you move on, on your journey. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken."

"Thank you for protecting us, Father God! Thank you so much," Steve said with awe and thankfulness.

Then, he walked toward the large rig, which was still rumbling, since its diesel engine had not been shut off.

"What are you doing, Steve?" Sarah said as she saw her husband leave the group.

"Honey," Steve said, "I am going to drive this rig away from our vehicles and I will come back on foot. Then, we all can get some needed rest. That is what God showed me to do."

"Okay, Steve," Sarah said, smiling. "Isn't it awesome how God protected us?"

"It is wonderful who our great, awesome God is. Yes," Steve said, looking up toward the winter sky, which appeared in patches through the tree tops.

Then, he quickly walked up to the vehicle and climbed up into the cab and shut the door. It thumped dully and something clicked as the door closed. Shifting into drive, he turned the vehicle around and drove it 120 feet from the group until he found a dense cluster of pine trees with an opening among them where the vehicle would fit.

Seeing he had found the perfect place to hide it for the night, Steve shut the engine off and left the key in the ignition. Making sure the door was not locked, he slipped out of the cab and shut it. Then, he pushed his way through the prickly pine branches and headed back toward the group of five, which surrounded two winter vehicles Sergey owned.

Steve was tempted to take the truck and use it instead of the Sergey's snowmobile and UTV, but he knew this was wrong. The UTV had quit working after the fuel display had suddenly indicated that the vehicle was critically low on fuel. He hadn't been able to tell Sergey about it yet and was baffled why it would suddenly be so low on fuel. A bullet might have put a hole in the gas tank to cause it to leak. Or, it could be an electrical problem. But, Steve had resolved that he was not going to steal anything, knowing that God's Word said in Exodus 20:15: 'Thou shalt not steal.'

As he walked back toward the group, Steve thought back to all the miracles God had done in his life. As he thought about them, great joy and peace overwhelmed his soul, and he felt like singing praises to his Abba Father God for who He is and for all He had done. Even though the UTV had either run out of fuel or encountered some system failure, Steve determined that he would trust God to provide for him and his friends and get them safely to the Siberian village of *Gryaznov*.

We will now leave Siberia and turn our attention to a time a few years earlier, before Steve, Sarah, and their friends were faced with a communist army at their heels. Steve and Jason were talking with each other after both heard gunshots coming from some nearby houses in Jason's residential neighborhood. Steven and his wife Sarah had been staying in a spare bedroom at Jason's house when the shots were fired. It was shortly after 3:00 AM and chaos was starting to reign in Jason's part of Cincinnati, Ohio as gangsters broke into homes and rifled them, stealing anything valuable they could. We will pick up the story from where we last left off.

Cincinnati, Ohio

Jason moved the drapes back over his bedroom window and sighed. "Lord," he said, looking up, "I need you to work a miracle and put an end to this violence."

"My son, Jason, I love you very much," God's tender, whisper of a voice spoke. "You are precious to Me, and all Christians are precious to Me. I want you to know that very, very soon, you and the O'Neills will be translated to Russia

where I will start you on a new leg of your journey on this planet. You will see miracles take place like you couldn't imagine. You will see lost souls being saved and mighty works of My Spirit happening on a regular basis. Now, watch what I will do."

That moment, a miracle happened which would forever change Jason Harper's life and the lives of his friends.

Novosibirsk, Russia

- Russia -

In a split second, the bedroom vanished from Jason Harper's view as he was translated from his room wearing a T-shirt and pajama trousers. The bedroom was instantly replaced by a tan-carpeted hallway, which was lined with numbered doors in a white hallway. Fluorescent lights quietly hummed overhead.

Jason was now wearing his blue carpenter jeans, a tan collared shirt, and his hiking boots. A backpack was resting at his feet. He picked it up and saw that it was a rucksack and it felt kind of heavy. It must be packed with items God saw that he would need.

Jason looked to the left and right and saw that the hallway stretched about one hundred feet in each direction before it reached stairwells on either end. 'How did I get here? Am I dreaming?' Jason wondered, somewhat dazed by the sudden change of scenery.

