

Southern Adventist University

**KnowledgeExchange@Southern**

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The Main Thing Devotional

Chaplain's Office

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## **Messy Miracles**

Joseph Khabbaz

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*Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" - Luke 1:45*

**Sometimes we need our plans to fail for God's plans to succeed.** During the Christmas season, we get a glimpse of people's unending desire to make sure everything is put in the right place. For some, it is the need to have the Christmas ornaments in the right place, the dinner table set a certain way, or the house decorated in a particular fashion. The reality is, the Christmas story is one of the most messy and chaotic birth narratives in Scripture.

Mary's personal plans were certainly different to the way her life turned out. Her plans would not have included a scandalous story of being pregnant before marriage, risking her engagement with the man she loved, and let us not forget the 80-mile donkey ride from Nazareth to Bethlehem while pregnant; what a mess! Yet, although the angel's promise to her was not part of her plan, it was part of God's purpose. The Bible says that when Mary received the news that she would bear the Son of God, she believed! For Mary, God's promise in the middle of broken plans was enough!

Today, you may be facing a situation that does not fit your plans. You may have planned to graduate by a certain time, perhaps you thought you would have decided on a major by now, received an A-grade in a particular class, or hoped to have your finances in order. When things do not unfold the way we planned, our belief in God's promises is particularly tested. Although 2020 would not be a kind of year we would have ever planned for ourselves, maybe we needed to see some of our plans fail for God's promises to succeed!

### **Reflection**

Are you someone who likes, or even needs, things placed in the right place? Think of some examples. During this year, were there any incidents that did not go according to your plan? Write them down. How can believing in God's promises help you during times when life feels chaotic? What is one of God's promises that has given you comfort in the midst of chaos? Who is one person that you feel impressed to share that promise with today?

### **Prayer**

*Heavenly Father, I praise you for being a God who fulfills all His promises. Although things may not have gone the way I expected this year, help me to find comfort in Your unfailing love. You are the God who became flesh so that I may experience the power and assurance of Your Salvation. It is with that same power I embrace the Gift of your Son, even in the midst of my broken plans. You are enough, for you have removed my sins and replaced them with Your robe of righteousness. Amen!*

### **NEWS AND RESOURCES**

- **21-Day Challenge in 2021:** What would happen if you decided to spend 21 minutes of devoted time with God for 21 days? Join our 21 Challenge for the New Year, beginning January 1. [Click here](#) for more details.
- Share your prayer requests or praises with us via text message using your mobile phone. **Text-to-Pray: 423-281-8996.**

- While we cannot meet in person because of physical distancing restrictions, we encourage you to make an appointment to **talk online** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or are desiring to grow spiritually.