This is a story about a young girl who was just about to turn into her teenage years. She accidently received the gift of gratitude.

She was her mother’s only daughter and her mother loved her so very much. Every morning when she woke up, she dragged herself to her closet to find something to wear. She had some comfortable shoes that protected her feet in her closet. She had some pretty dresses that hung on the hangers in her closet. Sometimes she would wear her jeans with her colorful shirts. Her room was filled, with many things that her mother had gotten for her over the years.

This little girl’s mother purchased most of the cloths in her closet. Her mother wanted her to be happy. Her mother wanted her to have shirts that would keep her warm in the winter. Her mother wanted her to have pretty dresses that she could wear out when she went to her events. Her mother loved her so very much.

Her mother had to work very hard every day to earn the money that fed the family. She was a good woman who had a strong faith that helped her take care of her daughter and her sons. It was not always easy for her. She tried to give them all that she could.

There were times when she had to work two jobs to earn the money that fed the family. The mother worked so much because she loved her children.

There were other people around, who said that she would not be able to work two jobs and raise her children. They were wrong. She had faith and she knew that her family would be all right.

She would pray daily, to her Heavenly Father and ask him to protect her daughter and her sons. She would tell them, a special angel had been assigned to them and that they would never be alone.

Sometimes a problem would come up and she was afraid. Then a miracle would happen around her and the problem for that day went away.

Each day, she would pray for protection and love in the lives of her children. She believed, her Heavenly Father sent down his angels to surround her household and protect her family, daily. This made her happy and she would thank her Heavenly Father for taking care of her family.

One day, some young men had bad ideas in their minds. They wanted to hurt someone. They wanted to cause pain for someone. They wanted to say cruel words to someone. They wanted to shout, scream, yell, and curse at someone. They were very angry because someone in their life said mean things to them and they wanted to say mean things to others.

On this day, an angry boy saw the little girl playing on the playground at school and walked over to her. He did not like the pretty dress that her mother had bought for her. He did not like the comfortable shoes that her mother picked out for her. He did not like the way she wore her hair that day.

So, the angry boy walked up to the little girl and started saying mean things to her. His words felt like rocks, thrown at her heart. His words began to hurt her feelings.

She did not like what the angry boy was saying to her. She told him to stop and leave her alone.

Instead, the angry boy lifted his hand up over her head and brought it down very hard. His hand landed on her shoulder and she could feel the pain right away. Tears started to rise up in her eyes. She was hurt. She grabbed her shoulder and fell to the ground.

While she set on the ground, she started to wonder, why the angry boy came over to her and picked on her. She felt that she did not do anything wrong to deserve this pain.

She asked herself the question, “why did he hit me?” She could not understand what she could have done to prevent all this pain.

The teacher came over and told the angry boy to go back into the classroom. The teacher and the other children bent down and lifted her up off the ground. They dusted the dirt off her pretty dress and walked with her back into the school.

The principle called her mother. Her mother said she would come to the school to see if her daughter was all right. When her mother arrived to the school, she asked the principle to call the bad boy’s parents and have him removed from the classroom.

The mother and the little girl got into the car and headed home. In the car, the mother asked the little girl how all of this happened. The little girl explained to her mother as much of the story that she could remember.

Now, the mother was also an angry person. She loved her daughter and did not want to hear that something hurtful had happened to her.

She was angry with the mean boy. She was angry with the parents of the mean boy. She was angry with the little girl because she thought that maybe the little girl might have done something to provoke the angry boy. She was fearful for her daughter.

Dinnertime at the house was a little uncomfortable. The mother was on the cell phone most of the afternoon discussing the events of the day. She was still angry and she had planned to go over to the house of the little boy and speak to the parents.

After the little girl changed out of her pretty dress, they had supper and then prepared to go over to the angry boy’s house.

The little girl did not want to go. She was embarrassed. She wanted all of this to go away. She did not want to see the angry boy or his parents. She just wanted to go into her room, lie across her bed, and listen to her music.

Music made her feel better. When she put on her music, she was able to go to a place far away. She would use her imagination and make all sorts of plans. She was happy when she heard the sounds that comforted her with her music.

“Come on”, her mother said, loudly. “I am not going to have this. I work too hard to let an angry boy hit you and mess up that pretty dress”.

The little girl thought that her mother was only angry because of the pretty dress. She began to get angry with her mother. She began to think that her mother was not concerned about her pain in her shoulder. She began to think that her mother was doing this for herself. She slowly went toward the door to join her mother in the car.

When they arrived at the angry boy’s house, the little girl and her mother got out of the car. The little girl looked at the place where the angry boy lived.

He did not live in a house like the one she lived in. The walkway to the place where he lived was full of dog dun. There must have been fifteen poorly looking dogs running around the front yard. They all looked very hungry and sick.

The little girl and her mother knocked on the door. An old man opened the door and let them in.

The little girl did not want to sit down when the old man said, “Have a seat, Punisha is coming now”. The couch was torn and smelled like dog dun. Inside there were some cats that were running around also. She also saw a couple of roaches running away from the cats. She sat down anyway.

