

Chapter Ten: Family Ties

As Laevieus stares at this gruesome sight he recalls the night Matthew Jordan had died. It was a hard thing for him to watch as the young boy came forth still angry and revengeful over the death of his brother Kyle. “Laevieus, have you recalled this night? Do you remember this boy?” Ask the Mighty One. As Laevieus stares he watches as he sees himself touching the young boys back to release him from his physical prison. The boy rises out of his own body questioning his own failure to kill another then they were gone. “Yes Lord, I remember it quite well.” “Good, then I do believe you recall his outcome?” “Yes Lord I recall.” “Was My judgment just?” asks God as Laevieus looks up towards the heavens silenced by his own inner questioning. Laevieus starts to relive Matthew’s end then finds himself debating within if judgment was right or wrong. “I am not sure Lord, I am not sure anymore. I thought at first You were wrong to let one so young be cast away from You when he never knew you and being lost in circumstance.” “You are right, yet you are wrong Laevieus, for judgment is not based on the age or size of a man but by the heart he lives in. Let Me show you more that you may receive and understand.” And with that Laevieus is suddenly standing in the middle of living room of the house were Matthew and Kyle Jordan was raised.

The room is dark, not a light is on in this quite empty apartment. Laevieus looks around to see that there are no family picture hanging from walls, no large furniture covering the floor space, just one lonely recliner sitting in the corner of the room with a figure of a man sitting passed out with a bottle of rum still clinched in his hand. “I want you to see the life that Matthew and his brother endured as younger children Laevieus; I want you to see the things that I watched over time.” Suddenly Laevieus hears a sound coming from a back room and starts to move towards it. He follows this small sound into a room towards the back of the apartment, and as he enters in he finds two small boys huddled together in the corner with faces down and heads pressed together, then the small sound echoes again. It is Matthew trying hard not to let out a cry, but he is having a hard time hiding the sniffles of his pain. He and his brother as bruised and bleeding from the beating that they received by the hand of their father who in a drunken rage turned his anger on them. Matthew looks to be about four years old while his brother looks to be six. Laevieus stares in disbelief and his heart is moved by this sight. “What happened? How can mankind treat one so young so horrifically?” speaks out Laevieus. “You saw all this and did not help them?” he questions. And with that Laevieus is moved to another time in life for Matthew who now looks to be six years old. Matthew is running down the street to a building that stands in the center of an open field, women are walking around with their children; some are sitting alone on benches that surrounds a small playground. This is a home for battered families and children. Matthew runs towards the building and into the front door; Laevieus follows and finds that Matthew is seeking his brother Kyle.

Matthew finds Kyle sitting on his bed staring out at the playground outside when Matthew starts to speak to him. “Kyle! Kyle, I found him! Just like you said, he was right where you said he would be!” Kyle turns to look at Matthew; “No one saw you talking to him right?” “No one saw me or even followed me Kyle.” “Good Matt, now give me the stuff.” Matthew reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small bag of white stuff. “What is this Kyle?” questions Matthew as he hands the bag over to Kyle. “Never you mind, it’s my medicine.” “Is it going to make you better Kyle because you don’t look so well?” “Yep bro it is going to make me feel just fine!” answers Kyle as he takes the baggy and leaves the room. Just then a young woman walks, it is Karen Lakes, she is Matthew and Kyle’s social worker who has come to check in on them and to bring some exciting news. “Hi Matthew, where’s your brother?” she asks. “He went to the bathroom, he’ll be right back.” “Okay good, I have some good news for the both of you.” And as they wait Karen walks to the window and starts to question Matthew. “It looks pretty nice out there, have you been playing with the other children?” she questions. “No, they only want to play on that gym outside, they don’t want to explore.” “You like exploring this place?” “Yeah, it’s so old I figure there has to be some hidden treasure somewhere.” Karen smiles as Kyle walks into the room. “Oh good, you’re here! I just wanted to check up on the both of you, Kyle, you alright honey? You look a little tired.” “I’m okay, just tired.” Replies Kyle as he sits next to his brother on the bed. “Well anyway I have some good news. I have found you both a home! Together!” And with that Matthew jumps with excitement from the bed. “HOORAY! Kyle we have a place to be now and we will be together! Isn’t that great!” screams Matthew with great joy! Kyle smiles and replies; “That is good stuff bro!” “Now, I will be coming to pick both of you up tomorrow and will take you to a foster family just over the bridge, they are so looking forward to having you both! So make sure you are packed and ready to go by nine tomorrow morning, make sure you take all your stuff with you, okay?” They both nod yes as Karen gives them a group hug then walks out of the room.

