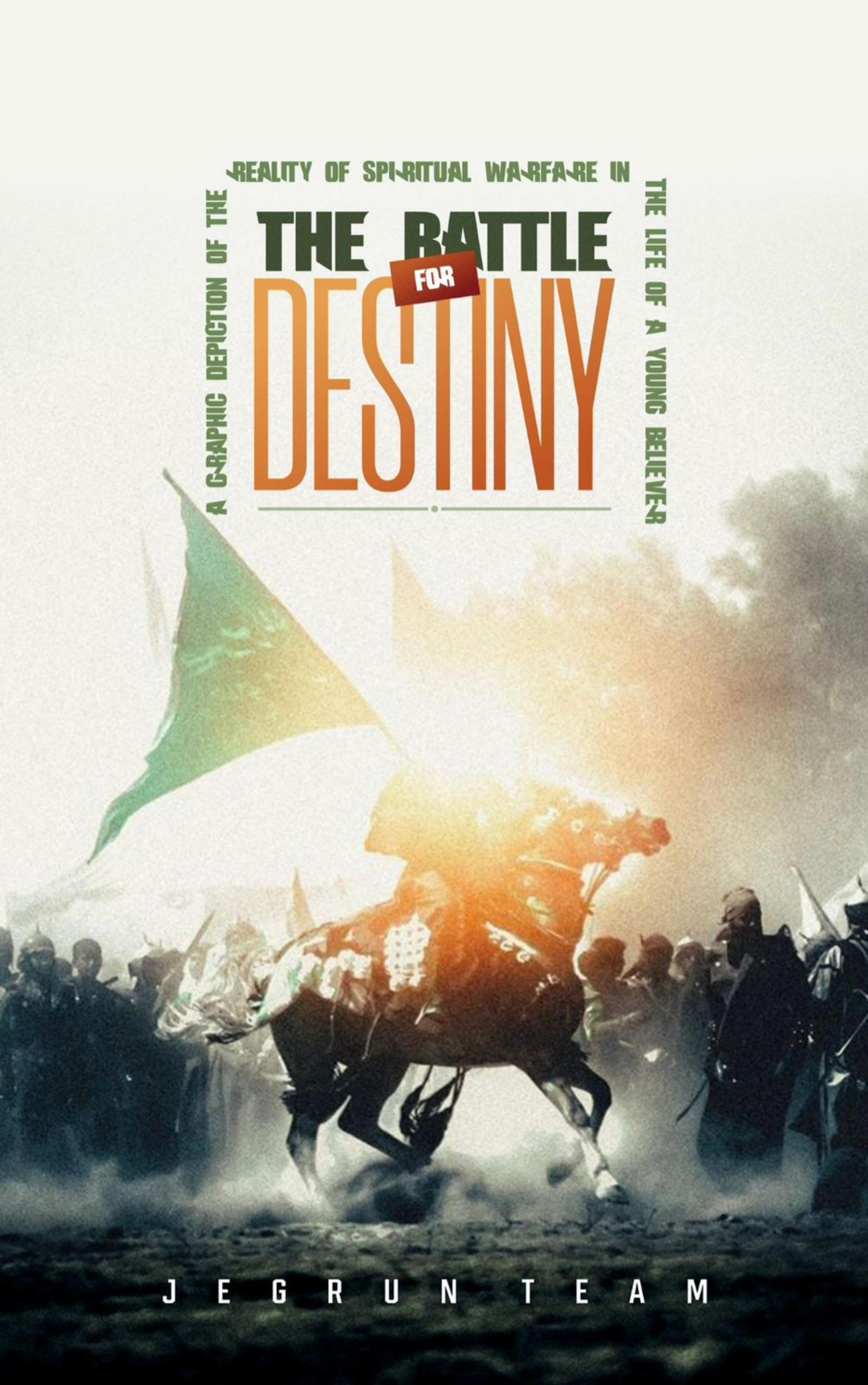


A GRAPHIC DEPICTION OF THE REALITY OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN
THE BATTLE FOR DESTINY



THE LIFE OF A YOUNG BELIEVER

J E G R U N T E A M

BATTLE FOR DESTINY

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Preface

Every believer in Christ has a glorious future in God. However, not every believer manifests that future. This is mainly due to the rigorous battle in the spiritual realm waged by enemy forces trying to truncate God-given destiny, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12).

The devil, our adversary, portrays himself as an angel of light. He uses seemingly harmless tactics to catch believers in his trap. Here's the good news: we are not without help.

Amid the battle raging against our souls and destinies, the Father works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. He equips His own with mysteriously powerful ammunition called The Whole Armour of

God. If worn fully, correctly, and daily, this armour would help every child of God stand firmly against Satan's schemes (Ephesians 6:14-18).

ABBA's Dwelling vividly exhibits this fight through the story of a young man. If read carefully and sensitively, his story would awaken awareness of this warfare and increase your sensitivity to the subtle strategies of the serpent's syndicate.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this book could not have been possible without the help of God and the ABBA's Dwelling team, who, through diligence and patience, compiled and edited this book with great skill and precision.

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Finally, to the One who brings all things together in perfect harmony, God, the

Source of wisdom and inspiration, be all the
glory and honour forever. Amen.

PART 1

Town
Hall
Meeting
in the
Abyss

All the demonic creatures trembled in fear as the iron gate opened, and the Dark Prince walked into the chambers, a trail of smoke following him from behind. His belligerent appearance, terror-filled eyes, long claws, and spiked tail made the congregation feel chills roll down their spine. He elegantly climbed the steps leading to his throne between two giant black pythons and sat down.

"You may sit!" said the Dark Prince in his typical eerie voice that reverberated within the walls of the isolated chambers.

"And now, to the progress report," said the Dark Prince as he gestured with his left hand to the demon sitting at the edge of the first row. Trembling with fear, Division stood up and walked to the open space between the throne of the Dark Prince and the congregation.

"My Prince," said the wicked spirit, "may you remain exalted above all the fallen ones, and may your kingdom reign over the hearts of men. I am pleased to inform you that I accomplished my mission: I have successfully destroyed the home of the unsuspecting Pastor. The approach I proposed worked perfectly. I used his beautiful secretary to make his wife suspicious of him. Then I filled her heart with envy and bitterness. The love between them and the sweet fellowship of prayer and Bible study they used to have dried up as quickly as a plant abandoned under the scorching heat of the sun."

By now, Division could see a smirk slowly appear on the face of the Dark Prince – a rare occurrence in such a congregational meeting. Division became more relaxed and confident as he continued, *"My next step will be to make his wife begin to neglect him in bed. He will be so deprived of sexual fulfilment that he will be too weak to resist*

the beautiful secretary when I prompt her to make her move. The news of the fiery Pastor Mark who once ravaged our kingdom, falling face down on the laps of our agent who we sent to pose as his secretary, will linger for long on their social media. The entire Chapel of Life Church will be devastated. And of course, the plan of their Great King to bring a revival to their city through them will be aborted until further notice."

At this point, the Dark Prince sprung up from his throne, unable to hold his excitement any longer. He briefly danced with the black pythons beside his throne. The congregation members erupted in laughter, with resounding applause and a standing ovation for this feat that their wicked colleague had achieved.

"Now, this is the kind of news I love to hear!" said the Dark Prince excitedly. *"Pastor Mark has been number one on our hit list for the*

past fifteen years. We set several traps for him, but his praying wife was always sensitive enough in the spirit to keep him covered with her prayers. Our decision to send Princess Salisa into that congregation was such a genius idea. Tell Princess Salisa that we are proud of her and that upon successful completion of her mission, she will be promoted to the rank of Queen of the Western Coast."

Division slowly walked back to his seat. He enjoyed every moment on his way back, revelling in excitement as he saw the awe and admiration in the eyes of all his colleagues.

No sooner had he sat down did he hear the terrifying voice of the Dark Prince, "*Next!*"

The entire congregation shivered, and the excitement of the air vanished in a moment. The Dark Prince seemed to have quickly

forgotten the story of Division.

Trembling and shivering at the same time, Destiny-Destroyer walked onto the scene.

"My Prince," he began, "may you remain exalted above all the fallen ones, and may your kingdom reign over the hearts of men. My target has proven to be a difficult one. He is thoroughly devoted to the Great King and His kingdom and has remained very fervent in spirit. He fasts and prays regularly, keeps himself from evil, and remains quite sensitive to the voice of the Spirit of his God. I think we are hopeless concerning him as it seems there is nothing I can do to destroy the destiny God has planned for h..."

Boom! Boom! Bang! Bang!

All the creatures screamed in fear as they watched the Dark Prince sprout from his throne with speed faster than light. He

pounced on Destiny-Destroyer, inflicting one blow after another with knuckles that drilled painful holes into the face of the unfortunate creature.

Destiny-Destroyer moaned and wailed as he begged for mercy, "*My Prince! Give me one more chance. I promise to work harder. I will succeed this time.*"

The Dark Prince got up, pacing the floor angrily, breathing breaths of terror and mumbling unintelligible words under his breath.

"That young man...that young man! I dislike him so much!" he finally began to speak out. *"The attention of his Great King seems to be on him. Heaven has invested so much in his life. I've seen others like him before. Very fervent in spirit and committed to the words written in their Holy Book. His type usually grows to become one of the Generals in the*

army of our enemies that coordinate the attacks against us and ravage us and our purposes. We cannot let him continue. We must stop him."

