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INTRODUCTION

Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.
HEBREWS 9:27

THE 563 men, women and children who boarded *The Herald of Free Enterprise* ferry on March 6, 1987, in Zeebrugge, Belgium, for a trip across the English Channel to Dover, England, had no inkling of what awaited them shortly after leaving the harbor.

Without warning, the four-thousand-ton vessel began to list and within seconds, the happy passengers were transformed into desperate, terrified people as they plunged beneath the icy cold waters and began to battle for their lives.

Two hundred passengers and crew members went to a watery grave. The only reason the toll was not much higher was the quick work by rescue crews who risked their own lives to save others.

More recently, thirty-seven men lost their lives on the USS *Stark* in the Persian Gulf, and some twenty-nine people died when a tornado struck the little town of Saragosa in West Texas. We have grown used to hearing about (and even seeing) such tragedies reported on our television newscasts and tend to treat them as mere statistics unless one of our loved ones is involved.

It is an axiom that there are just two certainties in life: death and taxes, but that is not true. With the right deductions and a good accountant millionaires have managed to avoid paying any taxes at all. But everyone, millionaires and paupers, will face the ultimate certainty: death.

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