The scene changes and Laevius finds himself standing in the dark of an alley. As he looks around he see Kyle in the center of a group of boys. They are much older and taller than he. Laevius goes closer to hear what their conversation with Kyle is about. “You did good kid, just like we said! Now one more thing you have to do before you can hang with us. The old lady, the one you live with, she got stuff?” questions one of the boys in the crowd. “She got some stuff, don’t know what they for but she has a whole cabinet full.” Answers Kyle. “Bring some to us, we’ll figure out what they are.” Kyle nods and leaves the crowd when suddenly he hears his name being called by Matthew. “KYLE? KYLE? WHERE ARE YOU? KYLE?” And with that Kyle come out of the dark alley to find his brother just up the street from where he was at. “Matthew! Stop yelling for me!” speaks Kyle as he runs to his brother. “You know you can’t be doing stuff like that around here! Come on, lets get home before the old lady punishes us.” They turn and start to run together to the home of Momma Patty. Now Momma Patty and her husband Jethro loved children so much that she became a foster parent because they could not have children of their own. And as Kyle and Matthew

run towards the house there was Momma Patty, standing at the door waiting for them. “How many times have I told you boys to be home before dark?” she shouts as the boys walk into the home. “Kyle you should know better! Just for that it’s your turn tonight!” shouts Momma as the boys enter the home. God starts to explain, “You see Laevius in the house of Momma Patty punishment wasn’t as man perceived, it wasn’t a beating or a lecture, it wasn’t even a grounding or lock-up, no, it was something that Kyle and Matthew hated most of all, they were to be the center of attention! It was kinder yet harder. Go and see.” And with that Laevius walks into the home of Momma Patty. Everyone is gathered around a long dining table, Kyle and Matthew sit down for dinner as Momma Patty and her husband starts to bring out dinner for all to eat. Sitting around the table are four other children that they had taken in over the years, all much older than they. And as dinner is placed on the table Momma and her husband take their seat. “Well Kyle because of what happened; it’s your turn tonight.” Says Momma as everyone looks towards Kyle then bows their heads to hear him say grace. Laevius watches as Kyle bows his head with eyes wide open as if looking for the words to speak. The room is silent as finally Kyle speaks out; “Lord, Thank You for the food Amen.” And with that heads rise up and eyes stare at Kyle. “Now what was that?” speaks Momma, “Is that how you thank our Lord for all that He has given you this day?” Kyle stares intently at Momma as if angry to be put in such a spot. “I know you can do better, maybe tomorrow. Okay everyone, dig in!” speaks Momma as arms stretch out to grab a hold of the food that lay before them. Laevius watches as Kyle and Matthew don’t make a move until everyone else has taken a share. “Do they know You Lord?” questions Laevius. “Do they do not know Me Laevius.” Answers God. “But this woman will help them, that’s why they are here.” Soon dinner is over and everyone pitches in to clean the table and kitchen and when that is over they all enter into the living room for some night reading. It was a custom in Momma’s home that a family should gather together to hear God’s word before going to bed and because this night Kyle had broken the rules it was to be his turn to read out loud from the good book. All the other kids went up stairs and returned with their bibles in hand, but Kyle and Matthew had none. So Momma handed him a family bible that sat on the coffee table for him to be the reader of the night. “Okay Kyle, why don’t you open a word and read to all of us.” says Momma. Kyle stares at the bible and doesn’t make a move. “Kyle? Go on honey, read to us.” But Kyle just sat there staring at the book. “Kyle? In something wrong?” questions Momma when suddenly Kyle stands up and yells; “I DON’T BELIEVE IN GOD!” and to the surprise of everyone in the room Kyle runs upstairs and lays facedown on his bed. Momma is beside herself and asks her husband to go and check on the boy.