Destiny-Destroyer, now a pathetic bleeding creature, managed to speak up, "My Prince, I believe I have what it takes to bring down this growing soldier. I will attack him with lust, and if that fails, I will try to inflict sickness on him, and if that fails, I will try to...."

"Will you shut up your filthy mouth, you idiot?" screamed the Dark Prince. "Now I see why you have been an utter failure until now. That young man, Timothy, is too mature to be captured by one attack at a time. He must be ambushed, attacked from all sides at the same time. You are to get all your minions ready ASAP. Start by attacking him with lust. There's no better tool we've found to be so effective among young men. Use that lady in his youth group that he is already attracted

to, the one called Vanes...."

"Vanessa," completed Destiny-Destroyer.

"Yes, Vanessa," agreed the Dark Prince. "*She has a history of being immoral before repentance, so we can take advantage of her past and move through her to trap him. At the same time, you should send Discord to infiltrate his apartment and cause a fight between Timothy and his neighbours. We want him to be completely disoriented and frustrated because the chances of him falling into our trap will be higher.*

Simultaneously, you are to send Pride to inject him with a sense of importance. Pride should display all his spiritual exploits before him and whisper to him how great he is and why he deserves more honour from his brethren than they have given him. If Pride succeeds, the Great King will begin to resist Timothy by Himself, making our task much

easier than it could ever be.

Also, send Trauma to search the archives for any traumatic experience that Timothy might have had in the past, anything at all that caused a scar on his soul. We must study it and look for ways to trigger those painful experiences from his past. Finally, send Lukewarmness to kill his prayer life. Make him sleepy, cause him to overeat, distract him through his smartphone, whatever it takes. We must gradually get Timothy to a point where he prays no longer. A Christian with no prayer life will surely be a cheap prey.

Hahahaha!" the Dark Prince laughed wickedly.

"Oh, poor Timothy, poor little thing," he continued. "Let's see how you'll overcome this time. With Lust, Discord, Pride, Trauma, and Lukewarmness, you don't stand a chance at all."

Timothy woke up at 5:30 a.m. with an unusual urge to pray. After cleaning up and having a cup of coffee, he knelt in his closet, which he had converted into a war room. He began to worship God and was carried along by the Holy Spirit. After some time, he groaned in his spirit as the Spirit gave him utterance. He finally began to sing the 19th-century hymn by Charlotte Elliott, "Christian Seek Not Yet Repose." He couldn't go beyond the first stanza, as those words seemed to take a new meaning within his spirit:

*"Christian, seek not yet repose,
Cast your dreams of ease away,
You are in the midst of foes:
Watch and pray."*

After singing for a few minutes, he finally came to an understanding in his spirit.

*"I get it, Lord; I get it now. I am amid foes.
Please help me to be watchful. Help me to be
prayerful."*

PART 2

Backup
from
Heaven

T

imothy continued to sing on his knees, the presence of God surrounding him and the joy of the Holy Spirit bubbling in his soul.

Over the horizon, across from the building where his apartment was located, a thick dark cloud appeared. It initially looked like a usual raincloud, except there was something different about this one – there seemed to be a life in it.

The cloud drifted slowly towards Timothy's apartment building and gradually split into five clouds. Lust, Discord, Pride, Trauma, and Lukewarmness stood hanging over the apartment block as they carefully thought of a way to launch their attack.

"Who goes first?" asked Pride. "I think I should. It is clear from my records that I have the best success rate among us all. I

mean, next to Division, who, by the way, was lucky enough to bring down the fiery Pastor Mark, there's no other devil in the congregation who has successfully completed the Dark Prince's missions as I have," he continued.

"Your name fits you perfectly, unfortunately, you lack the memory and intelligence to remember that the Dark Prince clearly stated that Lust should go first, as no greater spirit is so effective among young people," replied Trauma.

"Oh, give me a break!" interjected Pride.

"What does the Dark Prince know anyway?" he continued. "If he is as cunning as he pretends to be, why didn't he succeed in deceiving our other colleagues who remained loyal to the Great King in Heaven? I regret that I was not discerning enough to know that his planned coup would be a gross fiasco that would banish us to eternal damnation!"

Tired of Pride's babbling, Discord responded, "Yeah. It's a pity he couldn't deceive our other colleagues; he only managed to deceive the foolish ones such as you...."

"*You watch it!*" replied Pride as he clenched his fist and revealed his sharp claws to threaten Discord and prevent further insults.

"Hey!" screamed Lust in a relatively mature tone. "*Take a look at us. We are about to lose the battle even before starting by shamefully turning on each other while our target remains in his secret place under the shadow of the Almighty.*"

In one moment, the five wicked spirits all looked intently in the same direction towards Timothy's room, their evil eyes piercing sharply through the padded walls that the apartment was built with. There,

they saw the young man. There seemed to be a glow around his face that blinded their eyes even from that distance. They could see a fire burning inside of him.

He was tightly girded with a belt in which sat a breastplate so thick and shiny that it seemed no arrow could ever penetrate. He also had his feet shod with footgear that gave him firm footing.

"This is a warrior to the core," was the comment of Lukewarmness, who had been utterly silent until now.

"Yes, I didn't expect anything less anyway," said Lust, hands akimbo and a look of discouragement on his face.

Just then, light was seen descending from high above the building. Oh, wait! That is not an ordinary light; they are beings! They seemed to have descended from the very

Shekinah. The glory they exuded was unparalleled by any other star in the galaxies known to man or devils.

"Holy crap! Is anyone thinking what I'm thinking?" exclaimed Pride.

"But who are they? And why are they here?" questioned Lukewarmness in his gentle and persuasive voice, which he regularly used to persuade his victims not to pray, fast, study the word of God, or do anything that can make them spiritually strong.

The five heavenly warriors surrounded their earthly counterpart – Timothy, building a defensive hedge around him.

Crainus, a high-ranking militant prince who served directly under the Arch-Angel Michael, was one of them. He was famous among the angelic ranks for his superior exploits.

He was the go-to warrior called upon for very delicate missions such as this. He was flanked on his left and right by Trifago and Skodrus - two competent warriors wielding golden swords. Between Trifago and Skrodus stood Friscol and Stallion - belligerent personalities always ready for a fight.

"So, what's the plan?" questioned Friscol, impatiently rubbing his palms over each other. *"I can't wait to begin to crush the heads of those devils. It's been several months since I was sent to fight the LORD's battles."*

"Patience, Friscol, patience. We must proceed with the initial instructions while we wait for the signal from Headquarters," answered Crainus, who was notably bigger than his four counterparts and spoke with a voice that set him apart as the leader of this platoon.

"Timothy is a fine soldier of our kingdom, and a lot lies in the hands of our King for him to accomplish in his lifetime. He has come to a season of promotion, but as a law, no promotion is given without a fierce contest. The events of the following days and maybe weeks will be cardinal in determining the destiny of this young warrior. Our duty is to accompany him and assist him through this season of trial. He will be severely tempted, but we will always be there to create a way of escape and show it to him. Nevertheless, it will always be his responsibility to make use of it.

Skrodus, you shall accompany Timothy to his place of work today. Our scouts have spotted a group of devils gathering around his office building. We have to assume they are there for him. Make sure he begins fasting immediately so that he can be sensitive enough in his spirit to pick up the signals we will be sending him."

"Yihooooo!" screamed the joyful warrior as he shot upwards, displaying a glorious array of colourful lights, with his right hand on his sword and left hand stretched forward. He would go through Timothy's route to ensure his path was clear. Then, he would return to accompany him to work.

"Friscol and Stallion," Crainus continued, *"you are to go ahead of us to Timothy's office building. Stand afar off and conceal your identities. You are to make no move until we arrive. You will communicate whatever intelligence you gather when we arrive."*

The two warriors held hands together and spun joyfully as they vanished into thin air, fired on by the urgency of their commander's instruction.

"What about me?" asked Trifago. He was the gentlest among all five, but his eyes burned with fiery passion whenever he battled an

opponent.

"We will need more prayer cover," replied Crainus. "We cannot underestimate the rage of the enemy against this young warrior. Go and alert Simon, the prayer warrior. If he doesn't pick up your signal, then go and alert Olga, the elderly woman intercessor. We will need her to deploy the full might of her intercessory abilities. If both of them fail to pick up your prompting, send a distress signal to Mrs. Simpson, the wife of Timothy's discipler. I think any of these three should be able to generate enough prayer cover for the first phase of our battle."

"Roger that!" replied Trifago as he was about to take off.

He stopped suddenly, turned to Crainus, and asked, *"And what about you?"*

"You see those five demonic minions that have been hovering over this building?"

Crainus asked.

"Yes, I took note of them: Lust, Pride, Discord, Trauma, and Lukewarmness," replied Trifago.

"I need to distract them so that you, Skrodus, Friscol, and Stallion can be free enough to do your work. Wait for my signal before you take off." Crainus continued.

The five devils still hovered over Timothy's apartment building, hopelessly wondering what those heavenly warriors were up to. By now, the discouragement had spread to all devils until Lust, desperate to live up to the Dark Prince's expectations, stood upright and spoke with the tone of a commander.

"Folks, we have a mission to accomplish, and we will fight with the last drop of our blood to bring Timothy down! Do not be

discouraged by the presence of the heavenly warriors. They can only strengthen him and create a way of escape from all the temptations we have arranged on Timothy's path. It will always be the responsibility of Timothy to make use of the escape routes. But if we succeed in distracting him and making him careless, then we will have our chance."