Just as he was wondering what to do, one of the numbered doors, number 53, swung open and a red-bearded man, wearing a brown backpack, stepped into the hallway. He appeared to be in his early thirties, fairly tall and of an average build, like Jason. The open door was just fourteen feet to Jason's left and the man who had just come from it seemed to be heading toward a specific destination because he was moving quickly.

"Excuse me, sir," Jason called out.

The red-haired man turned to face him, pausing in his tracks. "What did you say?" he said in Russian.

Jason didn't know Russian, so he didn't understand the Russian's question.

"I'm American. Do you speak English?" Jason said, indicating himself by placing a hand on his chest.

"American," the Russian said, chuckling. He said in Russian, "What are you doing in Russia if you can't speak Russian?"

"My son, speak to him in Russian," God's gentle voice said to Jason.

"Abba Father, I don't know Russian," Jason said quietly.

But, a thought came to his mind that the early Church did not know the languages of the Jews who came from Crete, Mesopotamia, Arabia, and other countries during Pentecost in the Biblical book of Acts. Nonetheless, the early Church spoke to the people in their languages by the leading and power of the Holy Spirit.

Finding courage, Jason looked to God to give him the words and spoke. The words that came from his mouth sounded strange to his ears, but he somehow understood what he was saying.

Speaking in fluent Russian, he said, "I am Jason Harper, a believer in the Messiah. I wonder if you are a follower of Jesus too."

The red-bearded Russian chuckled and shook his head with amazement. "What is this? You can speak perfect Russian? This is strange. You must have taken Russian in language classes."

"No, sir," Jason said, smiling, "I never learned any Russian except for words like 'vodka,' 'borsch,' and some place names."

"You aren't joking?" the Russian said, curious, as he stepped closer to Jason. "Where did you come from?"

"I came from Cincinnati, Ohio," Jason said.

"Oh, you're an American. I couldn't tell if you were Canadian or something," the Russian said.

The bearded Russian became serious and furtively glanced back and forth down the hall. Then, he said quietly, "Come into my apartment. It would be better to talk in there."

Jason followed him into the apartment and the Russian quietly shut the door and engaged a bolt to lock it tight. They were standing in a medium-sized apartment furnished with a small kitchen to the right, a somewhat spacious living room, and a hallway which was lined with a few doors. A large picture window revealed a breath-taking view of a large city spread out below. High-rise and mid-rise apartment buildings and office buildings formed a skyline of an unknown city and fluffy clouds floated overhead in a blue sky.

"What time is it, by the way?" Jason asked his host.

The man glanced at a wrist watch. "It is 3:34 PM," the man said.

"Wow," Jason said, astonished. It had been about 3:31 AM when he had been instantly transported from Cincinnati to somewhere in Russia. Now, it was 3:34 PM. But, Russia was on the opposite side of the world from America's perspective.

As he stood in the living room of his host's apartment, Jason began to remember the passages in the Bible about translation miracles where men of old were moved from one place to another by supernatural means. Philip in Acts chapter 8 was caught up by the Spirit of God and moved to another location after baptizing an Ethiopian leader. It was amazing to Jason that this miracle had happened to him. He was not anyone special, he thought.

"By the way, I apologize for not introducing myself. I am Alexei Khlebov," the Russian said, extending a hand to Jason.

Jason shook his hand firmly as he said, "I am Jason Harper, as you already know."

"I am also a believer in Jesus," the Russian said as he dusted a speck from a sleeve of his blue short-sleeve collared shirt. "I didn't want to talk in the hall about Jesus because my neighbors might open their doors at any moment and

overhear our conversation. Speaking about Jesus is very dangerous under our new government, which is openly leaning toward communism.”

Hearing Alexei explain that brought to Jason’s mind articles he read in the news about Russia cracking down on Christian evangelism and witnessing. Some critics of the new laws were thrown in jail and others were also given heavy fines.

“There are rumors abounding in Russia that we will soon go to war with America,” Alexei said quietly, “so I recommend that you don’t tell anyone that you are an American. I don’t understand fully how God can give you the ability to speak fluent Russian, but that will work to your advantage. I couldn’t tell that you were an American if I were to just hear you speak how you do. So, it would be better to keep it that way.”

Jason nodded.

