

# SHARING THE GIFT OF HEAVEN



# *Eternal Life*

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**SHARING THE GIFT OF HEAVEN  
ETERNAL LIFE!**

By David A. Beckett, Jr.

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# About the author

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David Beckett and his family have lived and served the Lord in three Asian countries since 2004. He is the founder of **GSM, Good Shepherd's Ministry** and currently serves the Lord in Mongolia. His ministry is disciple-making and his great love is to, in any situation, bring people into the presence of their Heavenly Father. For God alone is able to heal, to encourage, to comfort, to guide and to offer eternal life in Christ Jesus.



**Psalm 84:1–4.** *How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise! Selah!*

# I Will Not Cross Alone!

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I'm from Texas, where people are strong, competitive and independent. But I am challenged by something I saw several years ago, based on the Special Olympics. It begins with a crowd watching special needs children race toward a finish line and personal glory. Suddenly, the lead runner falls, giving another a clear path to victory. But the Special Olympics is run by special people who do not think like the rest of us. Instead of taking the victory alone, the child turns to pick up the fallen competitor and is joined by the other runners. To great applause, they interlock arms and cross the finish line together.

This story confronts me with a question about my own faith race. **Will I take Jesus for myself and cross the finish line alone? No, Lord willing, I cannot and will not cross alone!** I challenge you to join me in sharing the Good News story in this book with friends, neighbors, strangers and family. Make sure you do not cross to Heaven's glory alone!

**If you accept this challenge, begin sharing this story today.**

# The Gospel of Jesus

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**2 Peter 1:21** *For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

The Bible was written over a period of 1,500 years. It contains 66 books written by over 40 different authors. All together, they tell one grand story. The first books are 3,500 years old. The last book was written 2,000 years ago. The first book is Genesis which talks of the beginnings. The last book is Revelation which reveals the end of our time. The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testament. The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. This fulfillment is the coming of Jesus Christ as Savior, Lord and ruler of an eternal kingdom. This kingdom is populated by all those who trust and believe in Jesus as the Son of God, sent to save our fallen world.

**What is this grand story?**

# The Genesis

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**Genesis 1:1** *In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

The heavens, with its vast expanse of galaxies, stars and planets revealed God’s boundlessness. But, God looked upon the earth as the centerpiece of His creation. Over the course of six days, God created all that is and He rested on the seventh day. He created light and separated the light from the darkness. He separated the waters of creation and called the expanse heaven. God set boundaries for the oceans and made land appear. He caused the earth to be filled with trees and green plants. Then He created the sun and the moon, to govern the days and seasons. God formed the birds of the air and the creatures in the sea. He made the great beasts and the livestock of the field, all according to its kind. And God saw that His creation was good.

**Now the earth was ready for God’s most prized creation.**

# Made in God's Image

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**Genesis 1:14** *God said "Let us make man (mankind) in our **own** image and in **our** likeness".*

God created mankind, male and female. He blessed the man and the woman, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it." Now, the Bible clearly says in Deuteronomy 6:24 The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Then, why would God say "Let **us** make man?"

In Scripture, God reveals Himself to mankind as Heavenly Father, Holy Spirit and Son. God's image and likeness is reflected in the human family. This is seen clearly at Jesus baptism in Matthew 3:16. Here, Jesus is baptized, and as he comes out of the water, the Holy Spirit descends on him and God, the Father, speaks from heaven saying "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased." God is three persons, but one family and we are made in His image. The foundation of all human society, the family, is made in God's image.

# The Gift of Life

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**Genesis 2:7** *Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

God named this man Adam, meaning red, like the blood that would run through mankind's veins. When God formed the man's body, it was lifeless. God breathed into the man's nose the breath of life. While the man's body was formed of clay from the earth, his soul and his spirit of life came from God.

God charged Adam to care for His creation. After naming all the animals of creation, Adam realized he was alone. Each animal had its partner, but he did not have one. Then, God put Adam into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs and formed a woman out of it. Adam named her Eve because she would be the mother of all humanity. So man was formed of the earth and the woman was formed from the man. And ever since, all human life is born through the women in her union with man.

# God's Nature Is Love

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After God made the man and the woman, His creation was finished and He declared it to be “very good.” The beauty of God’s image was revealed in Adam’s partnership with Eve. For God took the woman from the man’s rib. The rib is the protective bone covering the heart of man and the rib is itself protected by the man’s strong arm.

**Genesis 2:24** *Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

The woman was created an equal partner in life, for what command of God could the man fulfill alone? God said “be fruitful and multiply and have dominion over the earth.” This blessing would be fulfilled through the loving union, cooperation, labor and faithfulness within the family under the headship of the earthly family father. This command came with God’s promise of offspring as the reward of love.

# Love Is a Choice

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With the blessing of children a parent labors to prepare the perfect home. A parent's greatest desire is a trusting and loving relationship with their child. But love cannot be forced, for this is slavery. True love requires freedom, freedom TO LOVE, or NOT TO LOVE. This is the message of God the Father's creation story and the test of the two trees in Genesis 2-3.

**Genesis 2:8** *And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

God told the man *“You may eat of every tree of the garden, but you shall not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, for on the day you eat of it you will surely die.”*

**We can all guess what happens next.**

# The Great Rebellion

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**Genesis 3:1-6** *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

Since Adam and Eve lived very long lives, was God lying when He said they would die immediately? And was the serpent telling the truth when he said they would not? To answer this question, we must define “life” and “death.”

