

THE BEGINNING

I made my entrance into the world on a Friday. The date was 12 May 1972. History books and Google searches indicate that this was a pretty uneventful day as far as world events were concerned. BJ Vorster was in office as South Africa's seventh prime minister, the Cold War was simmering in the background and Roberta Flack's hit, 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face', was the number-one hit on the Billboard Charts.

Apart from my parents seeing *my* face for the first time, I think it's safe to say that, for many people in the world, 12 May 1972 was just another random day.

But, for me - it was my birthday. Birthdays are special and they have this magical, almost sacred, feel about them.

Deep in our hearts, there seems to be a feeling or a hint that we did not arrive on this planet by accident. That, somehow, we were created with intention. And, if we can still our hearts long enough, we find there a longing to know what we were made for. Of course, our parents played their part in the story of our creation, but even they are surprised and overwhelmed when we finally make our appearance. Like they were given the most precious gift.

Why, for the most part, do we as humans respond like that? Why is life so precious? Why does it feel like there is an intention to our lives and we can't help seeing it as a gift, even though we get to play a part in creating it?

I personally believe that the answer lies in a few lines taken from a poem written by the great Hebrew king, David: 'You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb ... You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed' (Psalm 139:13-16, NLT).

This poem tells us that, long before King David's parents even had the desire for a child, God already had plans for him. This beautiful poem was not only written for David and Israel's sake, it was written for all humanity. Your life and my life are as sacred and special as this poem describes. Its words are in the strands of the DNA God created and used to knit us together. That is why there's a shadow or a hint in us that maybe, just maybe, we were made for a purpose because we were certainly made on purpose.

With all this intention and purpose, I must believe that 12 May 1972 was not just a random day for me to be born on; it was a day God handpicked for me. I don't think I will ever fully know the reasoning behind his decision, but as time goes by I am still discovering the courage to believe that 'Every day of my life was recorded in your book'. No one's birth is random.

From God's point of view, then, if our lives were worth making, then surely they must be worth living?

But what happens when the truth of those words is not the truth of our lives; when – for whatever reason – we feel that our lives are not worth living any more?