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A Change of Plans

Key References: Matthew 1:18-25; *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 3, pp. 31-42; *The SDA Bible Commentary,* vol. 5, pp. 282-286; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 23-26; Our Beliefs, nos. 23, 5, 4



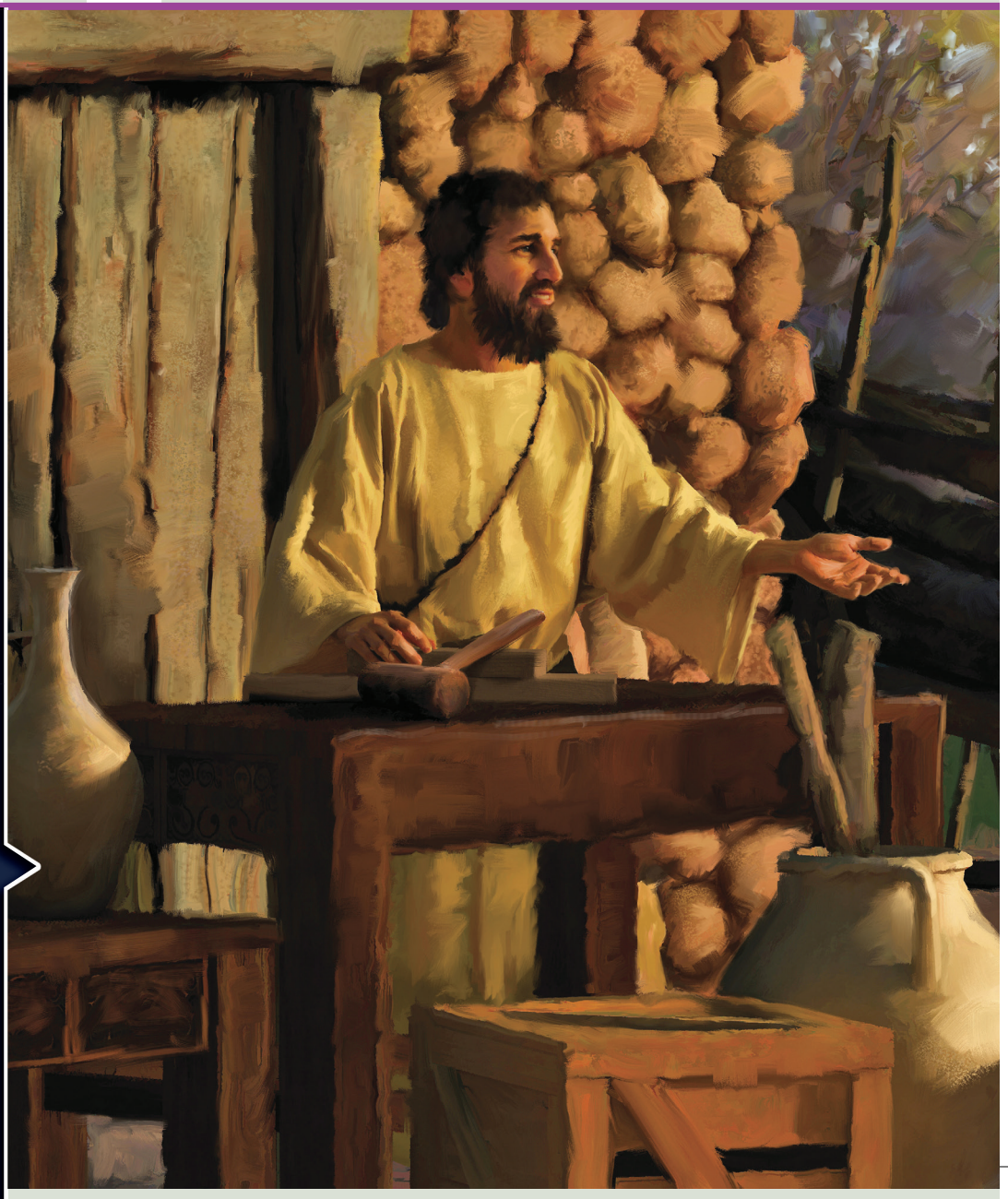












power**text**

"Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life" (Psalm 143:8).

power**point**

We worship God when we trust His plan for our lives.

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 88.

Think of a time you have been disappointed when plans you made didn't work out. You might then understand how Joseph felt when he discovered that Mary didn't appear to be the girl of his dreams. Let's imagine their conversation.

Joseph looked up, and his heart began to beat a little faster. Mary was coming up the path. His beautiful, beautiful Mary. Just the sight of her made him smile. It wouldn't be long now until the wedding preparations were completed, and she would finally be his wife. He had missed her the three months she had been visiting her cousin in the hill country.

Mary walked slowly, Joseph noted, not quickly and eagerly as she usually did.

