

THE  
LOVE  
STORY  
FROM  
HEAVEN

by Mike Harding

# **The Love Story from Heaven**

by  
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There is a God in Heaven who loves you. He is inviting you today to become His son or His daughter. If you will open your heart to Him today, your life will be changed forever. Today, you can become a child of God with eternal life. Today, you can become a beloved prince or princess of God. Today, God can come and live in your heart and give you His love, His peace and His joy.

The Bible is the greatest love story ever told. It is God's love story from Heaven.

The Bible says that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Our God is the true and only God. He created the universe – the sun and the moon and the stars. He created the earth and all the living creatures in it. And finally, after He had created this earth to be our home, He created us in His own image. God created YOU in His image. You are amazing and important!

God wants you to know who He is. He reveals Himself to us in the Bible. God wants us to know that He is good, that He is holy, and that He loves you. There is nothing evil in God. He is good in every way. He is a God of truth and goodness and justice. Most importantly, He is a God of love.

When God created the first human beings, named Adam and Eve, God created them so that He could love them and so that they could love Him in return. God gave them authority and dominion over everything on the earth. He made them to be a prince and a princess in this world. He put them in a beautiful garden. God loved them. And he told them to multiply and to fill the earth. Everything was good.

But one day something terrible happened in that garden.

What happened? First you must understand that God has an enemy. This enemy is a rebel angel named Satan. God originally created Satan as a beautiful and powerful angel named Lucifer. Lucifer started off as a good angel with no evil in him. But because of his beauty, Lucifer became proud in his heart. He didn't want to serve or worship God anymore. He rebelled against God. He wanted to become a god himself. He turned evil, and God kicked him out of Heaven.

After God made Adam and Eve, Satan came into the garden. He began to tempt Adam and Eve to turn against God. He tempted them to disobey God and to sin against God. And they did. God had given Adam and Eve free will. They had the ability to make decisions and choices, good or bad. When Adam and Eve began to sin and disobey God, something terrible happened. They lost their relationship with God. They fell into sin. Sin is like a spiritual disease that changed their hearts from good to evil. Adam and Eve did multiply and fill the earth, but their children were filled with sin also. The disease of sin now fills this world. That is why people lie and steal and hurt each other and kill each other.

Something else terrible happened. Adam and Eve were created with the blessing of God. But when they entered into sin, a curse came upon them and upon all of this world. Sickness and disease and death and poverty came into this world. Mankind was no longer princes and princesses of God, but slaves to sin and to Satan. All of mankind was infected by the terrible disease of sin. All of mankind was living under a curse. All of mankind was doomed to die physically and then to face an eternity as spiritual beings cast away from the presence of God.

Satan has tried to fill this world with false gods and false religions. But there is only one God, and He loves you. He wants to save you and make you His son or His daughter today.

God wants you to understand something. Because He created you in His image, you are precious and valuable to Him. God created you with a destiny and a purpose. He created you to love you, and so that you might love Him in return. Your life is important. You are like a precious golden coin. The coin may have been lost. The coin may have fallen in the dirt. The coin may have been stepped on and run over. The coin may not look like it has any value. But the coin bears the image of its Maker. The coin is still valuable. It just needs to be cleaned and restored to its original beautiful condition.

You are like that coin. You were lost because of the fall of the human race into sin. You may have fallen into the dirt of this dark and broken world. You may have been very damaged in this fallen world. You may feel like you have no value. But God says that you are precious and valuable. You still bear the image of your Maker. He wants to cleanse

you from the sin and dirt of this world. He wants to restore you to His destiny and purpose for you. He wants to love you and make you His child. He wants to heal your heart and make you new.

After the human race fell into sin, God made a plan. He loves us, and He wants to save us.

For thousands of years, God sent prophets into the world. Most of these prophets were from the people and land of Israel. The prophets all had one message: a Savior is coming! The messages of the prophets were recorded in the Bible. There were great prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel. They all said the same thing: a Savior is coming into the world! He will save God's people from their sins. Anyone who believes in this Savior will be rescued. Anyone who calls on the name of this Savior will be saved. Anyone who believes in this Savior will have forgiveness of all sins. Anyone who calls on the name of this Savior will become a child of God with eternal life.

God also raised up a man named Moses as a prophet. Moses gave the people of Israel God's laws for holy living. He gave them the Ten Commandments and many other laws. These laws told people that they should have no other God but the one true God. These laws told the people that they should not lie or steal or commit murder. These laws revealed God's holiness. These laws made people understand the things that God loves and the things that God hates, because He is good and He is holy.

