

# Music for a Better Day

**By David Dickson**  
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(Based on a true story)

Elizabeth kicked an empty coconut shell down the dirt road. She frowned as it rolled away. Today had not been a good day.

Not at all!

Lagi said something mean to her at school. No one had played with her at recess. And then her art project got ruined. She'd worked on it for weeks!

"It's not fair!" Elizabeth said. Who invented bad days anyway?

Elizabeth plucked a hibiscus flower. At least that was one good thing. In Samoa she could always find beautiful flowers. Even on a bad day.

She twisted the pink flower into her hair and walked home.

"*Talofa!*" Dad said. "How was your day?"

Elizabeth looked down. "Not very good." She walked past the noisy pigs in their yard and sat next to Dad on the porch.

Dad listened as she told him all about her hard day.



"I'm so sorry," Dad said, hugging her. "Days like that are really hard. Want to know something that might help?"

She nodded. "Yes, please!"

He started singing a song that Elizabeth knew well. It was a beautiful song that Dad sang to Mom all the time. She laughed and pushed on his shoulder. "Daa-aad! That doesn't fix anything."

He grinned. "I'm serious! Good music can always help your day go better. And, speaking of music . . ."

Elizabeth knew what he was going to say. It was time to practice piano.

More than anything, Elizabeth wanted to learn piano so she could play songs in church. She already loved singing with her family. Especially with Dad. But playing piano was harder. Her fingers had to work to find the notes.

"I don't know if I feel like practicing today," she said.



change. She felt peaceful. Elizabeth smiled. She was feeling the Holy Ghost!

Dad started humming. He stood next to her and began to sing.

She kept playing, and Mom joined in too. Elizabeth kept thinking about all the ways God blessed her and her family.

At the end, Dad leaned down. “Feeling any better?” he asked.

“Yes!” she said. “You were right. Good music *did* make my day better!” ●

Dad stood up. “Maybe it would help to think about what you’re playing.”

Then he took off his sandals and went inside to help with dinner. Elizabeth took off her sandals and followed him.

The sheet music for “Fa’afetai i Le Atua” sat on the keyboard. Elizabeth loved this Samoan hymn. It was all about giving thanks to God.

Elizabeth turned on the electric keyboard and started playing. “Think about what you’re playing,” Dad had said.

Elizabeth decided to try it. She thought about all the things she was thankful for. Her family. Her house. Music. Beautiful Samoa.

Her fingers started to find the notes more easily. After a while, her feelings began to



What helps you feel better on hard days?

Turn the page  
to learn more about  
Samoa!