He lifted his clenched left fist, scarred from blows he had received in previous battles, and said, "*For the glory of the Fallen Prince, we succeed together or fail together. We live together and die together!*"

The other four spirits followed suit, lifting their clenched left fists and echoing the chant, "*For the glory of the Fallen Prince, we succeed together or fail together. We live together and die together.*"

Just then, they saw a bright light from Timothy's room.

"Crainus!!" screamed the five devils in unison.

Almost spontaneously, they shot forth with great force and went after the heavenly warrior, who also took off towards the city's outskirts, occasionally slowing down to allow the devils to catch up with him and make them think they were succeeding in their hot pursuit.

As soon as the way was clear, Trifago took off to mobilise prayer cover.

Timothy got up from his morning prayer, dressed, and prepared for work.

PART 3

The
Battle
Begins

Timothy walked downstairs and exited his apartment building. As expected, he saw Nick, the World War 2 veteran, who lived on the first floor of the same building. Nick was always with his dog, a Siberian Husky, in the seating area in front of the building late at night and early in the morning.

Timothy wondered if he ever slept. He walked across the road and entered the underground tunnel connected to the entrance of the suburban train station. He glanced at his watch and realised he would be a bit late at his current pace.

He decided to speed up to catch up with the next train, whose whistle he could hear already. Due to his hurry, he failed to see the yellow sign on the stairs with the warning: "Caution! Wet floor."

He tripped on the final rise of the staircase

before the landing and was about to crash on the hardened floor, but just in time, an invisible hand appeared, holding up his chest just briefly enough to regain his balance.

"*Careful,*" whispered Skrodus as he took off his hand and let Timothy stand on his feet.

"*Oh, God! That would have been a bad fall,*" whispered Timothy thankfully.

"*Thank God I didn't wear my rubber leather sneakers with the smoother sole. I would have fallen easily,*" he added as he continued on his run to catch the train.

Skrodus shook his head and smiled, wondering why humans often fail to realise angelic interventions.

When the train arrived at Culture Park station, Timothy hurried off to the exit and

walked along the path to the second exit. Passing in front of a line of shops, he suddenly realised he had not had breakfast. He stopped in his tracks.

Skrodus, realising what Timothy was about to do and remembering Crainus' instruction, whispered into his left ear, "*Fast.*"

"Well, maybe I should fast today," mumbled Timothy as he made his way to the exit. He hardly took more than three steps when he thought, *"A cup of coffee won't do much harm. Today may be a long day."*

He walked up to the Starbucks shop and ordered a latte without sugar. The Barista smiled as she hurried to prepare the coffee. She covered the cup with a lid and handed it to Timothy through the narrow glass window.

Skrodus tipped the cup with his finger,

tactfully spilling the coffee but preventing the hot liquid from pouring onto the lady's hand.

"Oh my God!" she shouted softly and embarrassingly with her two hands on her mouth.

"I'm so sorry, sir. Today is my first day at work. I'm still getting used to this tiny little cubicle of a shop. I expected Starbucks to rent something larger than this," she continued as she hurried to wipe off the spilt coffee.

Skrodus whispered to Timothy again, *"Fast."*

"I'll prepare you another one in five minutes," said the lady as she hurriedly began to prepare another cup of coffee.

"Don't bother," said Timothy. *"I'm already late for work."*

She felt sorry for what had happened and apologised again.

"Don't worry," answered Timothy. *"It wasn't your fault."*

He walked through the exit and began the 100-metre walk to the entrance of the towering Business Center where his office was located. A small band of evil spirits that had been posted there took notice of him.

"There goes that warrior," said one of them. *"I heard he is the top target on our hitlist,"* he continued.

"Certainly, whoever captures this one will become famous in the Congregation," he said as he approached Timothy.

"Wait!" cautioned his companions. *"You have to be careful. How do you plan to attack?"* they asked.

"I don't plan to attack," replied the tiny creature. *"Just watch me."*

The creature vanished and sped his way towards Timothy. Fifty metres from the entrance of the Business Center, a school kid on a scooter ran carelessly through the road, brushing Timothy by his right side. Timothy's ID card fell off, but he didn't notice it or look at the kid because he was hurrying to the building on time.

Five seconds later, he was tapped on the shoulder by an elderly man, who said, *"Hey, young man, I guess this is yours."* He then handed his ID card over to him.

"Oh yes! Thanks so much, sir. I didn't know it fell," replied Timothy halfheartedly as he continued towards the building.

Something seemed odd about that older man. He turned briefly to glance again at

the older man. He saw no one.

"*That's weird,*" he said to himself.

The older man smiled from the window of the flower shop where he had vanished.

"*Nice one, Friscol,*" said another elderly man seated on a white chair with a walking stick.

"*Thanks, Stallion,*" replied Friscol. They waved at Skrodus, who continued to accompany Timothy to his office.

The dark cloud moved across the horizon from the outskirts of the city. It moved slowly this time, locating the top of the Business Center. The small band of spirits identified the cloud immediately. The dark cloud split into five smaller clouds, taking the form of the five evil creatures assigned to capture Timothy.

"They look so tired," said one of the tiny creatures.

"What took them so long?" he continued.

"What did you say?" questioned Pride angrily.

"Did you say my face looks long? Don't you know I'm the most good-looking among the fallen ones?" he continued with his tone as threatening as ever.

"No, my lord," screamed the evil creature, *"I was only wondering what took you so long to arrive at the scene."*

"Crainus outsmarted us," said Lust, *"but we'll make him pay."*

He glared towards the offices in the Business Center and said,
"Trauma...proceed! Don't be gentle. Do the

worst you can.”

“Did not the Dark Prince instruct you to go first?” objected Trauma.

“I'll surely launch my attack, but you must first disarm him before I can shoot my arrows,” replied Lust.

In the boardroom, where the briefing for the day happens before everyone disperses to pursue their task, Diana, the Chief Operations Officer, outlined the agenda for the day. Solid Rock Capital had surpassed its target for the first quarter of its fiscal year.

She attributed that feat to the Analytics and Insights group for accurate models that correctly predicted market trends and determined appropriate investment options for their clients to get maximum returns.

The next big project was an analysis of

CARliance, a Japanese software Company intending to launch a product that uses a machine-learning algorithm to predict automobile accidents.

Diana wanted the Analytics group to go through the 100-page document sent by the company, analyse their models, and propose recommendations for their product. She passed the hard-bonded document to Timothy on the other end of the table.

Carlos, the Sales group leader, received the document from Diana and passed it on to Collins – an IT guru who was also a member of the Analytics group. Collins passed it on to Nate – The marketing leader, but Sandra, an HR rep, tactfully interrupted the chain and held the document. She wanted to hand it to Timothy herself.

Timothy smiled dryly as he collected the

document from her. She smiled back but tried to hide her sadness. She wondered why Timothy had not complimented her hairdo this morning.

After the briefing, Timothy sat on his desk and opened the document. His heart leapt as he saw the picture on the first page. He closed the document slowly and took an intense breath. He opened it again, but couldn't go beyond the first page.

He got up from his table and went to the lobby. He filled a plastic cup with water from the dispenser but could hardly drink it. He fumbled a bit around the office and finally returned to his desk.

He opened the document again, and now images flashed through his mind. He saw it all again: the crash, the screams, the smoke, the blood. He began to feel it all again: the fear, the horror, the terror of that

unfortunate accident.

He had been on his way home from the amusement park with his parents. They joked and played with each other. He was having his third cup of vanilla-flavoured ice cream, and he had spilt some of it on his Superman shirt, but he wiped it with his hand. He knew his mum would scold him if she saw it.

He was a happy child, but an unexplainable and unforgettable mistake changed his life forever.

His father ran into a trailer that had failed its brakes. He couldn't remember much after that. His faint memories only held the wails of his mother. The door from her side had bent inward and pierced through her ribs.

Her lungs were soon filled with blood, and she died from suffocation before the medics

could arrive. His father had survived and was rushed to the emergency room. He passed away after three hours.

Doctors mentioned brain damage as the cause of his death. Miraculously, Timothy had escaped with only a few bruises on his neck.

Grandma Anna, who adopted Timothy and raised him, always told him God had spared him from death in that accident because he was a unique child, and God had great plans for him.

As much as he loved to believe that, he often wondered why God did not have great plans for his parents.

The more he condoned those thoughts and memories, the weaker his spirit became, and depression began to creep in.

"I guess I was just one of those unfortunate children that had to endure tragedies," he said to himself.

As soon as he believed that lie, his belt – the belt of truth that holds other pieces of amour together loosened a bit, creating a gap in his armour.

Hovering over his head and flashing those vivid images, Trauma smiled smugly to himself. *"Gotcha!"* he said.

"Tada!"

Timothy's heart leapt in shock as he turned around to see who had rubbed her fingers on his cheek.

Sandra giggled and asked, *"What were you afraid of, Timothy the brave?"*

"You scared me," said Timothy, turning to

to continue working on his MacBook. Then he remembered he had not been working on his MacBook.

"Oh, did I?" asked Sandra sarcastically as she slowly closed his computer and sat on his desk, her knee-length skirt slightly pulling upwards and revealing a bit of her thigh.

"What do we have here?" she said as she opened the document's first page. "CARliannce...preventing accidents, saving lives" was the catch line written under the picture of a ghastly motor accident.

"Hmm, looks good," she said as she dropped the document. She noticed Timothy was uncomfortable as she read it.