But these laws could not save God's people. The laws were good, but the people were infected with the disease of sin. The law said that we should not lie, but people continued to lie. The law said that we should not steal or kill, but people continued to steal and kill. God's law could not save us. God's law was never meant to save us. The purpose of God's law was so that all the people of the world would understand that we need a Savior.

And so for thousands of years God sent prophets. They were writing the pages of the Bible. The message of the prophets was this: there is a Savior coming! Whoever believes in Him and calls on His name will be

saved. Their sins will be forgiven. They will receive eternal life as beloved princes and princesses of God.

In order to understand what happened next, you must first understand a great mystery. The Bible says that there is only one God, but He exists in the form of three parts or three Persons. We call this the Trinity. And since God created you in His image, you also are a trinity. You are one person with three parts: you are a spirit and a soul and a body. Your spirit is the eternal part of you, made in God's image. Your soul is your mind and your will and your emotions. Your body is the physical part of you that other people can see and hear and touch. So, you are one person made of three parts. God also is a Trinity. He is one God with three parts. God reveals Himself to us as the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Part of God stayed in Heaven. He is the Father. Part of God came into the earth to save us. He became a man like us. He was born of a virgin. His birth was a miracle. He came to save us. He is that Savior. His name is Jesus Christ. And part of God is called the Holy Spirit. When you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you forever! God actually wants to live inside of you because He loves you!

This is how it happened: About two thousand years ago, an angel of God named Gabriel appeared to a young woman in Israel. The woman was engaged to be married, but she was not yet married. She was a virgin. She believed in God and loved God. Her name was Mary. The angel told Mary that God had chosen her, and that she would have a baby. She was to name the baby Jesus. This baby would be called the Son of God because He was born of a human mother, but His only Father was God. This baby would be the Savior of the world. This baby would be the One that all the prophets had spoken of. Someday, He would also be the King and Lord of all the world. Mary asked how this could be, since she was a virgin. The angel answered that the Holy Spirit of God would come upon her, and that the birth would be a miracle of God. Mary believed the angel, and nine months later she gave birth to a Boy. So she gave Him the name that the angel had told her – Jesus.

Jesus was God in a human body. He is the second part of God the Trinity. He came into the world as one of us. He came to be that Savior. He came to rescue us from sin and death and the curse. He came to make us children of God again. He came because He loves us so much. He came because He loves YOU so much!

God knows you. He knows your name. He knows how many hairs are on your head. He loves you, and He wants you to be His child forever.

Jesus grew up and became a man. When He was thirty years old, the Holy Spirit of God came down upon Him out of Heaven and filled Him with power. Also, the voice of the Father spoke from Heaven in the hearing of many people. The Father said to Jesus, "You are My beloved Son." From that time, Jesus began to teach people about His Father God. He loved the people. He taught them about Heaven and about the Kingdom of God. He began to heal the sick and to do miracles. He even raised the dead. He set people free from evil spirits. He forgave them for their sins. He also called twelve men to follow Him – to be His disciples.

Jesus told all the people that He was the Savior that the prophets had spoken about. Jesus told them that if they would believe in Him, they would be saved. He told everyone that He was the only way to come back to God the Father. He told them that He would forgive their sins and give them eternal life. He told them that, if they believed in Him, the same Holy Spirit of God would soon come and live in their hearts also.

After three years of teaching the people and healing the sick, the religious leaders of that time became very jealous of Jesus. Multitudes of people were following Jesus, but the religious leaders didn't believe in Him. They still thought they could save themselves by trying to keep the laws of the prophet Moses. Even though Jesus had done many miracles, they didn't want to believe that Jesus was the Savior the prophets had spoken of. They were jealous of His popularity with all the people. So they falsely accused Jesus of crimes that He did not commit. And they said that He should be put to death for claiming to be God and for claiming to be the Savior.

In those days, the Roman Empire was in control of the land of Israel. So the religious leaders of Israel turned Jesus over to the Roman government to be executed for His crimes. Even though Jesus was innocent, the Roman government agreed to put Him to death. They whipped Him and beat Him severely. Then they nailed Him to a wooden cross. That was how they executed criminals in those days. All Jesus had done was love people and forgive people and heal people, but the religious leaders and the Roman government crucified Him. Jesus was the only innocent man in the world. He was the only one who had never committed sin!