“So, how did you get over to Novosibirsk in the first place?” Alexei said as he walked toward his kitchen and opened a cupboard door.

Before Jason could respond, Alexei said, “Do you want tea or coffee?”

“Water would be fine for now?” Jason said as he looked around the apartment.

Alexei reached in the cupboard and pulled out a glass cup and walked toward the kitchen sink.

Jason noticed that the two couches, the three lamp stands, and the kitchen table, which was located in a corner of the living room, were all orderly and uncluttered. Perforated notepads were neatly arranged on a lamp stand beside a green settee. A Bible was placed beside them with a blue ballpoint pen resting directly up against the stack of notepads. Everything looked orderly and unlike how Jason sometimes arranged his stuff.

“Here you go,” Alexei said as he walked into the living room.

Just then, a loud knock came at the door, startling the men. Alexei dropped the glass before he could hand it to Jason and it shattered into sharp fragments. The water splashed across the carpet and speckles of it struck Jason’s trouser legs.

'I sure hope that isn't the secret police,' Alexei thought as he eyed the door. Fear began to grip him and he felt a tightening in his chest. He had once been interrogated by the secret police and they had thankfully let him go, finding no incriminating thing on his person or in his responses.

But, a calm voice spoke to him and said, "Alexei, My son, I am the Lord your God and Abba Father. Answer the door. You will be safe. And, I the Lord your God have spoken."

"Yes, Abba Father. I choose to trust you," Alexei said as he headed toward the door.

He placed his hand on the doorknob but hesitated. There was no spy hole to view people on the other side of the door. Anyone could be standing there. It could be men working for the secret police or the regular police. Someone might have seen Alexei witnessing to a homeless man or placing a Gospel tract on a park bench.

But, Alexei decided he would open the door, trusting that God would keep him safe. As he opened the door, he saw, to his surprise, that no one was standing directly in front of it. He stepped out into the hallway and glanced to the left. When he turned to the right, he saw a couple--a man and a woman--standing in the hall and talking quietly with each other. Both had large backpacks beside them. The woman was wearing a modest blouse and a long jean dress, which went down to her ankles. The man, presumably her husband, was dressed in a brown Polo shirt and blue carpenter jeans.

"Excuse me," Alexei said to the couple as he walked into the hall, "did you knock at my door?"

Both turned toward him and the man said in English, "I don't understand what you're saying?"

Jason approached the door and peered out into the hallway. He instantly recognized the couple. It was Steve and Sarah. As he poked his head out the door, they noticed him.

"Jason, what are you doing here? And, where are we?" Steve said.

"God translated me and you to this apartment building," Jason said in English. "We are in Novosibirsk, Russia. I don't know where that is, exactly, but it is somewhere on the opposite side of the world from Cincinnati, in Russia."

"What are you telling him?" Alexei said in Russian as he turned toward Jason.

"He is a friend from America," Jason replied in Russian. "His name is Steven O'Neill and his wife is Sarah. I was just telling him about how we arrived here in Novosibirsk and that this place is on the opposite side of the world from Cincinnati, Ohio, where we came from."

"How *did* you arrive in Novosibirsk?" Alexei said, curious.

"Would you like to talk in your apartment?" Jason said.

"Oh, of course. What was I thinking," Alexei said before motioning to the couple in the hall to join them.

They followed him into his apartment and he shut and locked the door once they were in.

Steve was surprised to see that Jason had already arrived at the same building he and Sarah had been translated to just moments ago. Both Steve and Sarah had heard God tell them to get ready to be translated. Before Sarah had finished adjusting her hair and before Steve had brushed his teeth, they were translated from Jason's home, where they were staying at.

In spite of their appearance on leaving, the couple found that they were now fully ready for the day, being made ready by some miraculous action of God. When Steve was in Jason's bathroom brushing his teeth, he had been wearing socks on his feet, but no shoes. Now, he was wearing hiking boots, and the laces were tied.

"Would either of you care for coffee or tea?" Alexei asked Steve and Sarah (in Russian).

"What did he say?" Steve said, turning toward Jason, who somehow could understand Russian. How Jason knew Russian was a mystery to Steve. He knew that his friend had never studied Russian before.