"Timo darling, why don't you ever have time for me anymore? You won't even walk me home after work. You have never agreed for us to have coffee together during breaks," she

said.

“Sandra!” interrupted Timothy. “I have some serious work to do, and I guess you do too. Please stay away from me.” He got up and walked to the restroom.

He shut the door, pulled down his trousers, and sat down to answer the call of nature. He then picked up his phone to scroll through his WhatsApp messages. It was 14:55. He saw a text from Sandra and tapped on it to read through it.

“Timo darling, I made my hair over the weekend. Do you like it?” the message said.

Then he scrolled down to see the picture she had sent.

“Oh God!” He came off WhatsApp quickly to recover from the shock of what he had seen. *“What exactly is wrong with this lady? God,*

please deliver me from this Delilah that wants to finish my destiny. Why did she decide to send me a picture from her shower?"

He locked his phone again and put it back into his pocket. Somehow, he could not recollect his thoughts. He kept ruminating over what he had seen.

"Isn't she sexy? Be a nice guy and just tell her she looks beautiful," whispered a dark creature that hung from the toilet ceiling where he was. It was Lust.

"No. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. I will not yield it as an instrument of unrighteousness to sin," declared Timothy.

"Come on. Even God knows that you are a man and that you have needs. It's not as if you went to watch porn. She simply sent it to you. God knows that you can't avoid falling into sin from time to time; that is why He

has provided Blood of Jesus to cleanse you. Just indulge yourself this time and warn her not to send such a picture to you again. You can even block her after this," the evil creature continued to persuade Timothy.

Reluctantly, Timothy reached for his pocket, brought out his phone, and unlocked it.

PART 4

An
Irresistible
Bait

He was about to tap the Whatsapp icon when a call came in. Timothy sighed intensely and answered the call.

"Hey, Simon. It's good to hear from you. How are you?"

"I'm fine, Timothy. I'm sorry to call you at this time. I know you're still at work. I woke up this morning with a strong burden to pray, and I have been unable to get you off my mind since I started praying. There's a verse of Scripture the Holy Spirit impressed on my heart, and I want to read it to you.

It says, 'By means of a whorish woman, a man is reduced to a crust of bread, and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.' I don't know precisely what this means, but you should be very careful. There could be an adulteress around you who is setting traps to prey on your life." Simon said.

Timothy was silent.

"Are you there, Timothy?" Simon asked.

"Yes, I am, Simon. Thanks for the word of encouragement. It's really timely," Timothy replied.

"God be with you, brother," Simon said, showing he was ending the conversation.

Timothy hung up the call, angry in his spirit. He clicked on Sandra's contact and pressed "Block."

Simon sighed deeply and prayed silently, *"Lord, help Timothy."*

He then returned to continue teaching his lesson. His students wondered what was so urgent that their Math teacher had interrupted the class to make the call.

Trifago smiled and leapt off, gliding towards the Business Center to join the other warriors. His work was done.

Crainus reunited with the three other warriors high above the clouds near the Business Center. They jammed their shields together joyfully.

Scrodus rubbed the back of Friscol and said, *"Nice work, warrior."*

"Friscol, Stallion, let us know what intelligence you've gathered," requested Crainus.

"Not much," the two warriors responded in unison.

"But I keep hearing plans about the weather. I looked through the forecast for this week, but there is nothing unusual," added Friscol.

"I see. We must keep Timothy safe at all costs. Let's keep our eyes open," concluded Crainus.

"By the way, where is Trifago?" asked Stallion.

"He has a little task to complete," replied Crainus, smiling as he did so. *"Timothy overcame one battle. We must begin the promotion process".*

On the other side of the building, one of the evil creatures asked, *"Did we get him?"*

"Well, yes and no," replied Trauma.

"I successfully executed my role with style. I loosened his belt of Truth – the one piece that holds all other pieces of armour together making him believe a lie. I created a gap in

his amour. We would have dragged Timothy into the mud of sin if only Captain Lust," he said with a sarcastic glance at Lust, "had successfully done his own part."

"Hey, don't blame me," protested Lust. "I almost had him. He was an inch away from falling into the quicksand of pornography. I convinced him to take one look, the one look that often becomes the hook from which many young people never recover. But he was interrupted by that call from errmm... Simon, the intercessor. How I hate intercessors!"

On his way back home, Timothy's phone rang. He looked at the screen and saw the caller ID. It was Mariam, the Church secretary.

"Hello, Miss Mariam," greeted Timothy happily.

"Hi, Brother Timothy. I'm glad I could reach you. I have an important announcement for you," said Miss Miriam.

"Okay, let me hear it," Timothy replied.

"Pastor Tom will be overseas next weekend for an international minister's conference. It was an impromptu invitation he could not reject. This means he will be unavailable for the National Youth Leadership Conference, which will take place on that same weekend. He will need to be replaced by someone. The Church board had a meeting this afternoon and decided you should be the replacement. I received a call from elder Charles at 15:00 this afternoon instructing me to inform you to prepare," Miss Miriam said.

"Oh wow," responded Timothy.

"Do you think you are up to the task? There

will be hundreds of attendees at the Leadership Conference, and thousands of youths will connect online from all over the world," added Miss Mariam.

"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me," responded Timothy.

"Good," answered Miss Mariam. "We'll follow up with more details."

Trifago smiled, leapt off the Church building, and went to unite with the other warriors.

A small evil creature ran frantically, screaming, *"My lord!! My lord!!"*

He joined the other devils, shouting, *"Something terrible is happening! We must do something!"* Then he broke the news of the phone call to the others. They broke into

tormoil.

"If the anointing on Timothy's life is allowed to find expression, he will do untold damage to our kingdom. We must do something to stop him!" said Lukewarmness.

"I have a plan," said Lust. *"I failed before, but I won't fail again. This time, I'll tempt him with a bait he cannot resist."*

Timothy returned home and settled on the couch with a small cottage cheese and sour cream bowl. He switched on the news and was shocked to see warnings of a coming hurricane. That explained the thick clouds he had noticed on his way back.

"The magnitude of this one will be huge. Meteorologists are warning that there could be a possible outage of electricity and

disruption of telecommunication lines," the newscaster had said.

A few moments later, the showers began to pour. Timothy could tell it would rain heavily. He got a message from Javier, his flatmate.

"Hi, Timo! It seems I won't be able to return today. My flight was cancelled due to the hurricane forecast. I'll be at my Mum's for the next few days. Stay safe, hermano."

Timothy could not help but imagine how Javier sounded in his Spanish accent.

"Wow," Timothy said as he read this message. *"This must really be serious."*

He typed a reply: *"Okay, mano. Stay safe."* He sent it, but it didn't deliver. He tried again, and it still didn't deliver. Then he noticed his cellphone had no mobile data.

“Really?” he asked in shock.

When he lost his Wi-Fi connection half an hour ago, he resorted to his mobile data. He could not imagine he'd be cut off from that network also. He heard a knock on his door.

“That's weird,” he said to himself. He wasn't expecting anyone today since Javier said he'd not return from his Mum's place for a few days. He could not hide his shock when he opened the door.

“Vanessa!” he exclaimed. *“What are you doing here?”* Timothy asked.

“I was on my way from work when the suburban train suddenly stopped and said they were prohibited from moving further due to the weather. There are also no buses moving anymore or taxis that I could hire. I also discovered that I have no network coverage in this area. I recognised this area

because I once came here to attend your homegroup when I initially joined the church," Vanessa replied

She was drenched in the rain. Standing in her leather boots, she held her arms as she shivered, battling the cold. Timothy's heart was moved with compassion.

"Okay, please come in," he said as he stood aside and motioned for her to come in.

"Thank you," she said.

Timothy got her a towel to dry off her hair and some body parts. Timothy had served her tea in a white mug – a combination of Greenfield's Festive Grape and Summer Bouquet.

Vanessa was a shy girl, hardly able to maintain eye contact with Timothy for long. Timothy felt that was cute. And as she sat

drinking tea in his living room in her pink finger-cut sweater, he could not deny that she looked more adorable than ever.

"This is the first time we've had such terrible weather in this city," Vanessa said, interjecting his thoughts.

"Yes, that's right," Timothy replied.

Vanessa noticed he was a bit unsettled.

"Don't be bothered, Timothy. God will protect us. Events like this one are only part of Bible predictions for these last days," Vanessa added.

Timothy was impressed.

"Come, let's pray," demanded Vanessa.

"What?" asked Timothy.

"I said let's pray. We'll pray for ourselves, our loved ones, and the city," she motioned toward him with her two hands, and he joined her in the centre of the living room, holding her hands as they kneeled together.

They remained on their knees with hands joined together for a few seconds. Then Vanessa chuckled.

"What?" Timothy asked excitedly.

"Are you waiting for me to pray?" she asked.

"Of course," Timothy responded.

"No, you pray. You're the man of God," Vanessa insisted.

"But the prayer was your idea in the first place," Timothy contended.

And they were on their knees with hands

joined together, laughing. Now combined into one, the five dark clouds hovered over Timothy's apartment window, enjoying the scene. Things were working according to their plan.

Four of the Heavenly warriors also watched from high above the clouds.

"Crainus, what's going on? Shouldn't I give him a hint?" asked Skrodus, who was now bothered that things could go wrong.