Jethro was Patty’s husband of forty years now and he was a very soft spoken man. Anything that Momma wanted, Momma got. But this night Momma could not deal with the outburst of Kyle. And as Matthew followed behind Jethro they enter into his room. Laevius is just as surprised to hear Kyle’s outburst, so he follows behind and into the room to watch and hear. “Kyle? Son, are you alright?” “Just leave me alone!” replies Kyle. “Why are you so upset son? Have we hurt you in some way?” Questions Jethro as Matthew takes a seat on the bed. “Yeah Kyle, why you so mad?” asks Matthew. And with that Kyle burst out in tears and

starts to admit his anger. "I hate God! I hate Him for what He has done to our family, I hate Him for what He has done to me and my brother, and I just hate God!" Jethro listens as through the tears Kyle admits his Burning hatred towards God. "Now son, hate is a strong word. You sure you're not just angry at God? You can be angry without hating." Kyle looks up at Jethro as if not comprehending what he just said. "It's all the same!" screams Kyle, "I hate Him and I am angry with Him because of what He has done to us, me and my brother. Look at us, living off of charity, no mother or father to our name, no relatives to want us. It has been suffering since I was young and we continue to suffer! Where is the God that you all talk about? Where is the God that you said takes care of our needs? Where is this God that shows love? Where is this God? I tell you, there is no God! If there was then why are we suffering? Laevius is heart wrenched by what Kyle is saying, "How can one so young feel so much pain that he blames it all on You?" questions Laevius. Jethro starts to speak, "Son, I am so sorry that your life turned out the way that it did, and I am even sorrier that we did not have you sooner. Kyle, you have to understand that a lot of what happened to you and your brother had nothing to do with what God did, but what choices others have made. You and your brother are victims of circumstances beyond your control. Now, did God make your daddy beat you? No He didn't. Did God make your mommy kill herself? No He didn't. Did God place you in a shelter? Yes He did so that you and your brother could be safe, and did He make a way that you both could be together here in our home? Yes He did! That we may be able to help you not be so angry with the life that once hurt you, but can be happy in the life you now live. Do you understand? We are not going to beat you, we are not going to leave you, and I and Momma Patty are here for good! God made sure of that, and we will do all that we can to help you heal." And with that Kyle starts to cry and presses his head into the chest of Jethro as he sobs all his anger away. Matthew joins in with tears as Jethro grabs a hold of him and holds them close.

"Lord, did life change for the boys? There is so much anger and hatred towards the world in their hearts." Laevius ask as the scene changes and he is watching Matthew standing in front of a department store picture window. As he watches Matthew looks to be nine years old now and his birthday is just around the corner, he will be ten soon and he is looking for what he wants for a birthday present. As Matthew watches the display person change the scene he notices that they are starting to bring out the toys for the summer. To his surprise they display the new BMX bicycle like all his friends have. He has decided that that is what he wants most of all, a new bicycle for his birthday. He turns to run off and head home for dinner. Laevius follows behind when he come across a familiar face, it is Kyle, and he is standing just inside and alley smoking with some of the young men from the neighborhood. Kyle does not even see him as he runs by, but continues home before it gets dark. Kyle seems to be about twelve years old now and is hanging around with some of the troublemakers from the neighborhood. "It seems that not much has changed for this one Lord. He seems very lost." "Laevius, Kyle is making choices in spite of what he has received. He is still angry and hateful towards Me and the world around him." "Can You not

help him Lord?" "I have laid before him all that he needs to be happy, I cannot force My love or peace upon him unless he asks for it." Replies God.

