

Chapter 1

- The Divine Intervention -

When faith replaces doubt, when selfless service eliminates selfish striving, the power of God brings to pass His purposes."

— Thomas S. Monson

This book began on a warm autumn day at a popular café in downtown Toronto on September 29, 2013, and was completed July 23, 2018, almost five years later. September 29th has significance to me as it was my father's birthday, Michael Rosario D'souza, who was born in a small village in Goa, India.

But this birthday was very different back in 2013. My father, my champion, had passed away on Monday, Aug 12, 2013 at St. Michael's hospital in Toronto, Canada at 3:33pm. He was admitted for triple bypass surgery at 80 years of age, but did not make it out of recovery. Although, we did have two full days with him where he was fully conscious, giving us a whole 60 seconds of saying our personal goodbyes to him, we were still very much in shock and in pain after he passed. We were not expecting this outcome. This single event changed my life forever. Allow me to explain.

My father was not the president of some country, or a mayor, or a prominent public figure, but he did have seeds of greatness within him. He had dreams that he discussed with me, but felt they were somewhat unattainable. He believed he had a purpose, but felt it was too late in life for him to accomplish it. He had great faith, but believed great works were for others. He even believed he had a destiny, yet felt he had nothing to contribute from his own life.

And as his daughter, I can tell you that I am no different. Until that day, I thought in the same way. They say that the apple does not fall very far from the tree. However, now I have been charged with living out a great man's legacy, and for his sake, his daughter will shine. For his sake, she will live out her daddy's dreams. For his sake, she will live out her daddy's purpose; and for his sake, she will live out her daddy's destiny. It is a privilege to carry that mantle and anointing forth to the next generation, so here I am for him. And, for all of those who want to do the same, I am here to tell you that it is never too late.

To give you some background of the seeds of greatness that my father carried, let me briefly tell you his story. Like many young Indian men at that time, he travelled to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from India in 1956 to work when he was 25 years old. At 29, he got married to my mother. At just 21 years of age, she too went to live in a foreign land leaving all her own family back in Mumbai, India.

Dubai, at that time, was truly a "desert" and not the buzzing metropolitan city it is now. My father shared with me that his mandate was to stabilize his family and then help my mother's siblings and his own siblings immigrate to Dubai. He brought almost all of them over who wanted to come, including other extended family and friends. He was relentless in his service to his family and his friends. A strong-hearted man who overcame all the barriers to bring them to his "Promised Land", or as he called it, "The City Of Gold".

He very unselfishly wanted them to have the same opportunities he had. He housed most of them and even gave his own money to help them through their rough times. He was the kind of person who would give the shirt off his back to anyone who needed it. I am sure some of you can relate to this

about your parents who also went to the Middle East in the early '50s, '60s and '70s.

He had a vision for his life, so he saved his money and lived on eggs and bread most days in his younger years. He was very disciplined and quite frugal. He made only a small salary of AED200 Dirhams per month (about \$54 US dollars) that could merely support him, let alone others, but he compensated for that by working three jobs to make extra money. My father shared many stories of Dubai in these early days.

Once such story was how he obtained water through jars that came on a donkey's back. He needed to filter the water thoroughly (to get rid of those pesky worms which were no doubt trying to keep cool from the hot desert sun). It was a very time-consuming process, to say the least. It was a hard life.

It was extremely hot during the summer months in Dubai, so he put a cold wet towel on the roof top and slept on it to cool down. My father was not a complainer. He learned how to drive by just driving on sandy roads and sand dunes with no formal training. He would sit with sheikhs, high officials, and senior delegates and humbly interact with them. They enjoyed his company and loved his jokes. He had a wonderful sense of humor. He was a man with influence, yet so humble.

He was fluent in English, Arabic, Persian, Portuguese and many other Indian languages. He was incredibly intelligent. He loved people and was fiercely loyal and independent to his loved ones. He would always fight for the rights of his children. He was a protector. My father did not have any formal training, but when I look back now, I see that he was filled with wisdom

despite all the challenges and limitations he faced in his early career and life. He made some good choices in his life without anyone guiding him. Besides being the best provider on earth for his family, he bought homes in India as investments and saved enough money to keep himself and my mother comfortable in their retirement.

He once met with the Queen of England at the launch of the Free Zone Port at Jebel Ali, in Dubai. He shared with me that she came up to only him for some reason and shook his hand to everyone's sheer surprise. (He would always jokingly say it was his charming demeanor, but mockingly my mother would disagree).

Even in his death, he thought about his family. They say that people choose how to go during those precious last few moments. He waited for us to leave the room and hung on only until then. He loved my mother dearly and shed a tear as he looked away from her during his final moments. However, my father chose to die by himself because that was his final act of self-sacrifice true to his character. He loved us all so much he did not want us to see him suffer or leave that way. He was so selfless.

My father did have greatness in him, but he never thought he did. He always told me he was just a normal Indian boy from a small village in Goa, India. But he had the power to touch and change people's lives, and whenever an opportunity presented itself, he did.