"He asked if you and Sarah would like coffee or tea," Jason said.

"How do you know Russian, Jason?" Sarah said with curiosity in her voice.

"I only know that I didn't understand Alexei until God suddenly gave me a clear understanding of Russian along with an ability to speak it. Do you remember what happened in the book of Acts, chapter 2, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit?"

"They were speaking in tongues and telling the multitudes in Jerusalem about Jesus," Sarah said promptly.

"The tongues is other languages, of course," Jason said. "And, we have the same ability to speak other languages fluently and understand them when God gives that ability to us."

"Then, dear Abba Father," Steve said suddenly, "I ask now that you would give Sarah and I the ability to speak and understand Russian. We need to understand the people in this country. I feel that comprehending other languages is a necessity for this part of Sarah's and my journey. And, we choose to trust you. In Jesus Christ's name, amen."

"Yes," Sarah agreed.

"Would any of you care for a desert to go with your coffee?" Alexei said in Russian as he stood in the kitchen preparing his coffee maker, which rested on a counter near the sink.

Steve cleared his throat and said, "That would be good. Thank you." Somehow, the words came out in fluent Russian. Then, he blinked a few times and shook his head. 'Did I just speak Russian?' Steve thought. Then, he excitedly exclaimed, "I actually can understand Russian! This is amazing!"

"Let's try to not be too noisy," Alexei said, as he glanced at the wall of the living room. "My neighbors might be home and they might hear us if we are too noisy."

"Oh, sorry," Steve said apologetically.

"No problem," Alexei said as he turned to open a cabinet door. He pulled out a box containing a moist desert bread and set it on the counter.

"So, where are we exactly?" Steve said.

"You are in Novosibirsk, Russia," Alexei said, "which is in southern Siberia, not too terribly far from Kazakhstan. It has a population of about 1.5 million and rests along the Ob River. And, it is the third most populous city in Russia."

"Do you hear much about the tension between Russia and NATO?" Sarah said.

Alexei set down a knife he was going to use to cut the desert bread.

"We are inundated with propaganda here in Russia about the NATO alliance preparing to invade Russia," Alexei said quietly, so that Sarah and Steve had to walk closer to hear better. "But, I can guarantee that America is filled with propaganda about Russia being a major threat to its survival. But, Russia is not the threat that your news media claims it is. Many of our leaders want peace and do not desire war to start in Europe or elsewhere. But, some of the war hawks in Russia and in your country of America want war to commence very soon."

"How close do you think America and Russia are to actually going to war with each other?" Sarah asked slowly.

"Very close, I feel," Alexei said as he sliced through the desert bread.

Suddenly, a loud knock came from the apartment door and everyone froze.

"I sure hope that isn't the secret police," Alexei whispered as he walked toward the door.

Chapter 37

"The Search in the Vietnamese Jungle"

- Vietnam -

A platoon of 24 communist Chinese soldiers walked on a narrow trail through a jungle in northern Vietnam. A young, 21-year-old soldier named Yong Tang was one of them. He wished he could be somewhere else. Mosquitoes pestered him, the temperature was at least 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and his feet felt somewhat sore and sweaty from all the walking he did for the past six days.

Each Chinese soldier was equipped with a rucksack, a rain-proof sleeping bag, a bullpup-style Type 95 automatic rifle, ammo, an all-purpose fix-bladed knife, grenades, rations, a map, and a compass. They had been hiking through the Vietnamese jungles for nearly a week, and many in the platoon were ready to return to base, but the lieutenant in command of the platoon had orders to locate and kill Christians, and he was determined to do just that.

After all their time patrolling this section of the jungle, the platoon had seen very few people. But, they had killed one Christian man who they had found in the jungle carrying a backpack, which had contained three Bibles in Vietnamese. He was an older Vietnamese man who appeared to be in his late seventies. Something about this older Christian had struck Yong Tang as being remarkable. The memory of the encounter replayed itself in Yong's mind.

The soldiers at the front of the column had seen him sitting on a fallen grey ebony tree and reading from a Bible. Yong had quickly hurried up to the soldiers as they had stood around this Vietnamese man asking him questions, with their guns trained on his heart. But, despite the threat of the soldiers, he had remained peaceful and calm, and the appearance of joy seemed to cause his eyes to sparkle.

