

Papa's Perfect Party

What if the rain didn't stop?



SOMETIMES THE RAIN DOESN'T STOP

Not all prayers are answered right away, like Alex's prayer was. But God always listens and loves to bless us. We can choose to trust that He knows what is best, even when things don't seem to go right.

By David Dickson
(Based on a true story)

This story happened in Samoa.

Dark, gloomy clouds hung in the sky. Alex glared up at them.

BOOM!

More thunder rumbled. Big, heavy raindrops crashed down everywhere.

Alex shook his head. This wasn't good. Not good at all. Sometimes, in Samoa, it could rain for days without stopping. But he wanted his grandpa's birthday to be perfect!

Alex went to his room and knelt by his bed.

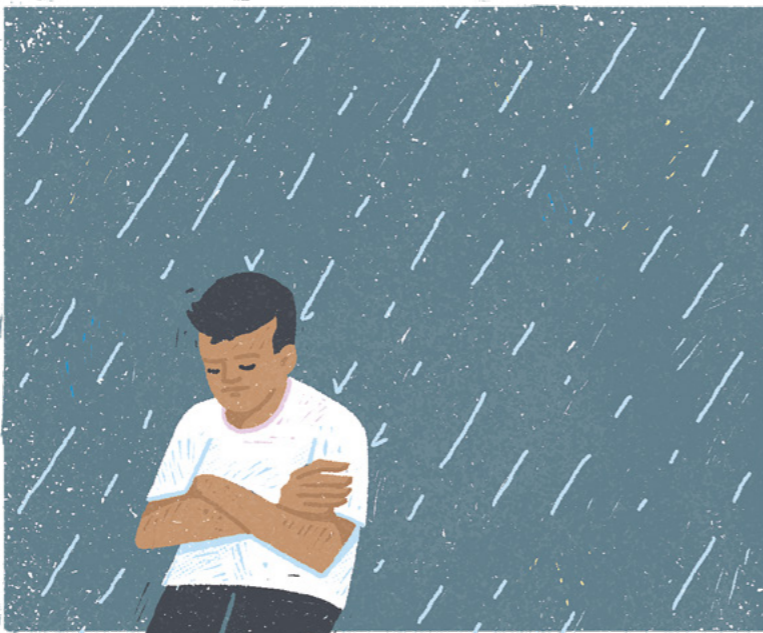
"Dear Heavenly Father," he said. "Please make the rain go away in time for Papa's birthday party tomorrow. We already sent out the invitations. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

When Alex stood up, he saw Mom and Dad standing in his doorway. They were smiling.

"I hope you don't mind that we heard your prayer," Mom said.

Alex smiled back. "That's OK. I just want tomorrow to be special for Papa. It won't be the same if we need to stay inside. We wouldn't have room to dance!"

Dad squeezed Alex's shoulder. "No matter what the weather is like, Papa will know how much you love him."



The next morning, Mom and Dad asked Alex to say the family prayer. It was *still* raining hard. And it *still* didn't look like it would stop.

"Please bless the rain to go away in time for the party," he said. "And please bless us all to have a good time. Especially Papa!"

Alex watched the sky all morning. For a long time, nothing changed. But then something amazing happened.



"Look!" Alex shouted. "A patch of blue sky!" His family ran out to the yard. The clouds were starting to clear up.

In a few hours, all the clouds were gone! Even the puddles on the ground had dried up. Alex hurried to decorate the yard. Papa and the guests would be here soon.

When Papa got there, he was surprised. He looked at the lights, the colorful streamers, and all

the guests. "Everything looks beautiful," he said. "Thank you so much!"

The party was just as fun as Alex had hoped. They danced to Papa's favorite songs. The food was tasty—especially the sweet coconut bread. Alex even got to sing with Papa.

The best part, though, was when it was time for the *Siva Taualuga*. This dance was always performed by the most important person of the day. And, of course, that was Papa!

Papa got up to dance, but then he looked at Alex. "Come join me, Alex!" Papa called. Alex jumped up and danced next to Papa. Soon all the others were dancing too.

Papa leaned down to hug Alex. "You made me feel very special today," Papa said. "This was the *perfect* birthday party."

After the party ended, Alex looked up at the sky. The thick black clouds were back. Rain started pounding down on them again. But this time, Alex didn't mind. He knew that Heavenly Father had helped the weather stay nice long enough for Papa's party.

"Thank Thee for the nice weather," Alex prayed. "And thank Thee for such a wonderful Papa." ●

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