**OUR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER JCC 30/JUNE/14**

For many of us it is easy to assume we all know what it is like to have an earthly father – the kind of father who cared for our every need, who was always there for you, and who was understanding, loving and patient, etc. There isn’t one of us who can claim to come from a perfect home where we had a perfect father and a perfect upbringing – some of us had no father at all; or some had fathers with varying degrees of imperfections; or some had highly dysfunctional fathers; or some had absentee fathers or fathers who were entirely engrossed in their vocations; some had fathers who were uncommunicative. It is from our imperfect pasts that we have formed and drawn the conclusions and conceptions that we have today of what our heavenly Father is like, tempered from what we have read about Him and who He is from the Bible. This is a love letter from our Heavenly Father directed to you. Here are some passages of scripture that describe your heavenly Father, His character, His love and His consideration for you. It begins….

**‘My Precious Child,** you may not know me, but I know everything about you – and I still love you.I know when you sit down, when you get up – I am familiar with all your ways. I know exactly how many hairs there are on your head – I count them regularly. I know your thoughts and I know what you are going to say before you say it. I go before you and I follow after you and you are totally surrounded by my presence; my hand of blessing is on your life. **My response:** Father, as I think about all of this, it is almost too glorious and too wonderful to believe! You care about me so much; you are with me through every situation, in every trial and temptation; You protect, love and guide me – You know me completely! You know every detail about me and my life! **Psalm 139:1-18**

There is no where I can go where you are not. I can never be lost to your Spirit. You support me, guide me and strengthen me everywhere I go. There is nowhere I can hide from you. You are everywhere and I can never be far from your comforting Spirit. It amazes me when I consider how you made all the delicate inner parts of my body and knit them together in my mother’s womb; your workmanship is marvelous and so wonderfully complex. You saw me before I was born and you scheduled each day of my life even before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your book! How precious it is to realize you are constantly thinking about me. I cannot even begin to count the number of times in a day that you think about me! And when I awaken in the morning you are still thinking about me! **This is your heavenly Father and how He sees you and what He thinks about you.**

**My precious child**, you are my offspring, you are my beloved child. I knew you even before you were conceived. **Jeremiah 1:4,5** ‘Then the Word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed you in the belly I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified you, and ordained you a prophet of Israel.’ You were not a mistake – I chose you when I planned creation. **Ephesians 1:11,12** ‘In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ.’ Because of what Jesus has done, you are gifts to me, you are a special present that gives me great joy. I delight in you. You are a part of my sovereign plan, for all your days are written in my Book. I have determined the exact time of your birth, the exact number of your days and where you would live.

I am not distant and angry, but I am the complete expression of love. My love was lavished on you when I sent my only Son, Jesus, to satisfy my anger against your sins. It is my desire to fill you with my love because you are my child and I am your Father. I offer you more than your earthly father ever could for I am the perfect Father. **1John 3:1 4:7-19** Every good gift you receive comes from my hand, for I am your provider and I will meet all your needs. My plans for you and for your future are always filled with hope, because I love you with an everlasting love. I rejoice over you with singing! I am your mighty Savior! I live in you! I will give you victory; I rejoice over you with great gladness; I will love you and not accuse you; I will exult over you with a happy song! **Zephaniah 3:9-19**

I will never stop doing good for you, for you are my treasured possession. I want to show you great and mighty things you haven’t even imagined. If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me, and I will give you the desires of your heart. For it is I who gave you those desires. I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine, desire, think of, or even possibly hope for. **Ephesians 3:20** ‘Now unto Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.’ I want you, my child, to understand just how deep, how long, how wide and how high my love for you really is; I want you to experience this love for yourself. My love for you is so great you will never see the end of it nor will you ever fully understand it. At last you will be completely filled with Me.

I am the Father who comforts you in all your troubles. **11Thessilonians 2:16** ‘May the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, which has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.’ For I will help you to stand firm, and to keep a strong grip on the Truth you have been taught. I have loved you and given you everlasting comfort and hope. I will help you in every good thing you do or say. I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles. **11Corinthians 1:3,4** ‘Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort by which we ourselves are comforted of God.’ I am the source of every mercy, and I am the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens you in every hardship and trial. The more your sufferings, the more I will shower you with my comfort and my encouragement. I am your greatest encourager!

When you are broken hearted, I am close to you. **Psalm 34:18** ‘The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: and saves such as be of a contrite spirit.’ I will rescue you when you are humble and sorry for your sins. I am your source of courage and wisdom and will help you through your sorrows. I am always by your side. As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart. **Isaiah 40:11** ‘He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.’ Yes, I am the powerful and mighty God, and yet I gently care for you and guide you. I am ever-present to support you and help you with every detail of your life. I never grow weary or grow tired of supporting you. I give my power to you when you are tired and worn out, and I give strength to you when you are weak and weary. One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes. I will take away every pain you have suffered on this earth. **Revelation 21:3.4** ‘And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are all passed away.’ I am coming down to be with you, to live with you. Where I am there is peace, security and love. Where I am there will be no more pain, death, sorrow, crying or tears. Where I am there is eternal fulfillment and eternal joy. What I have prepared for you, no eye has seen and no mind has even begun to imagine.

I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my Son, Jesus. **John 17:21,22** ‘That they all may be one, as you Father are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that you have sent me. And the glory which you have given me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one.’ My great desire is that we will all be as one, united as a powerful witness to the reality of my love. My prayer is that we will be of one heart and one mind. I love you just as much as I love my Son, Jesus. Vs 26 In Jesus, my love for you is revealed, He is the exact representation of who I am. He demonstrated that I am for you and not against you. He came to tell you that I am not counting your sins – they are removed from you as far as the east is from the west; your sins have been cast into the Sea of My Forgetfulness. I sent Jesus and His death has made it possible for us to be reconciled; so we could enjoy a right and good relationship. My gift of Jesus to you was the ultimate expression of my love for you – I gave up everything I loved so that I might gain your love.

I have always been your Father and I will always be your Father. **John 1:12,13** ‘But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Which were born, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’ As you continue to welcome me in your life, you will continue to receive new life from me; you will become that new and perfect creation. I am making you a new person as you continue living in me and abiding in me.

**All my love, your Dad**

My hope is that this has enhanced and made alive your view of who our Father is and just how much He loves and cares for you. The apostle Paul, when preaching in Athens, spoke these words, ‘For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring.’ **Acts 17:28**

**God is our Father and we are His children. As our Father, He has proved His great love, care and concern for each of us. He loved us first and loves us with an everlasting, eternal love – that is why we love Him so much; that is why we are determined to serve Him and obey Him.**

**‘Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am you may be also.’**

When everything is prepared and ready, He will come and get us! Jesus is right now preparing Heaven for you and me. Eternal life and all its benefits await His children – our Father will spend eternity with us!