

Postcards  
from

Heaven

words and pictures to help you hear from God

Ellie Hart



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## Some words for the seasons

- We all live in a season of one kind or another, a season of work, a season of ministry, a season of looking after children, a season of joy, a season of grieving, seasons of friendship and relationships.
- The main feature of seasons is that they don't last for ever: the place we move into next may well be different in many ways.
- Last summer, a friend of mine who hears God more clearly, perhaps, than anyone else I know came and told me that the Father wanted me to write a book about the seasons that we go through in life, especially about how to get through the tougher seasons and how to navigate those curious empty spaces that come in between seasons of activity.

• So I've done my best, and my heart's desire is that this book could  
• become a place where you encounter our wonderful, beautiful,  
• untameable, passionate, loving God and hear him speak directly  
• to you, whatever your circumstances.

• When I was a student I moved away from my home in the  
• countryside and went to live in the bustle of a big city. Every time  
• I went home to visit, as I first stepped out of the car I would really  
• notice how clean and fresh the air was. So I'd stop, stand there for  
• a moment and inhale deeply, appreciating it more in that moment  
• than in all the years of growing up.

• My hope and prayer are that, for many of you, this book will  
• introduce you to the cool clean air of what God has to say to  
• you and that you will take a moment to breathe it in and feel it  
• refreshing deep parts of your soul.

There isn't just one way to use this book. Some people will flick through the pages until a particular picture catches their attention, and some work through from one end to another. It doesn't matter! But I would suggest that you take time. Sit and think about what the pictures or words mean to you. Talk to God about them and write down what you think you are hearing him say to you. Sometimes I've made a suggestion of something to do or read. God has made us all unique and there are many different ways that we can hear him speak to us. Listen to him the way you know how, and be open to him speaking in new ways.

*Above all – breathe deep.*

*May you be refreshed deep into your soul.*

*May new life pour into you, through you and out from you.*

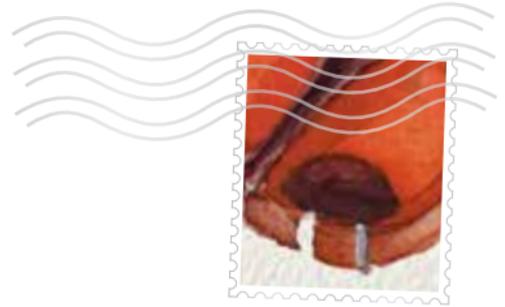
Be blessed in the name of Jesus. Ellie x



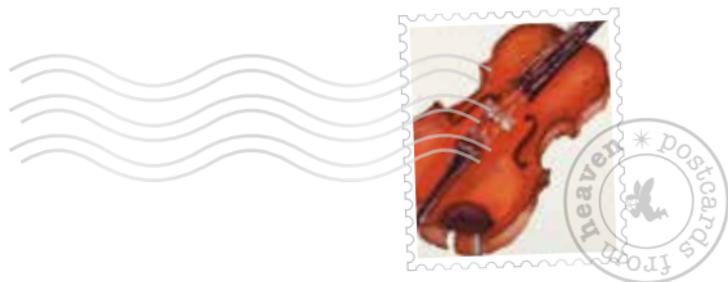
## The beginning – who you are

- This instrument is completely beautiful, a piece of art in its own right.
- Craftsman made, carefully designed and created with a specific task in mind. A piece of art and a piece of engineering. Each part is doing a job and the whole is tuned and ready.





- And yet, until it is resting on the shoulder of
- the master musician and surrendering to the
- tune that he chooses to play, it cannot achieve
- its full potential.



- So often, we fight back, unable to trust and rest,
- unwilling to surrender to the tune the master wants
- to play with our lives. While we are wrestling we are
- still beautiful, still the work of a master craftsman,
- still treasured by him. But when we rest on his
- shoulder and he turns his face to us and lifts his bow
- – then we become what we were always intended
- to be.

.....

I rest here on your shoulder,  
confident in you,  
my maker, my friend.  
I rest here on your shoulder,  
laying down my right to wield the bow or write the tune.  
I rest here  
at peace, assured,  
knowing that the song you have in mind for me  
will be the one my heart was made to sing.

.....

## For your journal

• **Read Psalm 139 and write a response to it.**

• How do you feel when you say out loud, 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made'?

• How easy is it to accept the idea that God knows you better than you know yourself?

• **Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and write a response to it.**

• Why do you think we find it hard to trust God, to surrender to him?

• What tune might God be wanting to play with your life at the moment?