Why did Jesus allow Himself to be crucified? If He was God, couldn't He have stopped that from happening? Yes, but Jesus actually came into the world to die on that cross. It was His plan. He came to die for us. He came to die for our sins.

The Bible says that the punishment for sin is death. Just as every crime deserves a punishment or a jail sentence, the punishment for sin is death. It is eternal rejection from the presence of God. God loves us, and He wants to save us. But He is a God of justice also. So God had to punish our sins to satisfy His own justice. Then He could forgive us. So Jesus, the second part of God, the second Person of the Trinity, came into this world as a man to take our place on the cross. He came to receive our punishment. He came to die for us. As He was pouring out His blood on the cross, He was paying the full price for all of our sins. The only innocent Man in all the world was dying in the place of all the guilty people. Jesus' last words on the cross were these: "It is finished." It was a Friday afternoon, about two thousand years ago.

After Jesus died, they took His body down from the cross. They put Him in a tomb. The tomb was something like a small cave. They laid His body inside and moved a large rock in front of the tomb. The religious leaders thought that they had gotten rid of Jesus. Even that rebel angel Satan thought that he had killed the Son of God. He thought that he had won a victory. He thought that he could continue to enslave and torment the human race because of their fall into sin.

But early on Sunday morning, something amazing happened. Angels came and rolled away the stone, and Jesus walked out of the tomb

alive! His Father in Heaven had raised Him from the dead after He had paid for the sins of the world. Jesus appeared to His disciples and gave them a message. He said, "All authority in heaven and earth is now given to Me." As a man, Jesus had saved us and rescued us from sin and from slavery to Satan. God had become a man, a member of the race of people He had created, so that He could rescue us and love us. If we believe in Him and follow Him, we will no longer be fallen slaves, but princes and princesses of God. We will be restored.

Jesus also told His followers to go into all the world and preach this message – this story – to all the world. This message is called "the gospel". If you believe that He died for you and rose from the dead, you will be saved. Jesus said that anyone who believes in Him and calls on His name will be saved. Your sins will be forgiven before God. The people who die without Jesus are lost forever. They die in their sins and are eternally separated from God. But the people who receive Jesus as their Savior will go to Heaven when they die. They will never be separated from God again.

And Jesus said that something else amazing will happen. The moment you call on Jesus Christ to be your Savior, the Holy Spirit of God will come into your heart and you will be born again. You will have a new heart, a new spirit from God. You will be a child of God. You will have eternal life. The disease of sin begins to lose its influence over you. God fills your heart with His love and His holiness and you become a new person on the inside. And God's Spirit will live in your heart forever. You will begin to know the presence of God and even the voice of God on the inside of your heart. He will lead you and help you and teach you by speaking to you inside your heart.

The Bible says that Jesus went back to Heaven forty days after He rose from the dead. He sat down at the right hand of the Father. He is there at the Father's side as our Savior and our Lord. The Bible says that someday Jesus will come back from Heaven. When He does, He will come in power and will become the King of all the earth. Every knee will bow before Him at that time. The people that believe in Him and serve Him as King now will reign with Him then in His kingdom. If you serve Him now as Your King, you will reign with Him as a prince or a princess when He comes and brings His kingdom.

Are you ready to call on the name of Jesus right now? Do you want to be saved right now? Are you ready to believe in Him and follow Him? Do you want to become a child of God in this moment? Pray this prayer now. Say it out loud. In this moment, you will be saved!

*Pray this: "Lord Jesus, I believe You are God who became a man. You came into this world to save me. You are the Son of God. Jesus, I believe in You and I ask You to save me now. I believe that You died for me. You paid for my sins with Your life and Your blood on the cross so that I can be forgiven. I believe that You rose from the dead. You are my Savior. Jesus, come into my heart now. And let Your Holy Spirit come into my heart right now. In this moment, I become a child of God. From this moment, God is my Father. He loves me forever. In this moment, I receive forgiveness of sins and I receive eternal life by calling on Jesus Christ as my Savior. Jesus, I will follow You. Amen!"*

Congratulations! You are now a child of God. Jesus has come into your heart. You are saved!

What should you do now?

If you can, find a good Christian church to attend. Call the people that gave you this book. Tell the people there about your decision. Get a Bible and begin to read it, especially the New Testament. The New Testament is the part of the Bible that we are living in today. Learn more about Jesus. Let the leaders in the church teach you more about following Jesus. We are God's family, and we need each other. We love each other, and we help each other to learn and grow spiritually. God bless you!