"We will kill you unless you forsake your worthless religion," a Chinese soldier said coldly as he aimed his gun at the Vietnamese man's heart.

"I had a dream that in a very short time God was going to take me home to be

with Him in Heaven. So, I am not afraid of dying," the Vietnamese replied with a peaceful look on his face. "But, are you afraid of dying?"

"Shut up, old man!" the soldier shouted. "I'm the one asking the questions. Where are all your Christian friends hiding? Tell me!"

"I am not afraid to die because I know where I'm going," the older man said calmly with a peaceful attitude which Yong had never seen in anyone before.

"Answer the question. Where are your friends hiding?" another soldier said before he stepped forward and slapped the man across the face.

"May God bring His peace to your soul," the Vietnamese man said as he rubbed his stinging face.

The first soldier to speak scowled as he glared at the man seated on the fallen tree. Intense hatred swept through the soldier's face. Then, he raised his gun and aimed at the Vietnamese man's heart.

"Old man, you are going to die because you are big fool," the soldier said fiercely as placed his finger on the trigger.

"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," the Vietnamese man said as he looked up toward the sky, toward Heaven.

Right as he finished his statement, a short burst erupted from the muzzle of the machine gun, filling the jungle with loud echoes, and the old Christian was caught up to Heaven in the arms of an angel.

Seeing the murder take place, Yong thought coldly, 'He got what he deserved.' But, another thought entered his mind shortly afterward: 'Why was this old man so peaceful and content to die? He actually had peace about dying?' Many of the older people Yong had known dreaded the thought of dying. What made this Christian so sure about going to Heaven? Yong didn't even know if Heaven existed.

Now, days after the killing, Yong still thought about the old Vietnamese man and wondered if that man had something Yong was lacking.

The lieutenant at the head of the platoon suddenly barked out an order for the group to halt and stand at attention. Then, he walked down the line of men until

he had reached about the middle and stood a couple yards off the trail. Facing the soldiers, he began speaking.

"Men," the lieutenant said, "our Vietnamese guide has located a trail made by humans. They could be Christians. We will follow it and see where it leads us. Hopefully, we will find a group of at least ten Christians to execute. So, keep your ears and eyes open for any hint of a Christian presence. The guide told me that Christians lurk in this area of the jungle."

Then, the lieutenant walked briskly back to the head of the platoon where his Vietnamese guide waited. In a few moments, they continued their march through the forest.

Yong looked forward to setting his sights on a Christian and taking him out, but something deep inside brought conviction that he shouldn't do that, and that there was no justification for committing murder. But, he tried to shrug the conviction off. After all, he had been trained and it had been drilled into him that Christians were the number one enemy. He had been taught that Christians were a threat to the stability of China and of the Chinese empire. The empire stretched from Mongolia down to Australia and through all of [Oceania](#) and Southeast Asia. Wherever the communists had control, Christians were hunted down and tortured, imprisoned, and killed.

A macaque squeaked at Yong from a high branch in a nearby Himalayan ash tree. An ape somewhere hidden from view in the jungle canopy hooted loudly as if it was warning its neighbors to beware of danger.

While a number of Christians had been killed for their faith, many Christians had escaped capture. In fact, hundreds of thousands of Christians had escaped capture and death, and had vanished into the jungles or into remote regions of Asia. Somehow, they had managed to stay off the radar. Unknown to Yong and the Chinese government, these Christians were supernaturally protected from the roving eyes of the Chinese government and from communist collaborators because they put their trust in God, and God had a purpose for them to continue doing His Kingdom work on earth.

We will now go back a few years to the time when Steve, Sarah, and Jason first

met Alexei Klebov, a red-bearded, Russian, evangelistic Christian. They had been translated or moved, by God's miraculous power, from Cincinnati, Ohio to Novosibirsk, Russia, which is located in southern Siberia. The miracle was of the same magnitude as what happened to Philip in Acts chapter 8. The friends were inside Alexei's apartment in a high-rise building when a loud knock had suddenly come from the apartment door.