"Mary!" he called.

She looked up and picked up her pace.

When Mary arrived, her eyes and face showed that she had an important message to share. Joseph must have felt fear prickling somewhere near his stomach. Something was wrong. He was sure of it. Mary looked around and observed the wooden objects that Joseph

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Sunday

READ Read Psalm 143:8 and this week's story, "A Change of Plans."

IMAGINE Imagine how Joseph felt before and after his dream.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Psalm 143:8.

PRAY Pray that God will help you learn to trust Him.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 1:18, 19 and Deuteronomy 22:23, 24.

THINK If Joseph would have sent Mary away when he found out that she was pregnant, what would have been her punishment by the religious authorities of that time?

TALK Talk with someone about Joseph's character. Why do you think God chose him to be Jesus' earthly father?

PRAY Ask God for a character of integrity in dealing with others when they hurt you or treat you unfairly.

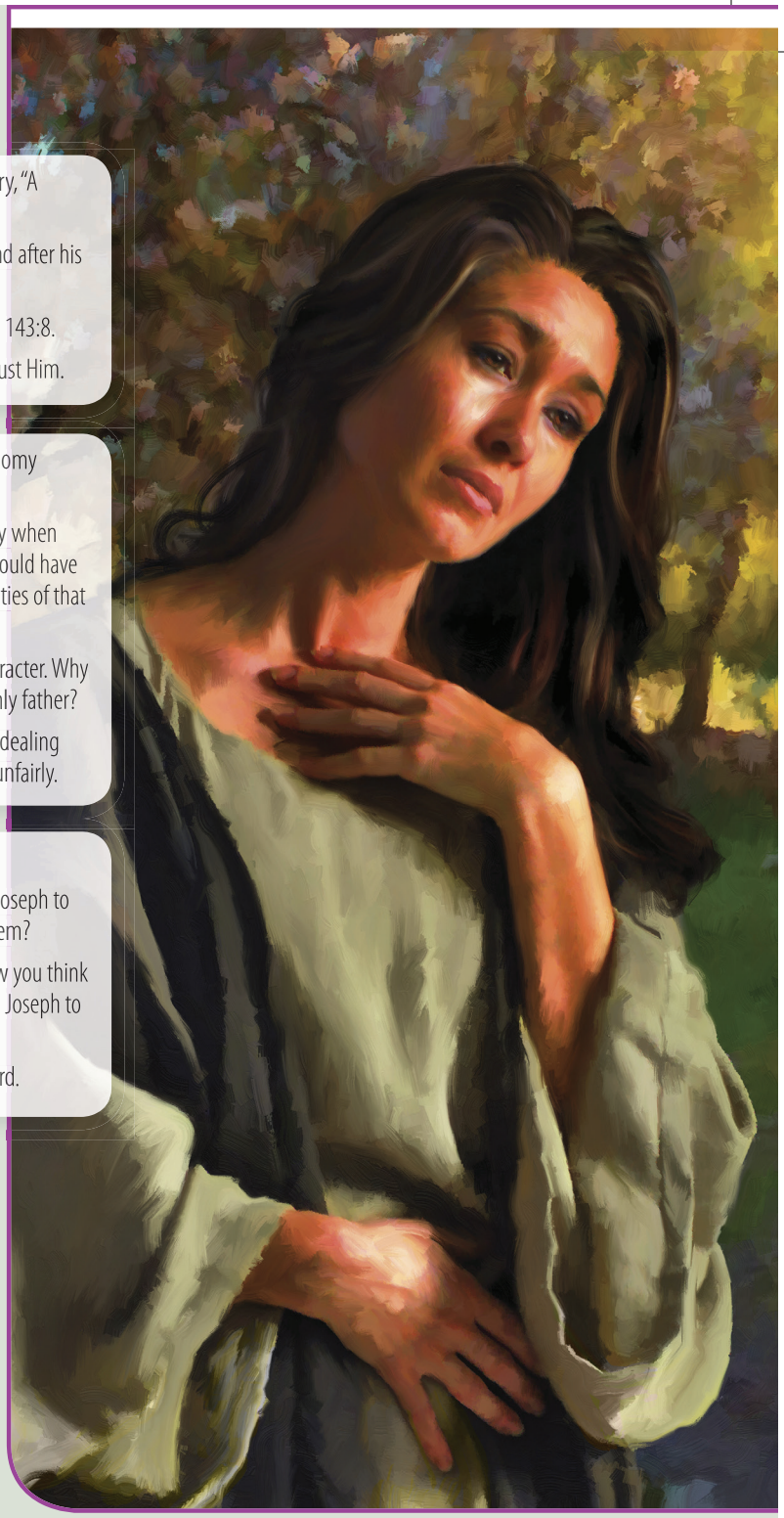
Tuesday

READ Read Luke 1:26-37.