"No," replied the commander. *"God wants to see what is in his heart."*

PART 5

Tests
and
Trials

W^{hile they held hands together, there was a thunder strike, and Vanessa rushed into Timothy's arms, screaming as she did. Timothy felt uncomfortable, but he had to follow through. He held her gently for a few seconds and told her not to be afraid. Unknown to Timothy, Vanessa pressed her lips on his shirt's collar and smeared red lipstick.}

"Give me a few moments. I need to use the restroom," said Timothy rather abruptly as he stood up and left the living room, leaving Vanessa wondering what had gone wrong.

Timothy shut the door behind him in the restroom and sat on the bathtub's edge. He needed this time alone to clear his thoughts. Something felt so wrong about what was happening.

Had he been wrong to let Vanessa into his

apartment at this time? But what else could a Christian brother do under the current circumstances with the weather? Why had he lost his peace? Why was the Holy Spirit not giving him any clear answers? Timothy could not stop thinking.

"Bam!"

His thoughts were interrupted by the slamming sound of his door.

Who had come in? Was it Javier? Was it another stranded Church member? What would they say if they saw him alone with Vanessa? He quickly washed his hands, dried them with a small orange-coloured towel, and exited the restroom. Vanessa was gone.

After exiting the apartment building, Vanessa walked briskly in her leather boots,

looking over her shoulders to see if Timothy to pursue after her. She took a left turn and walked through an alley to reduce Timothy's chances of catching up with her, just in case he did decide to run after her. After she passed a green-coloured trash container, her phone beeped.

"Great. I have some network connection at last," Vanessa said as she unlocked her phone.

She didn't log into WhatsApp because she assumed Timothy would have left her a trail of messages. She quickly typed a text message to a contact saved in her phone as 'Dad': *"It is done."*

"Excellent." The reply came immediately as though the person on the other end had eagerly awaited her message. Vanessa switched off her phone, threw it into her bag, and continued her walk home.

Timothy had been pacing his living room floor, hands akimbo, palms sweating, wondering what to do next. He had run to the ground floor and looked in all directions. There was no sign of Vanessa. Why had she left suddenly? Did he do anything wrong? Did someone sneak in and kidnap her?

"No, that's not likely," he answered himself. He would have heard the sound of his door opening. Even though his mobile data had become active again, Vanessa's line was switched off.

"Lord, please take control of this situation," Timothy finally said, and he put thoughts of her aside. He completed the slide deck he was to pitch to the management group the following day.

After a few hours, Timothy completed the work and slept. The day's events continued to play through his mind as he drifted slowly to sleep.

"Bam! Bam! Bam!" A loud noise came from the front door.

Timothy was startled up from sleep. He looked at his watch; it was 10:30 p.m. Who could be knocking at this time? Had Javier returned already? He used his right hand to trace the position of the switch of his bedside lamp and turned it on so he could see his slippers.

He slipped into them and went to open the door. His jaw dropped. He saw Vanessa still in her pink sweater and leather boots, her hair ruffled, a bruise on her lips, and tears in her eyes.

Standing beside her were two elders from the Church: Elder Charles, a grave and quiet man who was very keen and attentive to details, stood in his spectacles by Vanessa's left, and Elder Matthew, of brief stature and with a pot belly, stood frowning on the right

side of Vanessa. Behind them was Miss Miriam.

"Timothy, we'd like to have a word with you," said Elder Charles in his deep voice.

The elders sat down along with Vanessa and Miss Miriam. Timothy offered to make them tea, but they declined.

"Can you please narrate what transpired between you and Vanessa this evening?" said Elder Charles, breaking the uncomfortable silence.

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Timothy.

"Don't pretend you don't know what we are talking about," said Elder Matthew rather angrily, the tone of his voice higher than usual.

"Please take it easy, Elder," cautioned Elder

Charles. "Let the young man speak," he continued.

"I really don't know what this is about, sirs and ma," said Timothy. "I recall that Vanessa knocked at my door at around 6 p.m. because the suburban train had stopped moving. She came in, and I offered her tea. We discussed a bit and were about to start praying together when...."

"Boo hoo hoo hoo," Vanessa interrupted as she sobbed and cried bitterly.

Miss Mariam comforted her, putting Vanessa's head on her right shoulder and patting her hair gently, "It's okay, my dear. Stop crying. We will get to the bottom of this."

Timothy was shocked.

"I don't understand this, Vanessa. Can

someone please tell me what this is about?" Timothy said with his voice lifted. He was tired of the suspense.

"Silence, young man!" interrupted Elder Matthew.

"How dare you raise your voice on your elders?" he continued. *"Timothy, you are an utter disappointment. All our young people in church look up to you. How could you do something as stupid as this? How could you take advantage of a vulnerable sister, who came to you for help?"*

"With due respect, sir, what do you mean by 'take advantage'?" questioned Timothy. *"I simply offered her tea to help with the cold, but she left suddenly when I went to use the restroom."*

"You lie! Timothy, you lie!" interjected Vanessa. *"He put his hands on me. I tried to*

scream, but he overpowered me. He pinned me to the floor, forced down my trousers, and thrust himself through me."

"*What?!*" screamed Timothy, now on his feet. "*Vanessa! You dare accuse me of rape?*" he continued. "*Are you out of your mind? I have never put my hands on any woman in my life.....*"

"*You hold it there, young man!*" interrupted Miss Miriam, who had been mostly quiet until now.

"*Take a seat, and don't you dare raise your voice on any of us again, especially Vanessa. She is deeply hurt already,*" Miss Miriam continued.

Timothy kept standing, a bit furious, and his heart beat faster than usual.

"*I said sit down!*" repeated Miss Miriam.

"Don't sit down! Who is she to command you to do so? Weren't you the one who prayed for her sister, who was hospitalised three months ago? Wasn't it the grace on your life that got her healed? And even this elder Matthew, what has he ever achieved in comparison with your exploits. Isn't he just an elder because the founding overseer of the Church was a friend of his?"

This dark stream of thoughts continued to run through Timothy's mind. He tried to resist them, but they continued.

"There is no other person like you in the entire Church. Your youth group is the most vibrant in the city simply because of you. Many of the teenagers in the Church consider you to be their mentor. Don't you remember that you were given the award of Most Impactful Youth at the most recent Church Convention?"

"You hold it there, young man!" interrupted Miss Miriam, who had been mostly quiet until now.

"Take a seat, and don't you dare raise your voice on any of us again, especially Vanessa. She is deeply hurt already," Miss Miriam continued.

Timothy kept standing, a bit furious, and his heart beat faster than usual.

"I said sit down!" repeated Miss Miriam.

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stream of thoughts continued to run through Timothy's mind. He tried to resist them, but they continued.

All these thoughts went through his mind in a flash. The evil creature Pride kept going around him, whispering into his left ear, then his right ear, then his left ear again, leaving no space to process the thoughts. He wanted to push him to his limits and lure him into the trap of rebellion.

"Oh, God. Help me. Help me. Help me," Timothy whispered silently to himself. He put his two hands on his ears as tears filled his eyes.

"Be still and know that I am God," a word of hope came from his spirit.

"The LORD will fight for you, and you will hold your peace," another word of encouragement. Timothy sat calmly and

peacefully, not knowing how the events would unfold.

"Timothy, I had very high hopes on you. My heart is so broken. What exactly came over you? Can you please tell me why you did what you did?" asked Elder Charles in a compassionate voice.

"Elder, I am innocent of the charge Vanessa has brought against me," Timothy replied calmly. *"Please take a look around. There was no struggle of any kind in this house. I did not put my hands on her. I am not the cause of that injury on her lips...."*

"Where is your white shirt?" interjected Elder Matthew.

"What?" asked Timothy.

"The white shirt you wore to work today," Elder Matthew clarified.

"Oh!" said Timothy. "It's in my wardrobe, I suppose. But what does my white shirt have to do with this?"

"Go and bring the shirt," Elder Matthew insisted.

Timothy walked into his room and was back in no time. He presented the shirt to the Elder, who received and scrutinised it.

"What is this?" asked the Elder as he showed the smear of Vanessa's red lipstick that had rubbed on the collar of his shirt. "You said you only knelt down to pray with her. How is there a smear of her red lipstick on your shirt?"

"Oh, elder, it's not as it looks," replied Timothy. "While we held our hands to pray, there was a thunder strike, and Vanessa rushed into my arms out of fear. I held her

in my arms for a few seconds and assured her not to worry but to be calm."

"You really think we are gullible enough to believe that lie?" asked Elder Matthew sarcastically.

"Timothy, we love you very much, and you will continue to be part of our Church. However, given the current circumstance, we do not feel you present a good enough image for our church. It will be incorrect to let you minister at the National Youth Leadership Conference. We will find a replacement for you. This meeting is over," said Miss Miriam.

They all left his apartment.

Timothy returned to his room and knelt to pray but couldn't speak. After a few moments, he couldn't hold it any longer. He let the tears flow freely.

Five pairs of wicked eyes peered at him through his window.

"Great job, guys," whispered Lust. "His mouth will be sealed until further notice. His generation will not hear the message God has put in his mouth for them."

PART 6

The
Promotion
of the
Righteous

“Captain, is this according to plan?” asked Skrodus.

We are not to protect our warriors from trials all the time. God allows some trials to purify their motives and make them more effective in kingdom service,” responded Crainus. “The hotter the fire, the purer the gold.”

Kneeling by his bed, Timothy continued to weep. *“Why, Lord? Why would You let me be discredited like this? Is this how all You have said about me will go down the drain? Of what use is my diligence and sacrifice if You will let the enemy score a point easily against me like this? Will you let my name be dragged in the mud like this? Will you watch as the enemy damages my reputation?”*

“Will you still love Me even if I don’t let you preach at the National Youth Leadership

Conference?"