Greatness is Built-in

I want to remind you as you read this book today, that we all have seeds of greatness in us, but we believe a lie. We all have greatness in us, but most times we question our own abilities. We feel someone out there is better

than us and can do a better job. We feel insecure and unqualified for the task at hand, and this was exactly how I was feeling as the voice inside me was influencing me to write about my journey. I needed a compelling reason to write and I finally found it after I lost my father, and my life changed forever.

Junot Diaz sums it up nicely in saying about writers that, "In order to write the book you want to write, in the end you have to become the person you need to become to write that book." Throughout my own personal journey of finding a meaning and purpose in my own life, I have become someone who lives and breathes this truth through the revelations given to me by one far greater than my beloved father, and that is my Heavenly Father. Therefore, by sharing these revelations in a transparent way with you, I hope it will impact your life as much as it has impacted mine.

Sometimes it takes a traumatic event or something life-changing to move us into our path of greatness, but please do not wait for that to happen as this greatness is already in you. The seeds are there. They were always there, and they will always be there for each one of you to bring to fruition.

Satan often likes to make you feel that you are the only one going through the hard times, that there is something wrong with you, and that's how he keeps people alienated and in captivity. But your testimony and mine are important for others. It unlocks his deception that we are the only ones going through negative experiences. Believe me, it is through other people's personal journeys and testimonies that people find their own strength and become most aware of their own unique greatness and purpose. They also gain comfort as they find out that they are not the only ones going through similar challenges. That is an important principle to understand. By sharing

our challenges with each other, we can see that our sufferings are not limited to just us—that somewhere, at some time, some other person also went through the same thing. I am just a voice for many others who can perhaps relate to what I am saying.

This book, then, is written for those individuals who are honestly struggling with understanding God's purpose for their own lives. Therefore, let me share the three things that I have discovered about my purpose that might be helpful to you:

1. My purpose is linked to God's heart and my understanding of Him.
2. My purpose is not for myself, but for others.
3. My purpose is to help others find their purpose.

If you are searching for personal meaning and purpose in life, I want to tell you right off the bat that you will experience struggle, maybe even pain, or even frustration. But do not be discouraged as it's an integral part in the birthing process. If you want to make a difference in life and carry your family's mantle further or leave your legacy long after you are gone from this earth, then first ask yourself these three questions:

1. Who am I?
2. What is my true identity?
3. Who is my true identity connected to or with?

Transparent Courage

Ultimately, my story is a story of one Christian woman who had the courage to be honest about her struggles with God, but passionately pressed in to walk out this process to victory! So, are you ready for your journey?

The Purpose for Writing This Book

The purpose for writing this book is threefold:

- a) to help you identify God's vision and purpose for your life;
- b) to explore how God works in you to accomplish His vision and your purpose; and
- c) to learn how to stay focused and avoid distractions and roadblocks through this process.

The biggest part though, is allowing God to mature you through the process so that you can actually handle the destiny he has for you.

The exploration of this topic will serve to be a guide and a tool to be used by everyone on how to:

- a) prepare your mind and heart;
- b) change your behavior; and
- c) identify negative triggers and patterns that set you back from meeting and understanding God's leadership and sovereignty in your life.

Regret - A Destiny Killer

So, why should you desire to find out your purpose in life? Many before you have died without living the life of destiny that God planned for them, a plan chosen before they were even born on this earth. They had potential and talents that God put into them, but they did not believe in themselves. They did not ask why they were put on this earth and what they were meant to do with their lives here. Perhaps some felt that it was too late because they had grown older and had been passed up for more youthful people. However, irrelevant of age, all that is needed is the desire to live a God-given life. Our

heavenly Father makes that possible for individuals as it is never too late in His kingdom to start anything that is in His will. *There are simply no barriers or limitations except the ones that we put on ourselves.*

And we all know what regrets can do to us. Regret is a destiny killer. Regrets like, we are too old, we did not have the time, we had other pressing priorities, we could not find a mentor, the doors of opportunity never opened to us, we did not have enough money, what could we teach anyone, we did not have a story, no one recognized our talents, and on and on we can go. But I am here to tell you it is never too late. Never!

So, what is the biggest secret I would like to share with you? The secret lies in the fact that it is in the understanding of God's character, His faithfulness, His love, His grace, His timing, His providence, and His will that you will truly be able to understand his many facets, and through the revelation that He brings, you will fall in love with Him. *This one thing needs to happen first.* He will then activate those seeds of greatness that He planted in you from the beginning of time to fashion who you were created to be. Your source of strength will be Him, and you will flow in your natural gifts and talents with ease. It will be like writing a great love story between you and Him. You will be his instrument for the greatest works of your life and change history. There are tons of possibilities and life will be an adventure.

Are you ready? Do you have your seat belts fastened? Ready for the trip of a lifetime? Here we go! Remember, this is a lifetime journey and process, but it is so worth it!