

“Advent III”
December 16, 2007
By Rebecca Enney

“Is your father really coming to see you this Christmas?” Elizabeth asked Barabas as they were playing Parcheesi in her bedroom.

“Yeah.” said Barabas as he rolled a 5 and a 6, counted 11 spaces and landed on the space where Elizabeth’s player sat and sent her back to the beginning.

“Barabas ‘always’ wins at Parcheesi.” thought Elizabeth to herself. “I don’t know why I bother playing.”

“Be patient!” said a deep voice that Elizabeth had never heard before. It made her jump!

“I AM patient!” said Elizabeth.

“What?” asked Barabas, looking confused.

“You told me to be patient in a funny voice.” said Elizabeth.

“No I didn’t.” said Barabas.

Elizabeth rolled the dice. She only got 3! She gave a big . . . sigh.

You know how sometimes, when things aren’t going the way you want them to go, you get all discouraged about things. That’s how it is for Elizabeth lately. It’s not just losing another game of Parcheesi to Barabas. It’s a lot of things.

Elizabeth can hardly wait for Christmas. Christmas is all about getting lots of presents, right? But THIS year her mommy said they already have so many things, that THIS year they would only give ONE present to each other. Not lots and lots like other years. And yesterday when Elizabeth saw Santa Claus at the mall, instead of asking for lots and lots of presents, do you know what she asked him?

She asked “Are YOU the REAL Santa Claus?”

And the Santa said “Ahm . . . I am a Real Santa’s HELPER.” So Elizabeth left the mall with a . . . sigh. All her expectations of a Christmas filled with lots and lots of presents were slipping away.

And just this morning her mommy got an e-mail from Aunt Naomi and it said that Elizabeth’s cousin Martin is in the hospital there with some kind of serious infection and they are all worried and to pray for him. You might remember that Martin and his family live in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in Africa.

So – Martin is really sick, ‘Santa’s Helper’ was not much help, there will NOT be lots of presents on Christmas morning and she is losing at Parcheesi!

Elizabeth started to cry.

“Why are you crying!?” said Barabas. “It is only a GAME!”

And then Elizabeth heard that voice again. “Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Elizabeth jumped!

The wise man jumped and landed beside her!



“Are YOU the REAL Santa Claus?” asked Elizabeth.

“What?” said Barabas, looking around, unable to see the wise man.

The wise man said “Strengthen your heart for the coming of the Lord is near. The One who is and who was and who is to come will bring you salvation.”

Elizabeth smiled at the wise man and he jumped. He jumped away and was gone!

“What an odd experience.” thought Elizabeth and she rolled the dice.

“DOUBLE 5’s! WOW!” In Parcheesi when you roll doubles that means you get the two numbers that are on the top of the dice AND the BOTTOM of the dice! That is two 5’s and two 2’s. She got her last two players out from the beginning with the two 5’s, then she moved her player two spaces and landed on Barabas’s player and sent HIM back to the beginning and then that gives her 20 more spaces so she counted them out. And then she moved her OTHER player two spaces into Home and that gave her 10 MORE spaces to move her OTHER player and finally the game got really interesting!

In the end, Barabas DID win the game, but it was fun and Elizabeth was encouraged.

That night when Elizabeth said her prayers she prayed “Dear God, Please help my cousin Martin to get better and help the doctors fix his infection. And I hope Barabas’s father has a safe trip back here for Christmas.”

As she laid there in bed she BEGAN to change her expectations for Christmas morning. And then she heard the wise man's voice for the last time. It said "Christmas is more than getting presents. Christmas is about God coming into the world bringing Salvation in the birth of his Son Jesus Christ."

Elizabeth imagined that the wise man left a tiny figure of a baby Jesus on her bed!

THE END