"The Package in Novosibirsk"

A loud knock had come from Alexei Klebov's apartment door in Novosibirsk, Russia. Steve O'Neill, Sarah O'Neill, and Jason Harper had recently been miraculously translated to the hallway outside Alexei's apartment. After meeting the red-bearded Russian, the small group had entered his apartment and visited with each other briefly before the loud interruption.

Rap. Rap. Rap. The knocking continued.

"What should I do, Abba Father?" Alexei asked God quietly as he stared at his closed apartment door. His heart rate had increased since the knocking began only seconds ago.

"My son, Alexei, you may answer the door. It is just a mailman. Do not be alarmed. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken," God's gentle, quiet voice said to Alexei's spirit and soul.

"I choose to trust you, Abba," Alexei said as he started toward the door.

He opened it to find that a mailman was standing before the door holding a small package in one hand and a hand-held electronic device in the other.

"Hello sir, this is a parcel for Mr. Alexei Klebov. Are you he?" the mailman asked.

"Yes," Alexei said, nodding. He felt a thought suddenly come to his mind,

saying: 'What if this man is only posing as a mailman? Or, what if he is an undercover police officer?'

But, Alexei tried to ignore the suggestion.

The man handed the package to him and then extended the electronic device toward Alexei. "Would I be able to get a signature to verify the delivery?"

Swallowing, Alexei tried to ignore another suggestion in his mind that the signature might be a secret way of incriminating him or framing him for something he didn't do.

He took an stylus which was attached to the device by a curly cord and quickly signed his name on a signature line displayed on the small touch-screen. Then, the mailman thanked him and left.

Breathing out a heavy sigh, Alexei closed the door and locked it. Now, he faced a new challenge to his faith. 'Should I open this package, or not?' Alexei thought to himself. 'Could it be a bomb? Or, could it be full of some illegal substance with which someone might want to incriminate me?' These fears brought him to a place where he didn't know what to do.

"Friends, I'm facing a dilemma," Alexei said slowly. "I have a parcel which came from some unknown location. It may be for a sinister purpose. Should I open it or not?"

"What does God show you?" Steve said. "I'm going to seek Him too."

Having said that, he walked over toward the living room window and talked with his loving Abba Father God.

Alexei had some fear attacking him about the package. His fear was that he may not hear God's voice speak to him and that harm could follow if he opened the package against God's will. That fear kept him immobilized. But, he realized it was unbiblical, and so Alexei began giving it to God. Then, he asked his heavenly Father a question: "Father God, is that package safe to open?"

"Yes, My son, you certainly may open the package," God's loving voice said to Alexei's soul and spirit. "Don't be alarmed. I will keep you safe. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken."

"I choose to trust you, Abba Father," Alexei said below a whisper.

"What did God show you?" Steve asked as he walked toward the red-haired Russian.

"God showed me that it was safe to open the package," Alexei said.

"That's what He showed me," Steve said.

"I also heard it was safe," Sarah added.

Alexei pulled out a pocket knife and slit the packing tape. Opening the flaps, he reached in and pulled out some folded maps; a compass; 1,500 rubles in cash;* and a computer printout. He walked over to dining table and spread the contents on the wooden surface.

[This would roughly equal \$50 U.S. dollars from the year 2017.]*

"This is a strange arrangement of items," Sarah said as gazed at the objects.

Alexei picked up the computer printout and read through some text. Then, a slight smile spread across his face. After a minute had passed, he whistled low and shook his head.

"This is strange," Alexei said.

"What is it?" Jason asked, leaning toward him with curiosity on his face.

"The message I just read came from a brother in Christ I met back in the town of Sikorsky.* It's a logging town where I used to live. I worked as a logger operating a wheel feller buncher, a knuckleboom loader, and other logging machines. One fells trees and the other machine loads them. While there, I met some loggers who were Christians and they invited me to a Bible study. It was a secret Bible study, which met several times during the week, in different locations."

[Sikorsky is a fictional town in Siberia, Russia.]*

"The man who sent me this package is a good friend of mine called Konstantine Apalkov. The message he sent me is saying that God is showing him to prepare a place for me and for some friends I will have with me," Alexei said, pausing.

"You guys."