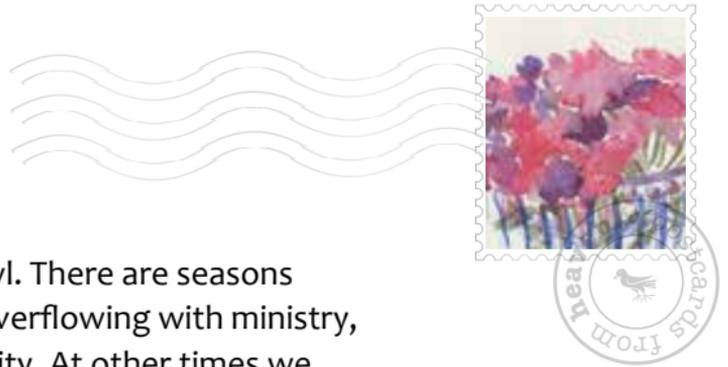
# My mother's bowl



- This is my mother's cut glass bowl, filled with sweet pea flowers from her garden. They smell and look beautiful.
- The bowl sits on the windowsill in the dining room and nearly always has something in it. Perhaps next time we visit, it will be full of trifle or clementines or loose change, buttons and my mother's car keys.
- Usually it's something that smells good or brings pleasure, or something that is precious and needs to be kept safe.



- There are in-between times, though, when it is
- cleaned out and polished up and set on the sill with
- nothing but its own beauty to recommend it – no
- ‘useful’ purpose, nothing to ‘give’ to others, no role.
- And I’ve noticed that in those moments, as the light
- shines in through the window, I can suddenly see
- its own beauty and the beauty of light caught in
- cut glass and fractured into a rainbow of colours.



- We are so much like this bowl. There are seasons when our lives are filled to overflowing with ministry, mission, family and community. At other times we are called just to be and to let go of our need to do.
- What God has been saying to me is that when this bowl is full of flowers, it is not longing for the time when it was brimming with custard! It can live fully in this season, enjoying its joys and enduring its hardships, knowing that one day a new season will come, but that it hasn't come yet.

.....

I search for you:  
I strain ahead to look for you,  
to see where we will go together,  
longing to know, longing to be there –  
and I glimpse your face through the mist.  
I turn around to look back  
at the place where I saw you last –  
felt your touch, saw you move –  
but the moment has gone.  
And yet  
when I open my eyes  
I see  
you are with me now.

.....

## For your journal

• ***Think about the season you are currently in and the seasons you have already travelled through.***

• What were the best things about those past seasons?

• What did you learn in each of them?

• How would you feel if your current season were to come to an end?

• What seasons do you dream of in the future?

• How can you see God at work in the season you are walking in now?

• In what way can you better embrace the season you are in now?



## An invitation

- A bench sits in a shady part of the garden. It's a place of peace, rest and friendship. It's a place of quiet and of conversation. It's a place for you to meet with Jesus.
- Have you been there lately?
- Sometimes I get so busy with life that I forget to retreat into this place of quiet with Jesus. I forget to do the one thing that restores my soul and enables me to keep up the busyness.





• Sometimes I'm ashamed that the garden that is my  
• life has become overgrown and messy – so I put off  
• inviting Jesus into it until I've had a chance to tidy it  
• up a bit.

• I am so busy trying to make my garden look pretty  
• that I forget to take the time to sit down and have a  
• cup of tea with the master gardener who is waiting  
• for me. How crazy is it that I stand alone, fighting  
• to hack back the weeds with my bare hands, while  
• Jesus stands behind me holding a scythe?



- Here's the news: once you've invited God into the garden that is your life, he is always there. He is always ready to sit with you on this bench, to listen to what is on your heart – however ugly it might be – and to speak forgiveness, restoration and love. He already knows about the mess, the corners of brambles and weeds. But his priority, his heart, is to take time to be with you.
- And when you make time to sit on that bench, I think he says something like this...

.....

My friend,  
good to see you!  
Come, sit down, rest.

My child,  
I am so glad you came.  
I have so much to tell you,  
so much to ask you,  
so much to give you.

But first,  
my beloved,  
take your time –  
I have an eternity.

Lean back;  
this seat is yours.  
Come, sit down, rest.

.....

## For your journal

• *How does this picture of a bench and the idea of sitting on it with Jesus make you feel?*

• What things in your life distract you or hold you back from spending time alone with Jesus?

• What do you find hard about making time with Jesus and what could you do to make it easier?

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‘My heart’s desire is that this book could become a place where you can encounter our wonderful, beautiful, untameable, passionate, loving God and hear him speak directly to you, whatever your circumstances.’

Writer and artist **Ellie Hart** has created a series of ‘postcards from heaven’— her own paintings linked to short, thought-provoking reflections, to help all who long to hear more clearly from God, especially when going through seasons of change and uncertainty.

**Ellie Hart** lives in Nicosia, Cyprus, offering a ministry combining art and prayer. She previously served as a youth worker and retreat leader before studying for a graduate diploma in theology at St John’s College, Nottingham.



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