The question was as straightforward as it was sharp. This voice was familiar. Timothy knew the LORD was speaking to him through the Holy Spirit within.

"Are you walking with Me diligently simply because of all the wonderful things I've promised you? Do you love Me more than these things?"

Timothy knew better than to answer these questions hastily. He knew he had to do a deep soul search for his answer to be as sincere as possible.

"If you are truly dead to your ego and reputation, why are you so concerned about what people will say or think about you? Since you offered your life to Me as a living sacrifice, don't I have the right to do with you whatever I want?"

Timothy realised that God was probing into the deeper issues of his heart, and all the events that had transpired were to get him to renew his surrender to God.

He remembered that the Israelites had to be circumcised again at Gilgal before entering the Land of Promise and that God often brings His finest warriors through sanctified trials that expose the wrong motives hidden in their hearts before qualifying them for the next phase of their destinies.

"I repent, LORD," Timothy pleaded aloud, his voice shaking with tears. *"I will serve You no matter what comes my way. I surrender my life to You again, LORD. Make me Your living sacrifice indeed. It is the greatest honor on earth to walk with You and be called Your own. I am fully satisfied and complete in You. Purify my heart and my motives, oh LORD."*

"Joy comes in the morning," another clear

whisper in Timothy's spirit.

"I have accepted your offering," the voice continued. *"Weep no more, for your joy comes in the morning."*

Timothy spent the next few minutes praising the LORD before sleeping.

Just then, the signal was given from Headquarters, and Crainus said, *"Warriors, it is time!"*

The four other angelic warriors gathered around him as he explained the battle plan to them. When he was done, Trifago soared through the dark sky, revealing a bright trail of colourful light.

He descended on a small house near the outskirts of the city. He descended through the roof and landed in the bedroom of Elder Charles, who was getting ready to sleep.

"Wasn't it a bit strange that Elder Matthew knew about the lipstick on Timothy's shirt?" Trifago whispered to Elder Charles.

"Vanessa had mentioned nothing about the shirt to you elders earlier, remember? How did Elder Matthew know so many details? Is it possible that he had been in touch with Vanessa earlier? And why was he so aggressive in accusing Timothy? Didn't you notice that he didn't even give Timothy a chance to speak? Could there be something more that you don't know about?" Trifago continued to blow a stream of thoughts into the mind of the keen elder.

The elder sat on his bed, meditating on these thoughts. He didn't like to believe where his thoughts were leading him, but he could not ignore the signs either. He got on his knees and began to pray.

Skrodus walked right through the glass door into the living room of Elder Matthew's luxury apartment. He saw the pot-bellied elder crunching a sandwich with a large glass of fruit juice on his table.

The instruction of Crainus kept echoing through his mind. Skrodus had been instructed to orchestrate a costly mistake that would vindicate Timothy.

Elder Matthew picked up his phone and typed a message to Vanessa, whose contact he had saved in his phone as "Child Care Center", to quell the suspicions of his wife:

"Hey, Darling! You did well today. You are the smartest girl I've ever met. That's why I love you so much. Vanessa, baby, I can never stop thinking about you. Please send me some hot pictures tonight again. I'll credit your account with \$5000 tomorrow. Anything for my baby. Take care of yourself, sweetheart."

Bye."

When he was to select the recipient of the message, he typed "Ch" to find the right contact to send the message to. All his contacts that began with the letters "Ch" popped up, and he was about to tap "Child Care Center."

Skrodus moved stealthily and pushed the glass cup that contained the fruit juice that Elder Matthew had on his table. Elder Matthew hastily sent the message and stood up, drawing his chair backwards to prevent the fruit juice from spilling on him.

He failed to realise that in haste, Skrodus had gently lifted his finger upwards until he mistakenly tapped "Charles Tuckins" instead of "Child Care Center."

Elder Charles' phone suddenly beeped. He

wondered who would send a message as late as this. He ignored it and continued praying, but his spirit would not let him. So, he got up from kneeling beside his bed and picked up his phone. He saw that the message was from Elder Matthew. When he read the message, he sighed deeply.

He immediately got up and got dressed. He made a call to Miss Miriam to find out where she was. She spent the night with Vanessa in the Church's guest house. She felt Vanessa needed all the comfort and companionship she could get after the alleged abuse she experienced earlier that day.

"Elder, don't you think it's too late for a meeting?" she asked. *"What could be so urgent?"* she continued.

"I'll explain when I get there," answered Elder Charles.

"Okay then. I'll alert Elder Matthew so that he can join us," Miss Miriam proposed.

"That won't be necessary," Elder Charles interjected.

"This is strange," Miss Miriam confessed.

"I know," replied Elder Charles. *"Get Vanessa ready to meet with us in the lobby of the Pastor's office."*

By 7:30 a.m., Timothy got a call from Miss Miriam and was told his attention was needed urgently in the church's office. He went there and met Vanessa weeping. She was seated with Elder Charles and Miss Miriam.

Vanessa lay flat on the floor, asking for his forgiveness. Elder Matthew had gotten into

an affair with her. He promised to be her father and take care of her.

That promise was easy bait for Vanessa, who grew up without a father and yearned for fatherly affection. She had gotten pregnant for the elder a month earlier and had been influenced by the elder to get close to Timothy to blackmail him for her pregnancy.

Miss Miriam also got on her knees to apologise to Timothy for being so quick to judge him. Timothy got on his knees and wept with them. Elder Charles stood up, lifted his hands, and led a prayer of forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration.

The five heavenly warriors gathered together above the church as they rejoiced in their victory. Suddenly, two bright lights descended from above and as they drew closer, their identities were revealed:

Craimony, an angel of protection, and Grugruel, an angel messenger who carries revelation.

Trifago, Friscol, Skrodus, and Stallion screamed in amazement as they jammed their shield with these two new counterparts. They were still in the dark as to why they had come.

"Welcome, warriors! Why have you come?" asked Friscol.

The two warriors smiled as they looked at Crainus, who smiled back at them.

"It's a new season for Timothy," answered Craimony. *"In this new season, Timothy will travel a lot. I've been sent from Headquarters to accompany and protect him on his journeys."*

"And I've been sent to stand by him during his

ministrations and administer divine revelations," added Grugruel. "My first assignment will be during the National Youth Leadership Conference in a few days, and I can't wait!" he continued excitedly.

"I guess our work here is done," remarked Trifago with a smile, and Crainus nodded in agreement.

Trifago, Friscol, Skrodus, and Stallion bid farewell to their new counterparts and got ready to return to Headquarters. Then they looked and saw that Crainus was not getting ready to leave with them.

*"How about you, Captain?" asked Stallion.
"You're not coming with us?"*

"No," replied Crainus. "There's a fallen Pastor who I've been sent to rescue. He was trapped by a marine agent sent by the Dark Prince to pose as his secretary."

"Let me guess. Pastor Mark?" asked Skrodus.

"Yes, Pastor Mark," replied Crainus. "The Church he leads is currently in shambles, but some intercessors have been praying. I'm being sent to restore the fallen Pastor because God is not through with him yet."

"Sounds like an interesting mission. Can we come along?" asked Stallion.

"No," replied Crainus. "You must quickly return to Headquarters. Ruach has an urgent mission for you all, and when I'm done, I'll join you in your deployment."

"Any hints?" asked Trifago.

"Well," replied Crainus, "you are going to the Nobolian Islands."

"Nobolian Islands?!" the four warriors asked in shock and excitement.

“Yes, Nobolia. That nation has gone through a season of great distress. The Church in Nobolia has been praying and fasting for divine intervention. God has heard their cry, and there is about to be a massive heavenly intervention. The battle will be tough, but victory will be ours. A new day is about to break in Nobolia. I must leave now. Good luck, Champs!”

As the four warriors shot upwards and journeyed back to Headquarters, Crainus took off to rescue the fallen Pastor. At the same time, Craimony and Grugruel descended into the Church office and stood beside Timothy.

PART 7

Mission to
Rescue a
Fallen Pastor

Crainus stealthily flew into Dacton, a mid-sized town with a dark history. This had been the home of all hideous crimes and the famous Headquarters of Satanism in the area.

Mark had grown up in this town and been a member of Crixcross, a prominent yet deadly teenage gang. He had twice been shot at point-blank range but survived miraculously.

He had left this hometown of his to go to College in Colombia, where he found himself amid a revival and got born again in his first year. Crainus remembered the incident quite well since he was one of the warriors deployed from Headquarters to fight for the Colombian Church and sustain that revival.

After graduating from College, Mark

received a call from God to return to Dacton to preach the gospel. This was at the beginning of the revival in Dacton.

The giant Angelic Prince continued to hover over the town, gathering intelligence. He had not yet revealed his presence to his colleagues in the area. He spotted a small band of Angelic fighters spaced equally around a rectangular building. He figured that was the Chapel of Life Church.

At the peak of the revival, thousands of congregants swarm into that tiny building to hear Pastor Mark preach the word of God. He was famously nicknamed "The Preaching Machine Gun" since his words always pierced sharply like bullets and convicted the sinners who listened to him.

Crainus reduced altitude, descending just low enough to get an in-view of the Church building. He saw most of the pews empty

and only a few women praying.

"Thank God for some prayer cover," he muttered to himself.