THINK Why was it important for Mary and Joseph to see and hear an angel speaking directly to them?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write how you think the angel's announcements helped Mary and Joseph to trust God's plan for their lives.

PRAY Ask God to help you believe in His Word.





had been working on. A new yoke for Old Nathan's oxen. She ran her hand along Joseph's workbench. She picked up his chisel.

"What's the matter, Mary?" Joseph asked quietly.

Mary looked up.

How can a person look so happy and so frightened at the same time? Joseph wondered.

"Joseph, I'm expecting a child," Mary announced softly.

Joseph's heart sank.

"I know it's a little hard to believe," Mary continued, "but just before I went to visit cousin Elizabeth an angel appeared to me. He told me that I would have a child," she explained simply.

Joseph took a deep breath. Then he took another. It was true that angels had visited people before. But this was *Nazareth*. Angels didn't visit Nazareth!

Mary wiped away a tear as she watched Joseph's reaction. Then a wonderful smile spread across her face. "The angel told me that I am going to have a son!" she said. "Not just an ordinary son, but a holy one. The angel said my baby will be called the Son of God."

Joseph was speechless. So many thoughts clouded his mind and filled his heart with anxiety. He was unable to reconcile his image of Mary with what he had just heard from her.

Mary stood in silence. She couldn't think of anything else to say to make him believe her. The plain truth was the best approach. Yet he hadn't seemed to have understood at all.

All of Joseph's plans for the future were now in ruins. He knew he could no longer take Mary for his wife. He planned to leave her without telling anyone else about what had happened.

That night an angel from heaven came to Joseph in a dream. The angel

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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 1:24 and Luke 1:38.

THINK What did both Mary and Joseph do after their angel encounters? What does this tell you about the relationship each had with God?

PRAY Ask God to make you willing to trust Him and follow His plan for your life.

Thursday

READ Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.

WRITE Is there a situation in your life for which you need to trust God? In your Bible study journal, write the need you have.

DISCUSS Ask an adult to share a situation when he/she trusted God and He provided for specific needs.

PRAY Thank God for the plan He has for you.

Friday

READ Read Psalms 20:7; 32:8-10; 56:3, 4, 11.

DISCUSS What are some of the things people trust other than God and why?

THINK What does God want to teach us when He uses the object lesson of the horse and the mule?

LIST List ways that God's love surrounds your family.

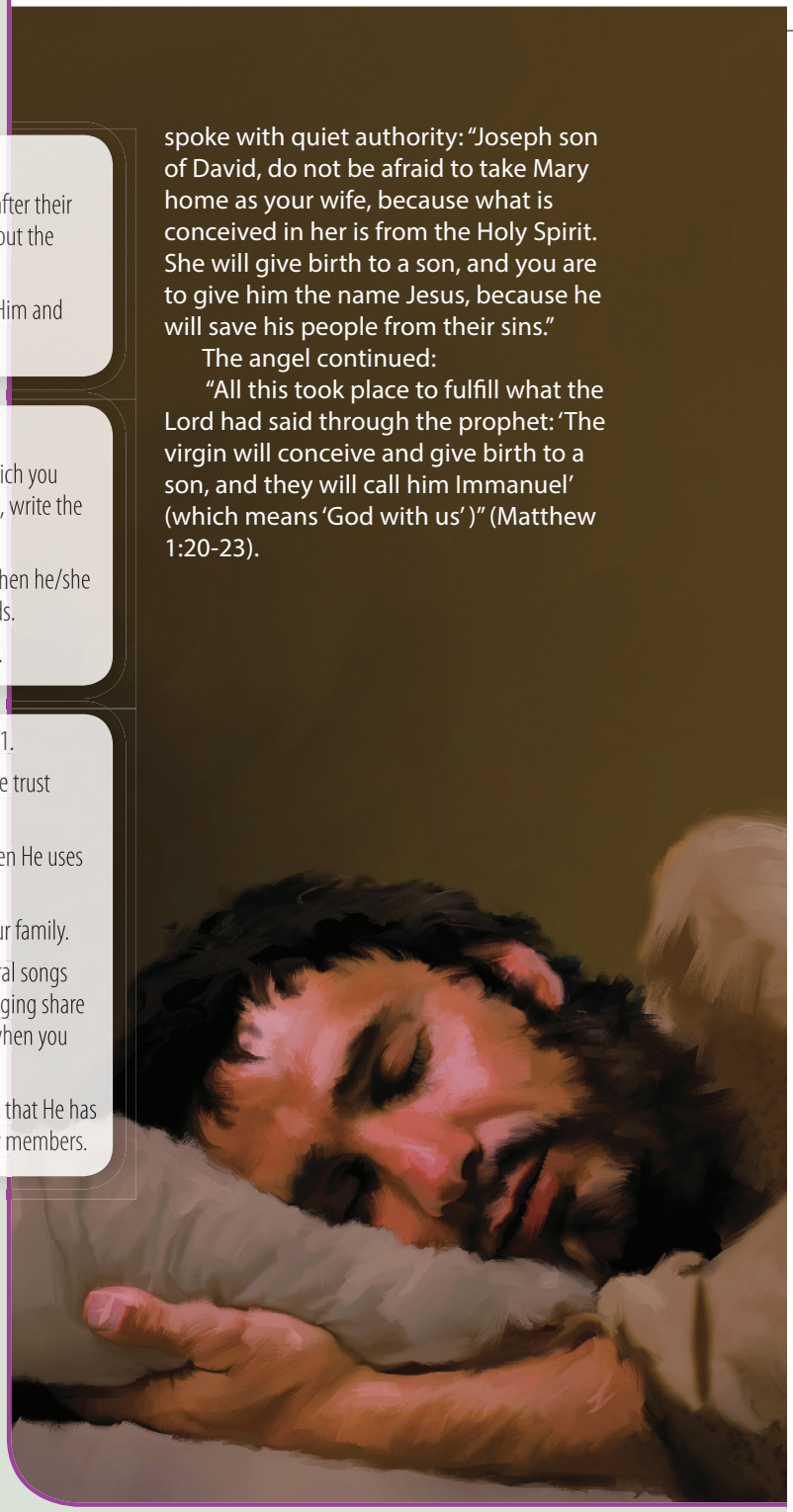
SING For family worship sing together several songs that express trust in God. After the time of singing share ways you each experienced God's blessings when you placed your trust in Him.

