



GEORGIA | June 8

Alex

Gift from God

When Lana was 2 years old, Mother asked her what she wanted for New Year's.

This was a normal question in the country of Georgia. In many countries, parents ask little girls and boys what they want for Christmas. But in Georgia, where Lana lived, parents ask their children what they want for New Year's. Georgian children eagerly wait for New Year's to open wrapped gifts underneath fir trees in their homes.

"What do you want for New Year's?" Mother asked Lana.

"I want a little brother," Lana said.

Mother was surprised. Lana was the only child in the family. Mother wouldn't mind giving her a little brother for New Year's. But Mother didn't think that she was able to have any more child.

Lana didn't get a little brother that New Year's.

When Lana was 3 years old, Mother asked her again what she wanted for New Year's.

"I want a little brother," Lana said.

Mother was surprised. She thought that Lana had forgotten her wish from the previous year. Mother wouldn't mind giving her a little brother for New Year's. But Mother didn't think that she was able to have any more child.

Lana didn't get a little brother that New Year's.

When Lana was 4, Mother asked her again what she wanted for New Year's. Lana hadn't changed her mind. "I want a little brother," she said.

When she was 5, Mother asked her again. This time she said, "I want a doll."

And just like that, she forget her wish for a little brother. She asked instead for toys. But Mother didn't forget.

When Lana was 9, Mother became pregnant. She couldn't believe it! She hadn't thought that she would be able to have any more children, and now she was carrying a baby boy. Immediately, she thought that the baby must be a gift from God. She hadn't thought about God in a long time, and now

she couldn't wait to give birth.

When Lana learned that she would have a little brother, she immediately remembered her New Year's wish from when she was small.

"Can we name him Alex?" she asked.

"Alex?" Mother said. "OK, if that is what you want. Let's name him Alex."

Mother brought little Alex home from the hospital on Lana's 10th birthday. Right away, Lana wanted to hold him in her arms. She was so happy. Mother hadn't had time to bake a cake or buy a birthday gift. But this was better than a cake or a birthday gift. This was even better than a New Year's gift. She had a little brother!

"A little brother is better than cake," she said.

Alex really is a gift from God. Before he was born, his family hadn't thought much about God. Then a neighbor saw Alex and told Mother about a Seventh-day Adventist children's center where the boy could play and learn about God. Mother began taking Alex to the children's center. She and other mothers studied the Bible with a church leader while their children played. Today, Alex's family goes to church on Sabbath, and Lana is a Pathfinder.

Mother is so happy that Alex was born. Not only did the family gain a son, but it also gained a Father in heaven. Because of Alex, the whole family now knows and loves God.

"I am a gift from God," Alex said. 🌍

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Georgia on the map. Then show Tskaltubo, the future location of a health center that is one of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects.
- Watch a short YouTube video of Alex at: bit.ly/Alex-ESD.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Euro-Asia Division: bit.ly/esd-2024.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives," and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults." For more information about the plan, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help open a health center in Georgia, where Alex lives. Thank you for planning a generous offering on June 29.

By Andrew McChesney



Walnuts are an important part of Georgian cuisine.

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