Alexei continued: "Konstantine said that the maps he included will help us know where to find him if he or his group go into hiding. There are 'safe houses,' or locations that are hard to find, where communist soldiers, secret police, and agents wouldn't think to look if they were to seek to arrest Konstantine and his group. They're indicated in yellow. There are alternative 'safe houses' in blue if the yellow 'safe houses' are compromised."

"He sure has planned this out well," Sarah said.

"Konstantine Apalkov is a very thorough guy," Alexei said.

"But, why would God want Konstantine to prepare a place for us?" Jason said, wondering aloud.

"Russia is not safe for evangelistic Christians," Alexei said with wide-open eyes, expressing his deep concern. "It is full of spies, informants, and secret police. Men and women posing as Christians secretly work for the government and report on what they see and hear in Christian underground meetings. Just last month, four brothers in Christ and three sisters were arrested while having a Bible study. A spy had attended their group, claiming to be a new brother in Christ. He had turned them in. And, they were locked up in separate prisons near Novosibirsk, I've been told."

"That is sad," Sarah said.

"They are charged with conducting illegal religious activities and so-called 'subversive' work 'against' the government. But, that is nonsense. They were just meeting to have Christian fellowship and have Bible studies. I have been told that there are now secret concentration camps being established where Christians and political prisoners are placed. Once you are in a camp, it is impossible to leave, unless God does a miracle."

"But, if those Christians had sought God about this spy, wouldn't He have shown them that the spy was not a true brother in Christ?" Sarah asked.

"God would, wouldn't He," Alexei said.

"Absolutely," Jason said. "God does not want us to walk in the dark. God said in Jeremiah 33:3: 'Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and

mighty things, which thou knowest not.”

“That is good to know,” Sarah said.

“And,” Jason said, “in John 16:13 Jesus said: ‘[13] Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.’ The Holy Spirit speaks to us with His voice. I remember looking up the Greek word which was translated as “speak” in that verse. It is *laleo*,* which means to utter words or talk. The Holy Spirit utters words and speaks to us. But, hearing Him comes from just being still, waiting on Him, and desiring to know the truth He will show us. And, the Holy Spirit will never contradict the Bible, God’s Word. He is one with God the Father, of course. So, He speaks as God the Father speaks. But, we all know this, I think.”

[* Note: **Laleo** is found in Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance under #2980 in the Greek section.]

“That is comforting to know,” Sarah said. “I want to seek to know God better. What you are saying reminds me of Psalms 63, where King David is speaking of his thirst for God. I remember Psalm 63. Psalms 63:1 says: ‘[1] O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;.’

“And,” Steve said, “verse 3 of Psalm 63 says: ‘Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.’

“God’s love is better than life. God’s love...is better than...life,” Alexei said as the thought about those words and pondered their significance. After a few moments of silence, his eyes fell to the maps on the table.

Deep inside his heart, Alexei wondered if God’s love really was better than life. He knew with part of his mind that it must be true, but he wondered. He had seen pain and suffering during his 35 years of living. His grandpa, an evangelical Christian, had died in a communist gulag during the cold war era. One of his uncles had been bitter toward God and had walked away from Christianity completely.

‘But, should I hold onto these events over what the Holy Scripture has to say?’ Alexei thought to himself. ‘After all, I don’t fully understand why God allows suffering, but will I believe God’s Word, or will I believe my feelings and what I

think I understand instead of what God's Word says?'

Alexei decided that he must trust God and the Holy Scriptures no matter what. But, fears were still attacking him and doubts of God's good intentions were creeping into his mind. 'Perhaps,' Alexei thought dismally, 'it would be better to just forget about doing God's best will if God's best will is for me to die in a concentration camp.'

"Alexei," Steve said as he placed a hand on the Russian's shoulder, "is something wrong?"

"No," Alexei hastily said, but he felt conviction soon after lying. "Well, actually I mean, yes, I am troubled by something."

"Do you want to talk about it?" Steve said, with concern for his new friend.

"Let's go to my spare bedroom to talk," Alexei said.

He led the way down a hallway and pushed open the door into a room which was used for storage. Large cardboard boxes were stacked in one corner. A shelf resting up against a wall contained more boxes. Against one wall, opposite from the shelf, rested a bed with a pillow and a sheet. It looked like it hadn't been used in awhile.