PRAY Thank God that you can trust Him and that He has a plan for you and for each one of your family members.

spoke with quiet authority: "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

The angel continued:

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us')" (Matthew 1:20-23).



Joseph woke up and looked around. Everything looked as it always had, but different at the same time. Then Joseph realized that everything *was* different. *Everything!*

The Messiah was coming! The Messiah was finally coming after all these years of waiting. The Son of God was coming to earth, and He was coming as a *little baby!* It was too incredible for his human mind to understand.

Joseph leaped to his feet.

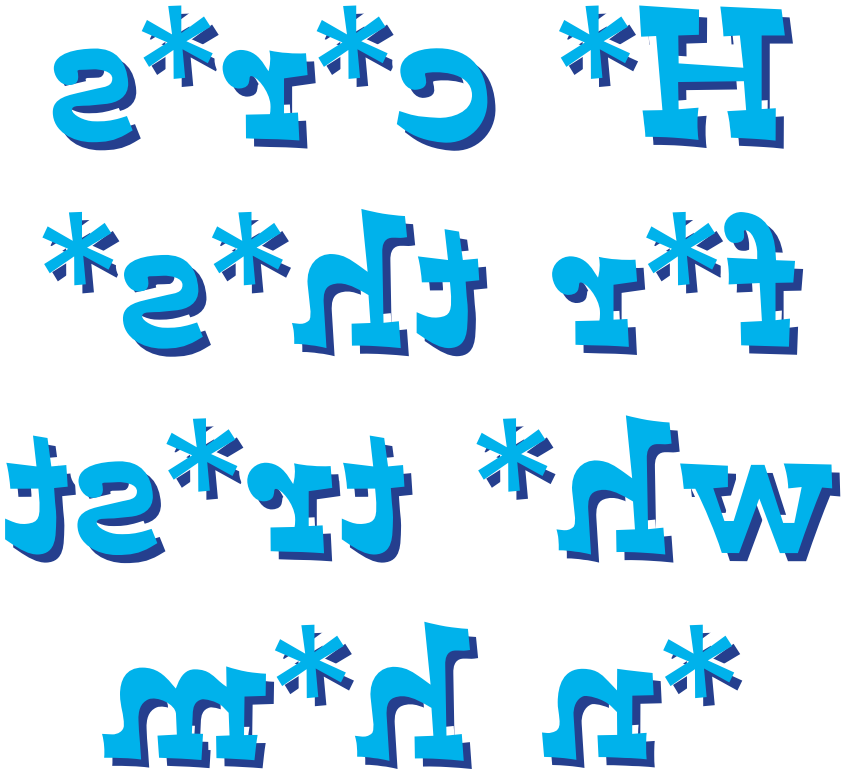
"Mary!" He had to find Mary and tell her he had seen the angel too.



PUZZLE
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I WILL TRUST IN HIM

Instructions: The asterisks (*) in the message below represent vowels. Hold the message up to a mirror. Can you replace the missing vowels to complete the message? (The number of times each vowel appears is listed below.) When you're finished, you'll know how important it is to trust in Jesus.



A=1 I=2 U=1
E=3 O=3