

A LOVE LETTER TO MY FATHER...
My Heavenly Father!

2019

Dear heavenly Father,

Every morning I wake up, each new day you give me is a gift from you. I don't want to take it for granted. My first thoughts always turn toward you as I thank you for your love that you show me in so many ways. Your Word says that in the beginning you created the heavens and the earth, all living things and creatures on land and under the seas. Then you created mankind to your image, male and female you created them.¹ I'm such in awe of you!.. And because you give me the breath of life, I can enjoy all that you've created. It's from the bottom of my heart that I say: "Thank you Father!"

Each new day always begins in your presence as I sit in my favorite chair, a cup of hot cocoa in my hand. It's such a special and peaceful time for me... I love to study your Word and learn from it, to pray and open my heart to you in praise and thanksgiving, to leave my burdens at your feet knowing that somehow you'll take care of them, to let your Holy Spirit direct me in the ways I should go, and to show me whatever needs to be changed in my heart and in my life so I can become the person you want me to be... Each day also starts without the foreknowledge of how exactly it'll play out before a new one begins... This is quite exciting, but I must admit it can be somewhat frightening at times... But rest assured that I never dwell on this negative thought because I know that together we can handle anything that will occur during the day. The good – which is easy! - the bad and the ugly... It's this togetherness that gives me the confidence to get up in the morning with joy in my heart!..

Your Word tells me that you formed me in my mother's womb; intricately and wonderfully made by you. And in your book were written - every one of them - the days ordained for me before one of them came to pass. You also discern my going out and my lying down. You are familiar with all my ways. It also says that wherever I go, you are there. I cannot go from your Spirit. I cannot flee from your presence. And that your hand will guide me, will hold me fast.² How amazing is the thought of it all, but also how very complex and difficult to understand from a human standpoint. It's only by faith that I can accept your truth and say that you're constantly with me and that you've always been throughout my seventy-four years on this earth. So, I'm sure that if we both travel back in time, you'll remember some of these circumstances that happened at some point in my life...

Do you remember the day my mom passed away of tuberculosis when I was only three years old?.. I was too young to realize what had just happened, but as a result I was also diagnosed with the disease. However, a medicine which had just been discovered saved my life... In spite of this 'miracle', for three years I still had to follow a strict regimen before I could be given a clean bill of health from my doctor. As a young child, it must have been hard not to be able to play with other kids or to run around and do activities that would exert me, to take naps twice a day outside on the porch, to keep getting injections to heal my lungs on an already bruised behind. But, as strange as it may seem, I don't remember being unhappy. Because of my isolation, I realize today that I probably developed a vivid imagination playing with my dolls, the only ones I could hold in

my arms and hug... No fear for them to catch the disease!.. After my mom's death, an aunt – my dad's sister – came to live with us and took care of us like our mom would have done... Because of her relentless devotion, I didn't have to be transferred to a sanatorium, away from my family. I'll always be grateful for everything she did for me, my father and my brothers. I was too young back then to recognize your hand in all of this, but today I know that you were there all along...

Do you remember when my younger brother passed away of cancer at the age of twenty-three?.. Oh, it was such a hard time for our family... After my mom's death, my father became a very depressive man. It was hard for us kids to see him this way and we were all affected by his mood. But just before my brother passed away, they both had a lengthy conversation. I never knew what was said, but my dad came out of it a changed man. Oh, he tried to tell us, but he couldn't. It was the only time I saw my dad cry... I had been married for a couple of years at the time and his death affected me tremendously emotionally. For two years, my dear husband and I had to live through this difficult patch in my life. I experienced panic and anxiety attacks which got so bad at one point that I couldn't even leave my home... Sometime during this ordeal, I probably asked for your help because I remember entering a church one day and kneeling in one of the pews... I went to see a specialist back then, but all he wanted to do was to prescribe drugs. I finally found help through books dealing with the problem, and got some insight as to how to get back to a normal life without the need for prescription drugs. I realize today that my brother's death wasn't in vain. Because of it, my dad found peace, serenity and joy, and I found a great appreciation for my husband's commitment and love towards me, as well as compassion for people going through emotional distress. I know today that you were always there in the midst of our sorrow and struggles because something good came out of all our sufferings...

Do you remember when my father passed away, about four months prior to my move from Montreal to Florida with my husband and our three boys?.. Oh, what a great loss that was... My father and I had a special bond. I remember as a little girl riding with him in his pickup truck which was equipped with a snowplow in the front and a couple of shovels in the back. He oftentimes brought me with him to help him clean driveways and sidewalks for some people that had hired him after a snowstorm. Oh, what special memories these are... But the day I heard of his death, I was devastated... I hadn't had the chance to know my mother, and now I had lost him... But today I realize that it was a good thing for both of us. For him, to see his only daughter leave her birthplace for a new country, some sixteen hundred miles away, it must have been unbearable... So, I'm sure you chose this time as the best one to be reunited with his wife... I knew that my father was not a traveling man and the likelihood that he would come to visit us in Florida was about nil. And I couldn't see the day when I could go back to visit him either. So, for me the pain of his death was in some way more bearable than knowing that he was still alive but that I couldn't see him on a regular basis... As for my aunt, I knew that she was a traveler. In fact, she came to spend a winter in Florida with her sister. They had rented a small apartment close to our home and we could see them every day. There again, I know that you were always present...

Do you remember when our little family went through some major financial struggles?.. Oh, how difficult it was to come to the realization that we were going to lose everything... It was after our move from South Florida to North Central Florida. Oh, I know...you may say that it wasn't very well planned, and I totally agree with you. We were the ones to blame but you were still with us, weren't you?..