Once the door was shut, Alexei turned around and faced Steven.

"Steven, I am bothered by things that have happened in my past," Alexei said with a gloomy look on his face.

Drawing a deep breath, he continued, "My grandpa was a good Christian man, a non-denominational evangelical Christian, but he suffered in a gulag and died there during the years of the old Soviet Union. I don't understand how God's love is better than life if my grandpa had to suffer for so long. It must be true that God's love is better than life, but why is there suffering for His children? And, if my grandpa had to suffer in a gulag, what makes me think that I won't be captured and placed in a gulag too? I've heard that the new Russian government is starting up concentration camps."

"There are many things that we don't fully understand about God and why He allows what He does, but have you ever asked God about these concerns you have?" Steve said.

"I have, I guess," Alexei said.

"What did He show you?"

"I didn't really wait for the answer," Alexei said gloomily. "I guess I just didn't want to hear God tell me something which might trouble me."

"God loves it when we ask Him questions," Steve said with compassion for this struggling brother in Christ. "He will not make our lives miserable. Rather, God wants us to have fullness of joy. Psalm 16:11 speaks of how in God's presence is fullness of joy. And, Jesus in John 14:23 told us that He and God the Father have made their abode with born-again Christians, who love Him and obey Him. So, we have God's presence dwelling in our spiritual hearts. And, God desires us to have fullness of joy, which comes from His presence which dwells within us."

Alexei nodded and scratched his red beard as he thought about Steve's words.

"Do you want to seek God about your concerns?" Steve asked.

"Yes," Alexei said with a little more confidence in his voice. "I certainly do."

Steve patted him on the shoulder and left the room, leaving Alexei to seek God, which he did.

"Father God, you know what I am troubled about," Alexei said when Steve was gone. "Will you show me why Christians suffer in death camps, and will you show me if it is your best will for Christians to suffer in such circumstances? I want to know that I can trust you."

"My son," God's loving voice said, "I am the Lord your God and Abba Father. Christians who walk out of My best will sometimes will find themselves in bad situations, but know that I will certainly, and I do certainly, work those out for their good, and bring them grace, and peace, and consolation through all their hardships that they face.

"It is not My will that Christians suffer in gulags or in hard circumstances, but I do allow it to refine them. If they had sought Me and followed My best will, I would never lead them into such situations, but I would deliver them from those situations to use them for My Kingdom.

"When I speak to My children, I speak in a quiet voice, and they have to believe that My voice is really from Me. But, they also need to be Bereans and test what they hear with the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make one wise unto salvation. If they will not go according to the Holy Scriptures, they will be deceived by clever evil spirits, but if they genuinely want to know the truth and want to know Me, I will deliver them from deception.

"So, look to Me, rest in Me, and know that I will certainly deliver you from those who would want to harm you, and from those who would want to kill or hurt you. I love you very much, My son. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken."

"That is amazing, Abba Father," Alexei said, looking up. "So, if I follow what you show Me to do, I am in your best will, and I will never be tortured or harmed like that? I believe you. Didn't you deliver Daniel from the lions' den; and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego from the fiery furnace; and King David from those who sought his life? You did. So, you shall deliver me from my foes, because I now choose to seek your best will and follow your specific leading."

"That is good, My son," Abba God's voice said. "You are doing well. Now, you may return to your friends. I will guide you in what to do. And, I the Lord your God and Abba Father have spoken."

"Praise you, Father God! You are trustworthy and more than trustworthy! I choose to build my life on you and on your Holy Scriptures," Alexei said, looking up excitedly, before he placed a hand on the doorknob.

To be continued...

[\(Click here to see The Table of Contents.\)](#)

[Right click link and select "Open link in new tab."]

(If you would like to know more about Jesus Christ, [click here](#).)

[**Footnote:** The **Chinese** are **not** the enemy, neither are the **Russians**. Both are people just like you and me. But, God will use Russia and China to judge wicked nations, which will not repent from their rebellion against Him. And, the devil will seek to stir up men to persecute the Church. But, God will deliver all who seek Him and trust in Him.]

(I am posting this entire story for free. I will make no money from this book.)

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