With that Laevius watches awhile then head towards Momma Patty's home where dinner has finished and the clean up is almost done. Matthew is sitting in his room looking out the window and waiting for Kyle to come home. Momma Patty enters the room, "Matthew, do you want to eat something? You cannot sit by the window all night; your brother will be home soon enough. Why don't you come down stairs and spend some time with Momma?" Matthew continues to stare out the window without saying a word. "Okay honey, I'll be there when you're ready." Momma speaks as she turns and leaves the room. Laevius is standing in the living room as the reading of the bible comes to an end. "That was wonderful reading Sarah, now all of you, off to bed and don't forget to say your prayers." Over the past few years new children have come into Momma Patty's home; Sarah, Mark, Spencer, and Cloe where the new kids in the house and Matthew and Kyle have been there for three years now. Laevius listens as Momma and Jethro start to talk. "Jethro, I just don't know what to do. Matthew is distant and Kyle is lost, how can we help them before we can't help them anymore?" Jethro ponders Momma's question and speaks, "Now Momma we can only do so much, they have to meet us somewhere along the line so change can come." "I know, but I am so worried about Kyle, he has been hanging around with that Suso gang and I know they want to make him theirs. I haven't told his social worker yet, but maybe I should mention it before things get out of hand." Momma and Jethro did not know that Matthew was listening from the top of the stairs and with what he heard he heads back to his room. Laevius sees Matthew leave and follows him to his room where he finds Matthew pulling out a bag and filling it with clothes. "Why does Matthew want to leave Lord?" "Because he feels that they are going to separate him from his brother and he does not understand that he is far from the truth." Matthew looks around the room one last time and heads out the window. He takes the fire escape down to the street and runs off into the night looking for his brother Kyle. Laevius turns and heads back to the living room as he over hears Momma and Jethro making plans for Matthew's surprise birthday party. "Okay, after school tomorrow I will pick him and his brother up and take them grocery shopping with me for dinner, Matthew gets to pick what that will be, then we will head home. You go and get the bike and hide it in our room until we get home. Have the kids decorate and let the other kids in while we are gone so that when we get back from shopping the party can begin!" Momma spoke with such joy that Jethro could not help but laugh at her excitement.

Laevius leaves this scene and is taken to the very alley that he had passed and saw Kyle in. Matthew is now in the alley with them and is telling Kyle about momma and Jethro reporting them to their social worker. "See, I told you Matt! These people don't care about us, no one does! They are going to separate us and this time it might be for good. Well I ain't gonna let them have it! Let's get out of this place." speaks Kyle as one of the other men stops them from leaving. "You two need a place for a few days? You can come and stay with me until the heat blows over." Speak Simeon Baker, the leader of this Suso gang. The gang is

known for drug trafficking, shootings, vandalism, and a lot of other crimes. They had been trying to recruit young kids such as Kyle in the neighborhood to start selling their stuff to other kids. Matthew looks at Kyle as Kyle accepts Simeon's invitation. "Okay then, let's get out of here." As Simeon, Kyle and Matthew leave for Simeon's place Laevius follows close behind. They enter into a run down apartment building a few blocks from the alley way. As they enter they find that they are not alone. His home is a place for drug addicts and prostitutes to crash. "Go ahead, find a spot and it's yours for the night, but hang on to your stuff, these guys have fingers!" Simeon chuckles as he walks into another room. Kyle looks around and finds a spot in one of the rooms that no one is in. they take the blanket off of a near by chair and place it on the ground to make a bed and that is where they were to sleep tonight. "Make sure you sleep with your back against the wall and keep your shoes on just in case." Kyle tells Matthew. Matthew is afraid, but Kyle has become used to places like these because when he wasn't coming home he would sleep in such places or in the alleys near here. As Laevius looked around at all the people in the apartment he could hear the whispers of demons in the midst. He could see some of them embracing those who were asleep as they spoke nightmares into their night sleep. The room was thick with darkness of spirit but he had to continue towards the boys. And as Laevius watched from the doorway he could see that Kyle was being embraced by a night crawler. A demon who whispers into the ears of sleepers to relive terrifying memories, they never let a man forget their sufferings of life. Laevius is beside himself and with every instinct he wants to help these boys be free. "Laevius, I feel your pain for ones so young, but you must allow that which has happened to happen." "Yes Lord, I understand" replies Laevius as he watches the unfolding of events for these lost two.