I remember after a year and a half, I had enough of all the struggles. From having credit card companies call us every week to remind us that we were behind in our payments, to moving into a filthy house with no air conditioning in the summer and insufficient heating in the winter in exchange for cleaning the church we were attending to at the time, to humbling ourselves at the point of having to apply for food stamps, to accepting the generosity of some dear friends... Oh, I remember being angry... I remember being at the end of my rope, and crying out to you one day: *"God, why can't you give a good job to my husband instead of digging trenches, working in attics for a minimum wage like he's doing now?"* Your reply was swift: *"Who are you to tell me how to provide for your family as long as I do provide?..."* Oh, you certainly didn't mince your words! I heard you loud and clear that day!.. How sorry and contrite I was for having acted this way towards you, and I asked for your forgiveness... I had no reason to behave the way I did because I realize now that YES, you always provided for our needs. Oh, maybe not the way I would have liked to, but you did... You are a Sovereign and loving God. I had seen your miracles so many times during the two years it took to finally come out of this crisis... And even to this day, I cannot forget them because in the midst of all our struggles, you were always there...

Do you remember when one morning in 1985 during my personal time with you, quite unexpectedly a picture of a house started to form in my mind?.. I'd never experienced this before, but for some reason I was convinced that it would be ours one day... I could visualize it so well that I drew the floorplan and tucked it away in my Bible. Another interesting feature about this house is that there was a flagpole in the front yard. That same day, I shared about this experience with my husband and our kids but they didn't seem perplexed at all, which surprised me a bit... Oh, we moved many times afterwards, but we never saw that special house... Years went by and I completely forgot about it until 2007 when my husband and I decided to move again. By then our kids were all grown-ups and living on their own. So, we started to search on the internet for 3 bedroom/2 bath homes available in our area. One day, I was particularly attracted to one, but then I realized it was a 2 bedroom/3 bath home. I must have inadvertently inverted the numbers during my search. Anyhow, I told my husband that we still should go and take a look at it.

As soon as we set foot inside the house, the picture I saw in my mind some twenty-two years earlier reappeared. It was incredible! I didn't share any of this with my husband during our visit wondering if this house could really be IT... We also realized that it was listed as a 2 bedroom home because one of the rooms had no closet in it, which we didn't mind since we could use it as an office. So, after much consideration, we decided to pay a second visit. While my husband was looking more closely at the front yard, he told me jokingly: *"Hey honey, here's your house with the flagpole!"* He had discovered it nestled among the oak trees!.. How could he have remembered that detail after all those years?.. I was so overwhelmed that I started to cry and was unable to speak for a little while. I finally calmed down and could tell him how I felt about this house. There were then no doubts in our mind that it was *the* one, and on February 14, 2008 we became its rightful owner. Such an amazing story worth sharing here because I know that you orchestrated everything...

What is kind of appalling also is that three months earlier, I had shredded the floorplan thinking this house had just been a trick of my imagination after all... But now I know that you were really there, at the beginning of it all! I don't understand why you waited twenty-three years to bring it to pass, but I can only imagine that you had very good reasons, and I wouldn't even dare to dispute them with you anyway... Your plans and your timing are always perfect. When we told our three

boys about it, they were really excited for us. One of them commented: *“I guess sometimes we have to give up a vision or a dream to get it back...”* He may have been right, but all I know is that you’re a sovereign God. Your thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are your ways our ways³, and my part is simply to trust you in every circumstance in my life because you’re always there, in every one of them...

Last but not least...

Do you remember one evening in 1977 when my husband and I were sitting in a huge auditorium filled to capacity with people coming to hear a preacher-evangelist speak about you? Oh, it’s difficult to really describe what happened that evening, but you made me clearly understand that it wasn’t through religion, my good works or my efforts that I could make myself look better in your eyes... Such a self-righteous woman I was back then, wasn’t I?.. At the end of the meeting, when the preacher asked for anyone who needed prayers to come up front, you had to virtually pull me out of my seat and push me in front of the podium because you knew very well I wouldn’t have done it on my own, didn’t you? Oh, how desperately I wanted to return to my seat but I couldn’t because my feet were sort of glued to the floor... This whole situation was kind of surreal, wasn’t it? I felt so humiliated, helpless and shameful standing there alone before other people finally decided to join me... But you immediately showed me your love, mercy and compassion. You revealed to me the extreme sacrifice you had made some two thousand years ago in sending your Son to die on the cross for my sins, and what it required of Him to take my place on that cross so I can be righteous in your eyes... It’s by your grace alone that it can be done. There’s no other humanly speaking kind of way...⁴ Oh, I can say without a shadow of a doubt that you were there that evening because you have totally transformed me from the inside out... And I’ll always be so grateful to you for what you’ve done on that special evening.

Father, these are just a few of the circumstances where I really saw your hand in them, but I’m sure there have been many more that I’m not even aware of. You were always there in all my sorrows, and collected all my tears in your bottle.⁵ But I also know that you rejoiced with me when it was time to rejoice. And as you promised, you’ll always be with me till the end of time...⁶

Oh, I could go on and on but now I just want to run into your loving arms and tell you how much I love you, how much you mean to me. How awesome, all-powerful, boundless God you are; full of compassion, gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth!.. Thank you Father for your love... for everything!

Your loving daughter.

¹Genesis 1:1-31 ²Psalms 139:1-16 ³Isaiah 55:8-9 ⁴Romans 3:21-27 ⁵Psalms 56:8 ⁶Matthew 28:20

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