

CHRISTMAS EVERY DAY BY DEBORAH GOALDMAN

How many of you made wishes on stars or candles or said prayers in the hope of getting things you wanted? Little Amy Nelson did that too, but the results were more than she expected. She learned a valuable lesson--one we can also benefit from as kids and as grownups.

Let's meet Amy when she was 6 years old. She was still the "baby" of the Nelson family which means *she was good at getting her way*. But that was easy to overlook because Amy was a delightful, fun-loving child. You see, Amy didn't just like to play--Amy *loved* to play. There wasn't a serious bone in her body. And like all kids, Amy *loved* getting new toys. So of course, Amy *loved* Christmas.

On Christmas morning Santa was generous as usual. Presents were unwrapped with much excitement. Toys were enjoyed. But Amy couldn't help feeling a bit disappointed. It would be another 365 days until the next Christmas. This thought was simply too much for Amy to accept.

So, at bedtime Amy knelt to say her prayers with Mom and Dad.

"Father in heaven, hear my prayer.

Keep me in your loving care.

Be my guide in all I do.

And bless all those who love me too. Amen"

Then Amy added, "And pleeeeeeease make it Christmas every day, Amen". After which she jumped in bed.

Dad tucked her and said, "Sweetie, Christmas only comes once a year."

Mom kissed Amy and added, "Be careful what you ask for; you might get it."

"Goodie!" gushed Amy.

Next morning Amy woke eagerly at 5 o'clock. She rushed into the living room and there underneath the tree was a pile of presents--all of them for her. With wild excitement Amy made the rounds bouncing on everyone's bed. "Get up, get up, it's Christmas again.

Big brother grumbled, "Go away" and then covered up his head. Big sister groaned, "Quit jumping on me and go back to bed." Mom and Dad said, "It can't be Christmas again, Amy. Go play with your toys and let us sleep a little longer."

"No, No", said Amy impatiently. "It's true. Come see the presents." By then she was pulling the covers off. "Santa came, again." Amy wouldn't give up, so they got up and trudged into the living room. Mom and Dad glanced at each other in disbelief.

Presents kept arriving every morning even after school resumed. It was Christmas every day just like Amy wanted. She was very happy at first. Then it got old. In the morning Mom would say, "It is almost time for school, Amy. Have you opened your presents yet?" Amy would groan, "No, do I have to?"

It was getting difficult to move around the house. Presents were everywhere. Amy tried giving some away, but the next day, the number of presents had multiplied. The house was literally "bursting at the seams". Everyone in the Nelson family was getting very irritable, including the dog.

At the end of one especially miserable day, Amy was near tears. She climbed into her bed--and I mean climbed, because her bed rested on a mountain of presents, just inches from the ceiling. As she laid there looking up, she remembered her prayer from months ago. "I got what I asked for, and I don't want it anymore." She cried and cried and cried. "Dear God, I don't want Christmas every day. Then she heard a gentle voice, "Be careful what you ask for." Amy paused and began again. "I don't want Christmas *presents* every day. But I do want Christmas *happiness* every day--if that's ok, Amen." Then Amy fell asleep.

Next morning there were no new presents under the tree. Amy was ecstatic. The Nelson family gave away the extra presents piled around the house and life returned to normal but in a better way.

The next day at school, a little girl in Amy's class announced, "I love cookies. I wish I could have cookies for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day." Amy smiled wisely and said, "Be careful what you ask for. You might get it."

Oh, the wisdom flowing from the mouths of babes. May we all take heed of what we ask for. Like Amy, we might get more than we expect.