As the angry boy’s mother walked into the living room, she was yelling into the back of the house, “Do it and I will beat your \*\*\*”. There were a lot, of little children running around and crying in the back rooms.

The angry boy’s mother had on an old dress that looked similar to the one that the little girl had on earlier that same morning; however, the one that she wore was worn and torn.

The angry boy’s mother and the little girl’s mother started to talk about the day’s events. The little girl’s mother told the woman that she did not appreciate the way the angry boy bullied her daughter. She wanted an apology for her little girl.

The angry boy’s mother called the angry boy into the room and demanded that he apologize. She then took her hand, lifted it up into the air and brought it down, very hard across his face. She repeated hitting him so many times.

The angry boy was no longer angry. He started to cry. He looked like he was afraid. He apologized to the little girl, the little girl’s mother and to his mother. He said that he did not know why he hit the little girl but maybe it was that he did not like her dress.

His mother’s hand continued to go up and down onto his face. He cried to his mother, “Please, please, stop hitting me. It hurts so much. Momma pleases”.

The little girl’s mother stood up quickly and said to the angry boy’s mother that she was satisfied with the apology.

She told his mother that she did not want to cause this type of problem for the little boy. She told his mother that she understood that children could at times do things that are not intentional.

She took her daughter’s hand and told her that everything was going to be all right, the matter is closed. She thanked the little boy’s mother for seeing them and she turned to the door to leave.

As the little girl and her mother opened the door to the car, they could still hear the little boy’s screams and the angry mother’s harsh words to him.

The car door closed and they set there looking at each other. The daughter said to the mother, “Mama I am so glad that you do not talk to us that way. I am so glad that you work and take good care of our home. I am sorry for not listening to you all the time”.

Tears welled up in the little girl’s eyes. She remembered how afraid the little boy looked when the angry mother’s hand struck his face so hard.

The little girl knew that she, had been spanked at times too, but her mother loved her. Her mother took time to explain to her the reasons for her punishments. Her mother cared about the lessons that she would learn from her spankings that would help protect her, as she grew older.

The little girl began to understand the difference between a mother’s love for her children and the discipline she gives to help train and instruct them. She began to see that her mother was trying to keep her on the right pathway to help prevent hurtful and dangerous situations from getting in her way. She began to feel the love of her mother and understood the sacrifices that her mother had made just because she loved them.

That night before she went to bed, she and her mother spoke of all the important reasons for love and discipline. They talked most of the night. She was so glad that she had a good mother and she loved her so very much.

The next day, while the little girl was in class, she looked out of the classroom window. She remembered how she saw something in that little boy’s eyes. She saw that his mother felt burdened by him and all of those other children. She saw that his mother did not show him the love that her mother had shown to her. She began to realize that the angry little boy was really a boy that was hurting inside.

Maybe his mother did not discipline him in a loving way. Maybe she did not give him love while she was giving him the punishment for his mistakes. Maybe he just got beat all the time and did not get a chance to learn how to correct the errors of his way.

The little girl would never know the answer for the angry boy’s problem. She did know, however, that she would not have to fear him again.

The next few days, he did not come to school. A couple of days later, when he did come back, the right side of his face looked bruised, very badly. When he looked at her, he tried to give a smile, but the right side of his lips would not rise up all the way.

Later in the school year, he, his sisters, and brothers, went into a foster home. Soon, the cloths he wore to school started to fit him better. He started to feel better again. As time went by, no one considered him an angry boy.

Up until that point, the little girl never recognized the depth of her mother’s love. She had taken all that she was getting for granted. She had not accepted the fact that everything her mother had given to her, from a small child until now, was gifts of her mother’s love. She was now ready to accept that these gifts of kindness, smiles, money, laughter, and cloths were blessings. She wanted to start giving back to her mother gifts everyday too.

She decided to write down in her diary, every day, all the good things that were happening for her. She also started to write down all the good things that she tried to give back to her mother.

“Dear Diary: I picked up my cloths’ off the floor when my mother asked me. I am giving her the gift of obedience today. She was so surprised to see those cloths off the floor that she gave me, some money. She was happy to see what I had done. I guess I also gave her the gift of happiness. So far today, I have given my mother two gifts…”

Every time that the little girl wrote in her journal, she felt better. She started to see a lot of goodness all around her. She would write about the gift of seeing a small animal or the gift of hearing a song that made her feel better. The more good things that she wrote down, the more good things continued to happen to her. She became more happier than she had ever been before.

She started to write down, “Well, today, I have food to eat and I don’t have to share it with my brothers (ha-ha) so I am grateful for momma fixing me something to eat”.

She closed her diary and put it under her bed mattress and then she started to leave the room. She looked at her closet and for a moment, she stopped and thought of the day the angry boy pushed her.

With a smile on her face, she rushed over to the bed and grabbed her diary and wrote,

“Oh yea, I am especially glad that Momma gave me a gift of beauty today, I have another pretty dress to where back to school. I am grateful”.

The End