

By Beth M. Stephenson
(Based on a true story)

During all the long hours till daylight is through, there is plenty indeed for my two hands to do (Children's Songbook, 272).

I need help!”

Lizzy heard Mom yell from the kitchen and ran to see what was wrong. Mom was standing by the stove, where she had been putting jars of apricots into a pot of water. One of the jars had broken, and the glass had cut her hand deeply.

Lizzy grabbed a clean towel and wrapped Mom's bleeding hand while Daniel, Lizzy's older brother, found his keys so he could drive Mom to the hospital.

When Mom came home hours later, she explained that the glass had cut through an artery, a tendon, and a nerve. The doctors had been able to fix her hand, but

Mom can't use her hand. Who will come to the rescue?

Mom was supposed to keep her hand dry and hold it above her shoulder for several weeks.

“We'll all need to help out even more until Mom can use her hand again,” Dad said.

“What if we don't know what to do?” Lizzy's younger sister, Jamilyn, asked.

“Don't worry about that,” Mom said. “I can't use my hand, but I can coach you if you need help.”

Jamilyn and Lizzy looked at each other and smiled. It sounded like fun.

The next morning after family prayer, Dad left for work.

“I don't want the rest of the apricots to go to waste,” Mom said. “How do you girls feel about canning fruit today?”



MANY MAKE



"I will honor my parents and do my part to strengthen my family."

My Gospel Standards



Mom explained how to clean the jars and fill them with apricot halves. Lizzy liked mixing the syrup and carefully pouring some into each jar. Familyn wiped the rims and tightened the lids. Soon most of the apricots were stored in glass jars. Lizzy wondered what they would do with the mushy apricots that were left over, until Mom said they would use them to make jam. Lizzy grinned as she and her sister mashed up the apricots. She loved homemade jam!

"This is the best jam I've ever eaten," Mom said during lunch as she munched on a peanut butter and jam sandwich the girls had made for her.

After lunch, the girls were eager to learn what other grown-up chores were on Mom's "to do" list. Lizzy helped Mom pay the bills. Familyn folded laundry. They had just finished pulling weeds from the rose garden when Mom introduced their final adventure of the day: making dinner. The menu included spaghetti, meatballs, and salad.

"What about your breadsticks?" Lizzy asked. Lizzy

loved Mom's homemade breadsticks that they always ate with spaghetti.

"They're a little tricky to make," Mom said. But Lizzy and Familyn begged Mom to teach them the recipe.

When Dad saw the golden breadsticks and juicy meatballs at dinnertime, he thought Mom had broken the rules about her hand.

"No, the girls did it all!" Mom said proudly.

Before long, Lizzy and Familyn could do housework and cook nutritious meals without much help from Mom. Daniel helped out with the evening chores, and Dad went grocery shopping after work. By the time Mom could work around the house again, she found things had changed at home.

"I'll make dinner tonight," Lizzy said. "I'm in the mood for spaghetti, and I like my recipe best."

"Do you need any help with the breadsticks?" Mom asked.

"No, thanks. Familyn wants to make them, and you might get in her way," Lizzy said with a smile. ♦

HANDS LIGHT WORK

In some parts of the world, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May. What nice things can you do this month to show your mom that you love her? Tips for making an extra-special Mother's Day breakfast are on page 23.

