

LESSONS FROM RICK JOYNER'S BOOK "THE FINAL QUEST"

Pastor Moses B. Musinguzi (Last Adam Tabernacle)

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Recap of the previous lesson (Filling God's House)

- Jesus came to seek and save the lost. Our mission is to work with Him in that regard by preaching the gospel of salvation to the unsaved. Those who do so will get a soul-winner's crown.
- Let us pray for God to give us a burden for lost souls.

Today's Topic: THE HONOR AND GLORY OF SUFFERING

Theme Scripture: **1 Peter 4:12-16**

The Glorious Eagle

(41 – 43:1) I looked at the old eagle, and for the first time I noticed the scars among his torn and broken feathers. However, the scars were not ugly. They were lined with gold that was somehow not metal, but rather flesh and feathers. I could see that this gold was giving off the glory that emanated from the eagle and made his presence so awesome.

"Why did I not see this before?" I inquired.

"Until you have beheld and appreciated the depths of the treasures of salvation, you cannot see the glory that comes from suffering for the sake of the gospel. Once you have seen it, you are ready for the tests that will release the highest levels of spiritual authority into your life. These scars are the glory that we will carry forever. This is why even the wounds our Lord suffered are with Him in heaven. You can still see His wounds and the wounds that all of His chosen ones have taken for His sake.

"These are the medals of honor in heaven. All who carry them love God and His truth more than their own lives. These are the ones who followed the Lamb wherever He went, willing to suffer for the sake of truth, righteousness, and the salvation of men. True leaders of His people, who carry genuine spiritual authority, must have first proven their devotion this way."

John 20:19,20,24-27; Galatians 6:17; James 1:12

I looked at the leader of the company of angels that followed me. I had never witnessed deep emotion in an angel before, but these words were unquestionably moving him greatly, as well as the rest of the angels. I really thought they were about to cry.

*Then the leader spoke: "We have witnessed many wonders since the creation. But the voluntary suffering of men for the Lord and for their fellow men is **the greatest wonder of all**. We, too,*

must fight and even suffer at times, but we dwell where there is such light and glory that it is very easy to do this.

“When we see men and women choose to suffer for a hope they can see only dimly in their hearts, it causes even the greatest angels to bow their knee and gladly serve these heirs of salvation. We marvel at the dedication of you who dwell with so little encouragement in a place of such darkness and evil.

“At first we did not understand why the Father decreed that men would have to walk by faith, suffering great opposition while not having the benefit of beholding the reality and the glories of the heavenly realm. But now we understand that through these sufferings He proves their worthiness to receive the great authority that they will be given as members of His own household.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Romans 8:16-18

“This walk of faith is now the greatest wonder in heaven. Those who pass this test are worthy to sit with the Lamb on His throne, for He has made them worthy and they have proven their love.”

Courage

Then the eagle interjected, “Courage is a demonstration of faith. The Lord never promised that His way would be easy, but He has assured us that it would be worth it (Matthew 7:13-14). The courage of those who fought from the level of “Salvation” moved the angels of heaven to esteem what God has brought about in fallen men. The faithful warriors took their wounds in the terrible onslaught, while only beholding darkness and a seeming defeat of the truth, just as our Lord did on His cross. Nevertheless, they did not quit, and they did not retreat.”

I was again starting to regret that I had not remained on the level of “Salvation” and fought with those other brave souls. Once more, understanding my thoughts, the eagle interrupted them.

“By climbing the mountain, you were demonstrating faith and wisdom too. Your faith freed many souls so they could come to the mountain for salvation. You received some wounds, as the warriors on the level of “Salvation” did, but your authority in the kingdom has come more from acts of faith than from suffering. Because you have been faithful in a few things, you will now be given the great honor of going back to suffer, that you may be made a ruler over many more.

“But remember that we all work together for the same purposes regardless of whether we are building or suffering. If you go higher, many more souls will fill these rooms, to the great joy of heaven. You have now been called to climb and to build, but if you are faithful in this you will later be given the honor of suffering.” Matthew 5:10-12

I then turned and looked at the dark and foreboding door over which was written, "The Judgment Seat of Christ." Just as warmth and peace had flooded my soul each time I looked at the great treasures of salvation, fear and insecurity gripped me when I looked at this door. Now it seemed that everything in me wanted to stay in this room, and nothing in me wanted to go through that door.

Again, the eagle answered my thoughts. "Before you enter the door to any great truth, you will have these same feelings. You even felt them when you entered into this room filled with the treasures of salvation. These fears are the result of the Fall. They are the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The knowledge from that tree made us all insecure and selfcentered. The knowledge of good and evil makes the true knowledge of God seem fearsome, when in fact every truth from God leads to an even greater peace and security. Even the judgments of God are to be desired because all of His ways are perfect."

By now I had experienced enough to know that what seems right is usually the least fruitful path and is often the road to failure. Throughout my journey, the path of greatest risk was the path that led to the greatest reward. Even so, each time it seemed that more was at stake. Therefore, making the choice to go higher became more difficult each time. I started to sympathize with those who would stop at some point in their sojourn and refuse to go on, even though I knew more than ever that this was a mistake. The only true security came from continually moving forward into the realms that required more faith, which meant more dependence on the Lord.

*"Yes, it takes more faith to walk in the higher realms of the Spirit," the eagle added. "The Lord gave us the map to His kingdom when He said, 'If you seek to save your life you will lose it, but if you will lose your life for My sake you will find it.' **Matthew 10:39, 34-39***