The signboard of the Church was covered with dust, and just outside the gate stood a bar where men and women flocked in all day and all night, getting drunk, using harmful substances, and committing crimes. He could see a very thick, dark cloud over the bar.

The women's prayer in the Church formed a defensive shield to prevent the dark cloud from covering the Church. He sensed he'd need backup from Headquarters to successfully wage the warfare to rescue Pastor Mark, who he was yet to locate.

"Hmmm," the warrior said to himself thoughtfully. *"I can do this the easy way or*

the hard way," he continued.

He thought of a way to alert his colleagues in the area that he was around for a short mission without drawing the attention of the wicked spirits that had taken over the town after the downfall of Pastor Mark and the consequent fall of the Chapel of Life Church.

He could see dark entities everywhere: on the buses, on the trees, in the grocery stores, on children and their parents, between husbands and wives, trooping in and out of the psychiatric hospital. They were everywhere.

"Weep not for your salvation draws near, says the Spirit of the Lord," declared Joanna, an elderly woman-intercessor who prayed earnestly for the revival of the town of Dacton.

"Weep not for your Salvation draws near, says the Spirit of the Lord," repeated Joanna.

"Amen!" was the resounding response from Miriam, Suzan, and her teenage niece, who prayed along in the Chapel. With such encouraging words of prophecy, Joanna encouraged the women as inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The band of angelic fighters also rejoiced to hear such words inspired by the Holy Spirit. It meant it was time for visitation, and their relentless labour in preserving the prayer altar of the Chapel of Life Church would soon be crowned with success. In a moment, one of the fighters looked up and saw the flash of light.

"Wow! Did you see that?" he asked in a tone between a scream and a whisper.

"What?" asked another of the fighters.

"Something quite familiar," he responded.

"I think someone else has been sent from headquarters," he continued.

"Are you sure?" his colleague asked.

"There's only one way to know," he responded.

He took a few steps back and exchanged glances with the other fighters. The other fighters readjusted their positions with military precision and skill to fill the gap.

Then Granfizo shot upwards like a rocket to investigate the light he had seen in the crowds. When Crainus saw that, he smiled. He was glad the local warriors had picked up his signal.

"Crainus!" yelled Granfizo excitedly when he set his eyes on the Angelic Prince. He

displayed a military salute to pay respect to his senior officer.

"Granfizo," responded Crainus. *"I see you and your team are holding the fort. I've been sent here for an urgent mission, and I'll need every intelligence I can get."*

"And what would that mission be?" questioned Granfizo.

"To rescue the fallen Pastor," replied Crainus.

"That sounds exciting," responded Granfizo. *"Those ladies in Church have prayed for him every weekday for nine months."*

"God has decided to answer their prayers," said Crainus.

"Alright, Captain. My crew and I are at your command. How may we proceed?" asked Granfizo.

Angela woke up at precisely 4:00 a.m. the following day. She also woke up with great alertness. She had a very vivid dream. She saw someone take her by the hand and join her hands together with that of Mark. She had received some instructions which she didn't quite remember. She put her pillow behind her back and sat up on her bed. It was a bit cold, and she shivered slightly.

She buried her palms under her woollen sweater - that woollen sweater. It was probably the reason she dreamt about Mark. Maybe she should never put it on again. She had decided to do away with everything that reminded her about him. She got off her bed and began to take off the sweater.

"But you do miss him, don't you?" whispered an Angelic fighter.

She refrained from removing the sweater

and slowly sat back on the bed, biting her lips as she examined her heart deeply. No matter how much she tried to convince herself otherwise, she did miss Mark. He wasn't perfect, but he loved her more than anything else. The incident with Salisa was unfortunate.

In retrospect, she felt she should also take some blame for it. If she had continued to pray for her husband and not neglected him in bed, he would likely not have fallen into the trap the enemy set for him using Salisa.

"What was I even thinking?" she whispered to herself. *"Why was I so selfish and insensitive?"* she continued.

"Did I honestly think that the devil would sit back, fold his arms, and watch Mark continue to ravage his kingdom? Could it be that Mark fell simply because I broke ranks and did not fill the gap I was assigned to fill? Did I not

fail God by becoming suspicious and self-centred?" she continued to whisper these questions between sobs and tears.

Then she knelt to pray.

"Heavenly Father, I acknowledge my wrong this day. I'm sorry for my pride, selfishness, and stubbornness. I repent of my sins. Wash me clean with the Blood of Your Son, Jesus Christ. You brought me into Mark's life to be a help meet for him; to see traps of Satan that he could not see and avert the plans of the evil one.

You equipped me as an intercessor to be sensitive to the tricks of the enemy and to protect Mark with my prayers, while he continued to advance Your purposes and bring down Satan's kingdom, but I failed You. I created a gap that gave the enemy a space to strike a dagger through the soul and testimony of Mark. Lord, I'm sorry. I'm so

sorry. I am not worthy of a second chance, but if You can have mercy on me, please give me another chance. I promise I will not fail You again."

She prayed and repented with many such words. The Angelic fighter smiled. His work had been done. He sent a signal to Granfizo. It was time to proceed with the next phase of the plan.

Granfizo walked into Mark's room. The once fiery Preacher now had become a sullen, broken man, constantly bombarded with and haunted by memories of his past. Thanks to the prayers of the women in the Church, he had not fallen into depression.

Mark repented and broke all ties with Salisa but never regained the courage to return to ministry in the Chapel of Life Church. He couldn't bear the shame with which the residents of the town and some of his

former congregants looked at him.

Besides, the final statements Angela made before leaving him remained a scar on his soul: "*You're such a disappointment, Mark*", "*What a shameless man!*", "*You blew it, Mark!*", "*You threw it down the drain.*", "*Your children will grow to be ashamed of you.*", "*You have disappointed God.*", "*I wish I never got married to you.*"

"God has forgiven all your sins. You are a brand-new man. Your call is not destroyed. Your hair has begun to grow again," whispered Granfizo. With such words, he attempted to re-birth hope in the heart of this Preacher.

"What do You want from me, Lord?" screamed Mark. *"I'm now a wasted man. I'm all alone. I cannot go back to ministry anymore. If You're truly the all-powerful God You say You are, then make Angela come*

back to me. Give me my family back, and I will serve You forever... "

His phone rang. He stretched his neck to look at it reluctantly. It was Angela. He couldn't believe his eyes. He wiped his tears hurriedly and picked up the call. He wanted to say "Hello", but the words didn't come out of his mouth. He heard Angela weeping.

"Mark, I'm really sorry. I'm really, really sorry," she said as she wept.

"You're sorry?" asked Mark, surprised. He glanced at the phone again to be sure it was his Angela speaking. Then he put the phone back in his ears and began to weep.

"I want us to give it one more try. I still consider it the biggest privilege to be called the wife of the wonderful man you are," said Angela.

"Wonderf..." the words couldn't come out entirely from Mark's mouth.

"Angela, I'm a useless man. I failed God, embarrassed you, and disappointed the Church," continued Mark.

"No, you did not fail God, Mark. It is possible to lose a battle and still win the war. There are more lands to conquer and God is not through with you yet. It is time to arise, oh warrior. God has committed His purpose to you and the fate of Dacton is still in your hands."

"The fate of Dacton is still in your hands." Those words ignited a fire in the soul of Mark.

Granfizo watched and smiled as husband and wife reconciled with each other. He saw the fierce warrior spirit awakened in the once beaten and weakened Mark. He

couldn't wait to see him wield his sword and mount the pulpit again.

In less than two weeks, Angela had moved in again with Jeremy and Shalom, Mark's two kids. Mark finally accepted the invitation from the Church board to return and Pastor Chapel of Life Church. He was set to preach his first sermon after his return within two weeks.

A dark entity appeared on the scene, then hurried towards the bar beside the Chapel of Life Church. Then, it ascended and united with the thick dark cloud over the bar. It brought a shocking message, sending panic through the other dark entities in the cloud.

Mark had reunited with his wife Angela, been reinstated as Pastor of Chapel of Life Church, and would return to Preach his first sermon in less than two weeks.

"What should we do?" cried the entity to the Strongman of Dacton.

"Relax!" replied the Strongman, trying to demonstrate leadership by being calm, although everyone else could feel the tension he was trying to hide.

"Let's use the bloggers. All of them! Disperse yourselves across town, and let's continue this battle from the media space," he commanded.

All the dark entities of Dacton obeyed.

The Angelic fighters surrounding the Church braced themselves, ready for a fight if one was needed. Thankfully, Dacton's key intercessor, Madame Joanna, kept providing prayer cover from inside the Church. She sensed in her spirit that something was up in Dacton and had begun fasting.

Megan got up from bed. It was afternoon already. She tried to recall the time she lay to sleep. She had returned drunk from the bar the previous day or early on the same day.

A dark cloud entered her room and settled over her head. Then, it began to whisper to her. She sat on her desk and opened her laptop. She surfed her news feed for anything that would catch her attention.

"Boring. Boring. Boring," she said to herself and was about to close her laptop. Then she stopped. Something had caught her attention.

"Wait a minute!" she said excitedly. *"Is that Pastor Mark?"* she questioned. She had seen an announcement from the Chapel of Life page that its former Pastor was being reinstated.

"My, oh my!" she exclaimed again.

"This will make a great story," she continued.

She immediately sent a message to her group of fellow bloggers. They had gained popularity precisely nine months earlier when they decided to cover the scandal of Pastor Mark—now seemed the best time to cover the story again. All the bloggers were excited and got to work. They proposed several titles for their cover stories.

