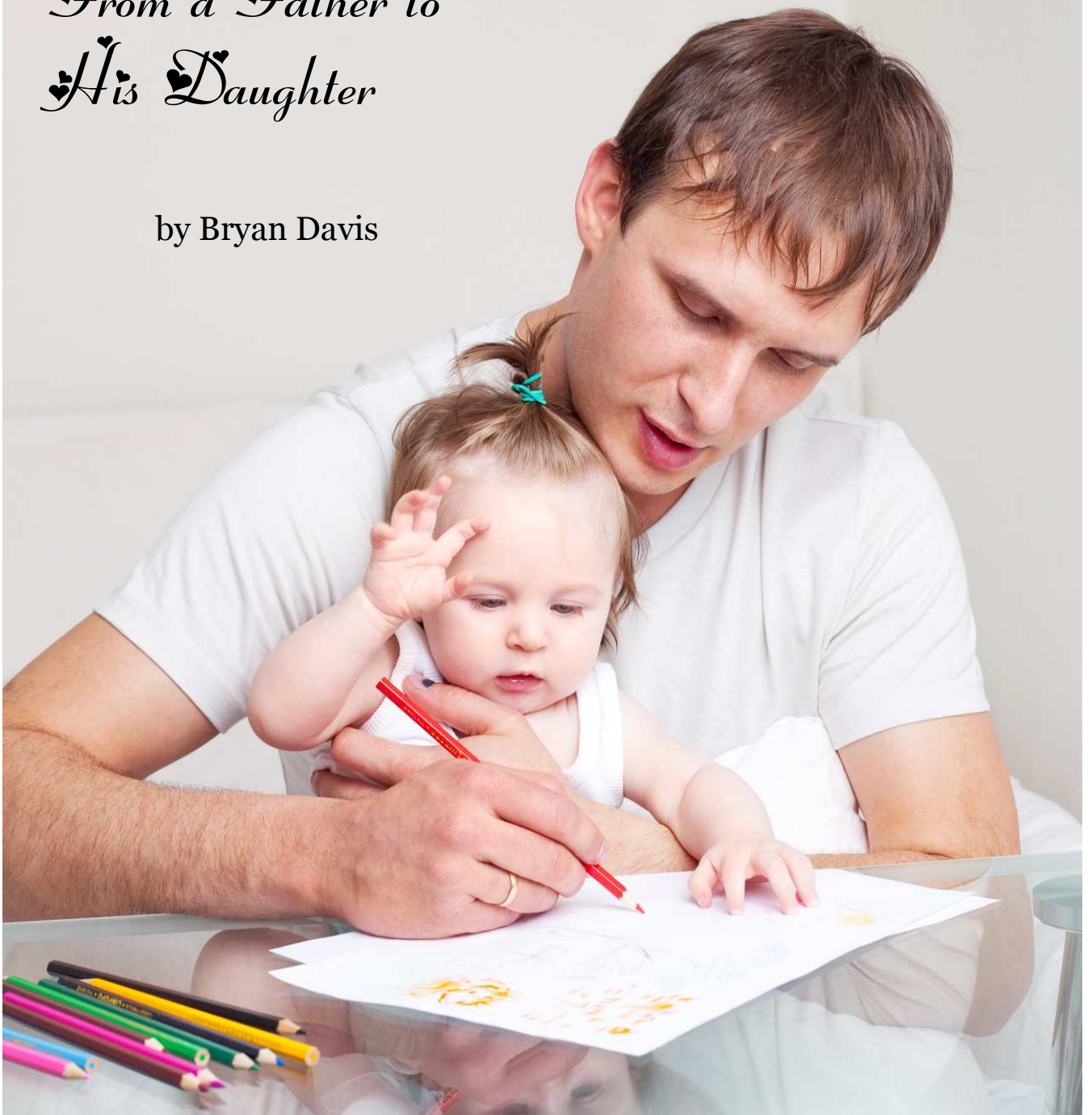


*Seven Promises
From a Father to
His Daughter*

by Bryan Davis



Promise #1 I Will Hold Your Hand



I remember seeing your tiny hand for the first time. It was small, pink, and wrinkled. You stretched and reached, your little fingers trying to grab anything they could touch. I put my finger in your palm and you grasped it tightly. What strength you had for a newborn!

Your eyes caught mine. I could see my face in the dark, violet circles. You watched and watched, and when I spoke to you, you squeezed my finger tighter and kicked your feet. You didn't want to let go, and I didn't want you to.

I caressed your hand and kissed it. You are my daughter, precious and priceless. From the day I first saw you, I knew. I knew that holding your hand meant far more than just father and daughter touching for the first time; your touch told me about the future.

Today, with a touch of your velvet skin, I welcome you to my home. As my daughter I see you as a valuable treasure, and yet more than a treasure. Your value is not estimated by a stack of paper bills or coins, but by the wisdom and virtue that God has implanted in your soul.

I take your hand now as the sign of a covenant, a promise for the future. At each stage in your life I will be there to give my support with protection, security, and strength. As you take your first steps I will hold your hand, helping you to trust that you will never fall while Daddy is there. That way you can boldly step forward, not caring that your wobbly legs aren't quite ready.

When you reach for a book, I will take your hand and guide it to the Bible and to other books that will help you nourish the wisdom in

your mind. It is my job to train you, to make you fit for God's service no matter what he calls you to do. I will fill your mind with goodness, honesty, and love.

When you reach for a friend, I will take your hand and guide you toward godly peers, young ladies who have been taught your values and understand spiritual truth. I will make sure that the hand you hold on the playground will not lead you astray.

When you reach for God, I will take your hand and lead you to Jesus Christ, the perfect image of God. He will take your hand and lead you into all truth and, someday, into Heaven. In his hands you will be safe forever. And God holds your hand even now. The Bible says, "If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there thy hand will lead me, and thy right hand will lay hold of me." (Psalm 139:9,10)

Oh, dear sweet one! Grasp my finger again. Let us make this time last. We will hold hands for a while, in these short days of youth. We will run in the fields and laugh, making our shoes muddy and getting

grass stains on our knees, enjoying the secure bond of your hand clutching mine. Yes, let these days linger, for when I am old I will long for your hand again, and your touch will bring a sigh of satisfaction to my graying soul. Our covenant will be complete, your hand in my hand, our hearts united with Christ. Your treasures will be safely given back to the one who has graciously bestowed them. And someday I will lead the way one last time. You will find me at Heaven's gates, my hand open, waiting for yours to arrive.