

Letter 85
The Long Sorrow
2012-03-19

Dear Dan,

Satan was allowed to strike my wife (M) with many maladies, physically and psychologically. Because of this (M) and I have not had any children. Early in our marriage we tried to have children, including artificial insemination, but to no avail. The culmination of the Enemy's physical assault against us came in this manner.

(M)'s uncle (P5) was an avid thespian, and had a lifetime membership at the Ashland Shakespearean Festival. In the summer of 1997 we had accompanied him along with (M)'s parents to Ashland for a few days to see some plays.

In September of 1998 we were planning another trip to Ashland, and on Labor Day weekend were at a mutual friends house discussing logistics and motels, as we were going to caravan to Ashland on that Labor Day Monday. While we were at our friend's house, (M) begin complaining of not feeling very well, so we decided to leave so we could get home and hopefully feel better so we could leave for Ashland the next day.

But (M) kept getting worse. The pains were in her lower abdomen. As the minutes went by it became clear (M) needed medical attention. We drove to the hospital ER, and after the initial diagnosis, (M) was admitted to the hospital for emergency surgery. A massive infection had spread all through (M)'s uterus and related female reproductive organs. They all had to be removed and the infection cleaned out. (M)'s doctor said that in the old days she would have just died. It took some time for (M) to recover. And the surgery left some complications as the incision never healed properly, leaving the stomach wall muscles in a weakened state. After a while the incision along the stomach wall began to open, leaving the skin as the only barrier between the intestines and the exterior.

(M) and I have learned to live with this malady, as any corrective surgery would be that much more traumatic. The Lord has not allowed the fullness of Satan's plans to prevail. We have not been overly grieved by not having children, but the sorrow has been "metered" out in small amounts over the years. Yet the Lord still works, in that (M)'s sister has four boys and two girls, so we are the Aunt and Uncle, even though they are a staunch Mormon family. And we have been given pets over the years that are joyful to be with.

Sometimes I have yearned to live in a society that allows polygamy, so that there would be children. But the thought recently occurred to me of a notion that these letters may be instrumental in leading others to Christ. Perhaps by that means we will have family in Heaven after all.

Blessings...

Romanus Theophilus