They decided to release a new story every day through different online magazines until the only thing Dacton talked about was Pastor Mark. A few of their proposed titles were:

"Another Sexual Predator Back on Stage: Christian Misogyny at its Core." *"Pastor who allegedly raped secretary reinstated by All-male Church Board."* *"Pastor Mark"*

Unmasked: Preacher or Predator." "Nine Months after Colossal Fall, Mark Struggles to Rise Again."

Mark began to lose his courage as these articles made rounds on social media. Angela did all she could to strengthen him but knew this was a spiritual battle. As she prayed, she received comfort and confirmation in her heart that this was all a part of the plan.

Graham picked up his smartphone and read through his notifications. He was a teenage icon loved by Dacton for winning the national talent show in the capital city a few months earlier.

Suddenly, an idea dropped into his mind. He read the blog posts about one Pastor Mark and decided to share his thoughts with his

thousands of followers. He released a 30-second video with the hashtag #MarkIsBack. Then, he kept his phone aside and went to the gym for his usual workout.

An Angelic fighter hovering in his room and dropping those ideas into his mind smiled and lifted from the room. The dice had been cast.

Hundreds of other Angelic warriors began infiltrating different homes, shops, classrooms, stores, parks, offices, and vehicles, dropping ideas into peoples' minds, making them curious, spreading Graham's post, and spurring discussions about Mark.

Graham returned after an hour to see that the hashtag #MarkIsBack was trending all over the town, and more followers were trooping onto his page. He decided to publish some more about it.

Soon, the entire town became curious, and the hashtag gained national attention.

Angela walked into Mark's prayer closet.

"I'm sorry to interrupt you," she said. "I just got off the phone with the secretary of the Church board. She said Sasha James Mandala called and asked to come to cover your sermon live."

"Sasha who?" asked Mark with furrowed eyebrows.

"Sasha James Mandala of National Network News," responded Angela. "Sasha said she had seen a certain hashtag and was interested in coming to cover the sermon live as part of a faith-based documentary for the Network. Mark, Sasha is the most followed journalist in the nation. This is a huge open

open door."

Mark couldn't believe his ears. He wept while still on his knees. Angela knelt beside him and cried. Then, they prayed together.

"Remember that God said what the enemy meant for evil He will turn it for your good. He also said the glory of the latter would be greater than that of the former," she reminded her husband.

The D-day arrived. Mark carried himself to the other side of the podium with fear and trembling. He lifted his eyes and saw the pews filled with congregants from the front to the back.

Several others crowded outside the doors and even stood peeping through the windows. Many fans of Graham wore white t-shirts with the famous #MarkIsBack hashtag.

Sasha's crew from the National Network News had arrived quite early that morning. The cameras had been set up. Mark could see the red light blinking from where he stood. He knew what this meant. He was live on National Television.

Crainus and the other Angelic fighters hovered over the Church building, knocking off dark entities bent on creating distractions, affecting the equipment of the National Network News, or making people fall asleep.

A bright cloud hovered over the Church and rested on Mark. He felt that fiery unction he used to feel in his earlier days as a preacher – the days of revival. He took a deep breath and opened his Bible.

Before Mark sat a captive audience none could number. The "Preaching Machine Gun" had been cocked and was ready to fire.

The revival of Dacton was about to be reborn.



Afternote

Dear reader, we thank you for reading this far and do hope you enjoyed the story and are challenged, edified, and encouraged in your faith.

Even though this story graphically describes spiritual warfare by depicting the activities of angels and demons, we do not want you to leave simply with a paranoid awareness of the spirit realm.

Here are a few points we want you to take away from this story:

A. The reality of spiritual warfare: In Revelation 12:17 (KJV), the Bible says,

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Or in a simpler version,

"This made the dragon terribly angry with the woman. So, it started a war against the rest of her children. They are the people who obey God and are faithful to what Jesus did and taught." (CEV).

Please take note of the fact that we did not initiate this battle. The dragon (or Satan, the Devil), enraged with fury, jealousy, and anger, started a war against all children of God who obey Him and are faithful to what Jesus did and taught.

Spiritual warfare is neither a choice for the believer nor something any Christian can opt out of. The moment a person accepts Jesus Christ into their life and decides to live according to the will of God, that person is immediately blacklisted in the kingdom of darkness.

B. The believer's position of victory: The good news is that, for the believer, victory is sure! (Romans 8:37). Unlike physical battles, we are not fighting for the territory, for the territory is already ours.

We are not fighting to win, for we have already won. We are not fighting FOR victory but FROM victory. Jesus Christ gave our enemy a knockout blow at the Cross of Calvary (Colossians 2:15).

The warfare of the believer is all about enforcing the victory Jesus already won for us, the reason being that our enemy is a persistent contender and doesn't let go easily even though he knows he has already lost.

Although all who have not accepted Jesus Christ into their hearts (called the children of disobedience in Ephesians 2:2) can in no way escape his influence, every born-again,

blood-washed, and Spirit-filled believer has been spiritually raised and seated together with our triumphant Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion (Ephesians 1:19-21, 2:6).

God has provided us with weapons of war, but we must know what they are and learn how to use them. Ephesians 6:14-17 lists all the parts of the armour in our spiritual arsenal. Unless the believer has learned to put on the whole armour of God and deliberately insist on the victory Christ acquired for him at the Cross of Calvary, he certainly will be outwitted by the enemy's countless schemes.

C. The craze for sex among young people:
As part of his assault on the youth of this generation, Satan has taken over the media space and seeks to constantly bombard our minds with sexual innuendos in an attempt

to get us addicted to wrong things.

There appears to be no escape route as sexualized content occupies every media outlet possible: from billboards and banners to movies, music, magazines, newspapers, profile pictures, status updates, etc.

Many young ladies have unfortunately succumbed to the world system's definition of beauty. They do not feel attractive enough until they put on light /revealing clothing that shows their body's contours or sensitive parts. Decency in dressing is rapidly becoming a thing of the past.

Today's "celebrities" and "influencers" are mostly those who attract a lot of likes and followers using the power of nudity. Unless you deliberately take a stand for righteousness, brace yourself firmly with the armour of God, and constantly hold on to the Cross for grace to live above sin, it

may not be too long before you are swept away in this flood of evil.

However, there is grace in Christ Jesus to say no to sin and live righteously and godly in this evil and sinful world (Titus 2:11-12).

In the section for recommended reading, we have listed a few materials that you can lay a hand on to learn more about the way of victory over sin by the Cross. We encourage you to read through those materials. You will be a victor and not a victim in Jesus' name.

D. Satan's rage against marriages: God has ordained marriage as the basic unit of society to mirror His kingdom on earth. As a God-ordained institution, marriage is a union of one man and one woman.

Satan is in a desperate war against families, sowing disunity, suspicion, confusion,

irritation, and lack of trust. We are to be aware of this rage and fight for the unity and sanity of our families (Mark 3:25).

E. God's power to restore a fallen soldier: God can restore any fallen believer who turns to Him in repentance. It is necessary to not take joy in spreading news of another believer's downfall but intercede tirelessly until such a believer is restored (Luke 15:1-7).

F. A note on the ministry of Angels: As used in this story,

- 1) "Headquarters" represents Heaven.
- 2) "Ruach" represents the Holy Spirit. In the Hebrew language, Ruach means wind and was also used in the Bible to refer to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity (Genesis 1:2).
- 3) The "Dark Prince" is Satan or Lucifer.
- 4) All the names of angels used are fictional except Michael. Angels are ministering

spirits sent to minister to those of us who are heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14).

In the New Testament, there is a greater emphasis on the Spirit of God than on Angels. As seen from the Acts of the Apostles, the New Testament believer must be led primarily by the Spirit of God. "The Holy Spirit" or any similar designation for God's Spirit occurs about fifty-six times in Acts alone.

In contrast, Angels appear to give some form of direction far fewer times in the New Testament than in the Old Testament. This, however, does not mean that Angels do not provide direction to New Testament believers.

We are not to pray to Angels, worship them, or go in search of them. Christ should be our focus (Revelations 19:9-10, 22:8-9).

ABOUT THE BOOK

It is a beautiful world around us, but there is more than meets the eye. Timothy is a young believer, steadfast, and with a bright future. He faces meddling turbulence stirred up by his invisible foes to make him fall and miss out on his destiny, but Timothy maintains his integrity. He narrowly escapes some tactical mind mines and strategic armour-attenuating arrows that seek his demise.

Lust, lukewarmness, pride, and trauma are only 4 of the numerous demonic entities commissioned to bring Timothy down. Will Timothy remain successively unwavering to survive the impending array of assaults that can impede his life and destiny? Or will he become one of the numerous young men and women with great potential who sacrificed their destinies on the altar of sin?

ABOUT US

This book is a JEGRUN publication, written and compiled by ABBA's Dwelling.

JEGRUN, which stands for Jesus Global Revolution, is a group of young people from diverse denominations and nations passionate about revival and seeking to become arrows of Calvary whom God will use to confront His enemies at the gate in this end time.

JEGRUN hosts a weekly online program focusing on young people's areas of interest, such as discipleship, marriage and relationships, and career development.

ABBA's Dwelling, as a part of JEGRUN, seeks to share profound spiritual truths through the lens of creative writing and interesting conversations.

For further enquiries, counsel, or prayer, please reach out to us through any of these platforms:

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