# Eternal Life & Living Death

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The serpent defines life as a functioning body – the arms and legs are moving, the heart is beating and the mind is thinking (earthly life). But this was not the whole truth.

For instance, imagine there is a most beautiful tropical island one's mind could ever conceive. In this lush paradise is everything a person could want or need. You are invited to come and live, BUT, there are some conditions. You must go alone. You can never come back. No one can ever join you. And you will never die. Now, would you accept an invitation to go and live? How would you describe life on this beautiful island? Most say this life is worse than death, because you are alone forever.

God defines true life as relationship with His eternal family (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they betrayed their Father, from whom they received their spirit of life. Every generation of mankind since is born and lives in this broken relationship, dead to true life.

# Broken Creation

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As a result of the man and the woman's rebellion, their bodies were destined to return to the clay from which they were created. But their spirit would continue to live, alone. The ground was also cursed so that man's labor became hard and futile. The woman's child bearing became painful and often filled with grief. Adam and Eve were cast from the Father's presence because of sin.

**Genesis 4:8** *Cain spoke to Abel, his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.*

Sometime later Adam and Eve had two children. The older brother, Cain, became jealous of his younger brother, Abel, and killed him. This was the fruit of mankind's rebellion. Since this time, life was filled with violence, hatred and suffering. Now our world is plagued with diseases, death, war, addictions, natural disasters, violence and broken relationships. Has God abandoned his children? Are we to be left with so much suffering and death?

# Love's Hope

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God, our Heavenly Father, loves His earthly children in spite of what we have done. He could not abandon his children without hope of rescue. The story of the Bible from beginning to end is of the Heavenly Father's love for His wayward children. With great compassion, God pursues His earthly children through the centuries, moving heaven and earth to restore us to the life of his eternal family.

**Exodus 34:6-7** *The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."*

**What is God's plan for our rescue? How will God show mercy toward us, while executing justice regarding our sin and rebellion?**

# A Savior is born!

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God revealed His plan through prophets, who spoke His words. Over three hundred prophecies speak of the One who will come from heaven to rescue God's children. Mysteriously, this savior bears the names of God Himself.

**Micah 5:2** *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”* **Isaiah 7:14** *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”* **Isaiah 9:6** *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Of the increase of his government and of peace, there shall be no end.*

**Isaiah 49:6** *“I (God) will make you as a light for the nations that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.*

**Who is this child and how will he fulfill God's rescue plan?**

# Perfect Justice and Mercy

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**Psalms 22** was written by a King of Israel named David, who records the death of a future eternal king. *“They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. They look and they stare at me. They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they gambled.”*

1000 years later, a man named Jesus was born of a virgin in Bethlehem. He claimed to be the son of God, who came from heaven to die for the sins of the whole world. He died on a cross in Jerusalem. His hands and feet were nailed to a wooden cross as soldiers gambled for His clothing.

**Isaiah 53:3, 4-5** *He (Jesus) was despised and rejected by men.... Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our sins; upon him was the punishment that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.*

**Jesus is the Savior, God’s own son, sent to rescue his children!**

# God's Sacrifice for our Sin

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**John 3:16–17** *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*

**Matthew 17:22–23** *As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.” And they were greatly distressed.*

Days later, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and was hailed as King by his followers. He was arrested during the night by religious and governing authorities and sentenced to death. The next day He died nailed to a cross and was buried. However, three days later, He rose from the dead and appeared to over 500 people. His disciples then gathered in Galilee and watched Jesus rise up in the clouds as He returned to His Father

# God's Great Gift Is Jesus

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**John 14:1-3** *“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me (Jesus). In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*”

Our Heavenly Father gave life to His human children. But mankind rebelled against His love and was separated from His eternal life. Our body, made of earth’s clay, might live 80 years and then return to the earth when we die. But what is going to happen to us once we die?

**John 3:18** *Whoever believes in him (Jesus) is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.*

**How do you place your trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sin and to receive God’s gift of eternal life?**

# Receive Eternal Life

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Your Father in Heaven loves you and wants you to be united with His eternal family and receive His gift of eternal life. He gave his Son Jesus to die for your sins and to restore you to His presence. Will you place your trust in his Son Jesus?

**Romans 10:9-10** *If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

**Repeat this prayer of faith and trust in Jesus Christ:**

**“Dear Father in Heaven, thank you for sending Jesus to rescue me from my sin and death. Please forgive me of my sin and give me your gift of eternal life. Thank you Father God for bringing me into your eternal family! Help me to know you and to walk with you. In Jesus name, Amen.”**

# Baptism: the Celebration of New Life

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Your new faith is a journey and it is time to begin your new life in Christ through the expression of baptism. It is best to join a local church family and allow them to join you in celebrating your new life.

**Matthew 28:18–20** *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

An Apostle of Jesus, named Paul, describes the symbolism of baptism in **Romans 6:4** “*We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*” This is an important memorial in your life and a physical expression of leaving the past behind and living in freedom for an eternal future.

# God's Promise to You

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Tomorrow morning, you may wake and ask yourself if your new identity, faith and life are real. It is important to know, while we may not keep our promises, God is always faithful to keep His promises. The Apostle Paul says it this way:

**Romans 8:38–39** *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Romans 8:14–16 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

# A Grateful Life!

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Contact us with your decision, so we can celebrate with you. A life worth living is one of gratefulness, as you share the life and the love of God, found in Jesus Christ. May you continually grow in your faith and trust in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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**Philippians 4:7** *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

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# Notes

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