Suddenly there is a loud crash that wakes the boys from their sleep. Simeon and another man has gotten into a fight over some drugs that were taken from his room. Kyle and Matthew sit up and listen to the shouting as everyone in the living room starts to run out of the apartment. Matthew and Kyle are trapped until it is over. So they huddle together until the shouting stops, but it doesn't so Kyle tells Matthew to pick up his bag because they are going to make a run for it. "Now Matt, listen good, hug the walls of the hall then follow me out of the room, keep your back to the wall, you understand? Keep your back to the wall and follow me out of here, okay?" Matthew nods and they both stand to make their way out of the apartment. They can hear the argument getting louder and more heated as they get closer to the living room where Simeon and another man continued to shout about drugs stolen from Simeon's private stash in his room. As they enter the living room Simeon has a gun pointed to the head of the young man who is begging for his life, but Simeon is not having it! He wants his drugs or the name of the man who took it. Laevius watches as the demon that hangs onto Simeon's shoulders whispers, "He did take it, he is lying to you, you cannot trust him, and he stole from you!" Simeon hears as if hearing his own thoughts, "You were supposed to be watching my stash; you were the one I said I would blame if something was missing!" shouted Simeon as he cocked the gun in his hand. Matthew and Kyle quietly hugged the wall as they made their way to the front door. But the demon clinging to Kyle's

leg weighed him down that he could hardly pick up his feet, then the floor creak as they tried to sneak by behind Simeon who turns and shoots the first thing that he sees! Kyle falls to the floor! Matthew screams in disbelief and horror as Simeon grabs him by his shirt and threatens his life if he ever tells anyone that it was him. By now the other man has bolted out of the door and Simeon has set out after him. Kyle has fallen to the ground dead and Matthew falls to the ground beside him to cling to his lifeless body. Laevieus is in disbelief as to what just happened; it was so quick, so meaningless! As Kyle's body lies lifeless he separates from his body and watches as Matthew clings to him. "What have I done? What have I done?" questions Kyle as two familiar spirits arrive to take hold of what belongs to the king of darkness. Tomta and Dustrim have come to collect Kyle's spirit, and with an eerie chuckle they grab a hold of each arm and sink into a now opened crack that leads to the depth of the eternal underworld. Matthew sits alone crying over the body of his brother and with a sudden rage he stands up and wipes away the tears and sets out to find the man who killed his only family! Matthew digs into Kyle's pockets to find a hundred dollars from the drugs that Kyle sold earlier that day and runs out of the door to look for someone to help him avenge his brother's death. "Lord, this is too much horror for a child to handle! I thought You did not give more than one could handle?" "I do not give more than one can handle, but I do give more help when what they face is not of Me. Matthew and Kyle have had a life of hardship from the moment they were born, they faced suffering after suffering that was beyond their control. I gave them hope in many areas during their lives, but they could only find comfort in what they believed was hope. Family was hope for them, for the very thing that they longed for was the very thing I could not give them in their hearts. Family was blood and there is where hope lies, for family is forever, friendship was not blood but temporary and there is no hope of happiness in what is temporary. They longed for a family and could not accept the family they were only temporary in. In their hearts they were the only family they had, their hope of a happy future laid in each other and no one would be able to separate them, they were forever." "I understand, but how tragic the ending for ones so young!"

Laevieus has now been moved by God to a familiar scene, back on the dock of a pier. Matthew's birthday has come and he is now officially ten years old, but what good is living without his brother. Matthew sits behind a dumpster as Simeon and a few others have a conversation about what took place at his apartment. "The boy fell down dead, and his brother practically shit his pants when I threatened him. I went back to finish him off, but when I got there he had taken off. I have to find that boy before he spills the beans on me." And with that Matthew jumps out from behind the dumpster and shouts, "YOU KILLED MY BROTHER!" And starts to shoot into the small crowd, he hits three people before Matthew is shot dead himself, and as he falls, face to the ground the other men run off and leave the bodies dead on the pier. "Laevieus, was my judgment right or wrong in this matter?" "Lord, You were right. I can see now how you tried through their lives to help them receive you, but anger, pain, hurts, and all their sufferings of life had a great hold. I can see how You tried, and I can see how they rejected. I was wrong to have doubted Your judgment." And with that

God transcend Laevieus into the chapel of Hillside Assembly Church where Pastor Ronald Morgan has passed away in the pews.