

Live the Life You Were Created For

She
DREAMS



Tiffany Bluhm

Praise for *She Dreams*

“Tiffany communicates clearly that dreams look different for each and every woman; and no matter what her background, losses, or standing may be, she is not to be silenced or dismissed but to rise up to take her place because it is her birthright to dream. This is a message she lives, inspiring us with her bold faith and her capacity to encourage us collectively to make a difference where we are, with what we have.”

—**Ashley Abercrombie**, podcast cohost of *Why Tho* and author of *The Rise of the Truth Teller* (forthcoming)

“Tiffany is full of fire and life. She writes, and more importantly, lives this book. She’s got grit, passion, and a depth that causes you to read each word and see that you were born to live out your dreams while there is still breath in your lungs. Her words will cause you to see that you’re stronger than you know and created for more.”

—**Andi Andrew**, author of *She Is Free*, speaker, pastor, and founder of She Is Free

“Persistent hope jumps off every page of Tiffany Bluhm’s beautiful book, *She Dreams*. From the overcoming of adversity within her own life to the stories of biblical heroes whose broken lives were pieced together by the God of redemption, readers will find courage to let their own dreams take root, knowing that there is no tragedy, misstep, or disappointment that God can’t redeem. Whether you are single or married, with or without children, working in the home or outside of it, Bluhm reminds all of us that the Lord wants to use your passions, skills, and dreams for his purposes and glory.”

—**Katelyn Beaty**, author of *A Woman’s Place: A Christian Vision for Your Calling in the Office, the Home, and the World* and former managing editor of *Christianity Today*

“Tiffany speaks with the conviction and experience of a woman twice her age. She shares honestly about the cost, sacrifice, and grit required to not only see your dreams come true but also lift others to reach theirs.”

—**Eric Boles**, author of *Moving to Great* and president of The Game Changers Inc.

“Tiffany is thoughtful, clear-headed, and filled with rich biblical insight. These same qualities shine in her most recent book, *She Dreams*, where she explores how one’s best instincts, aspirations, and hopes can become a reality. I found myself praying through my own discarded dreams, inviting God to breathe life into them again; I know the same will be true for you.”

—**Bryan Halferty**, lead pastor of Anchor Church, Tacoma, WA

“This book is for the dreamers and for the women who are so buried in their season of life that they have forgotten to dream. Tiffany beautifully reminds us all that we are created to do big things and that no dream is too big. Empowered by examples from Scripture and her own life, Tiffany speaks encouragement and truth, emphasizing the need to just START and take the first step toward your dream.”

—**Nickie Snyder**, podcast host of *The Things She Does* and cardiac nurse practitioner

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Tiffany Bluhm

ABINGDON WOMEN / NASHVILLE

**SHE DREAMS
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*To all the women who dream, persist, fight, and slay:
this one is for you.*



Introduction

“Never give up on your dreams, my darling, for they are your birthright, and you owe it to the world to become the Queen, you are.”

—Mark Anthony¹

Above my bed hangs a gold metal frame with a message that reads “Breathing dreams like air.” It’s a line from F. Scott Fitzgerald’s classic work *The Great Gatsby*, and it’s the first thing I see when I walk into my room and the last thing I see before I crawl into bed each night. The words are a reminder that my dreams are necessary to me—not apart from me, but vital to me. I can’t escape my dreams. They are with me wherever I go. We coexist. I inhale them, however small or big, and remember that I am built for something bigger than myself. I am built to glorify God, to partner with Him for a beautiful (albeit messy at times) life.

That bold statement was hung above my bed at a time when I dreamed wild, God-sized dreams and yet there was no evidence of my dreams becoming my reality. Still, years later, here I sit at my dining room table, savoring all God has done in my life since that message

first made its way into my room. I have not given up on trusting the Dream Giver and He has not given up on me.

You and I were created to dream. More than the dream of becoming homecoming queen (although who doesn't want to wear a crown), or owning that rare purebred dog you love (if you are the dog lovin' type), or running that marathon (bless you), or starting that veggie garden (yum), you and I were born, destined, and purposed to dream wild, audacious, make-your-heart-race, only-God-could-really-bring-this-to-pass kind of dreams. It doesn't matter if you are practical or impractical, young or old, rich or poor, you have the capacity to dream big dreams, without excuse.

If you still have a pulse, then God is not done with you, even if you feel like He is. You have more life to live, more ground to cover, more stories to tell, more songs to sing. You have more. Neither you nor I have fully arrived. We are growing, changing into the women God destined us to be as we chase after Him and draw near to His heart.

In addition to sharing stories of women from the past and present as well as my own life experiences, I'll be inviting us to look to the story of a biblical dreamer—one dedicated to the dreams of God—who offers us inspiration and guidance as we pursue our own God-sized dreams. Moses, one of the most famous characters of the Old Testament, was an ordinary person like you and me who listened to God, leaned into God's will, and partnered with God for big, glorious dreams. As we uncover themes from his story that provide vision and clarity for our own dreams and combine those with the examples and inspiration of contemporary women, you'll discover what it takes to identify, embrace, and pursue the dreams that the Divine has for *you*. I'll also invite you to consider how your dreams can take shape through practices such as reflecting, collaborating, lifelong learning, pursuing passion, counting the cost, praying, holding on to hope, and

trusting God for the deepest desires of your heart. (And if you want to make the journey with a group of girlfriends, a separate study guide and DVD are also available.)

As you drink in the message of this book from the first page to the last, I hope you find yourself in the story as a woman who is an over-comer, a woman who is brave and courageous, a woman who doesn't give up easily—because when you pursue your dreams and live the life you were created for, you bring heaven to earth. You rehearse heaven in your season because you have trusted God, the Dream Giver, for your victory.

So from one dreamer to another, may you rise up to take your place, because no one will make all your dreams come true. No one is going to hold up a silver platter with your sweet dreams on it. I do wish life was that simple, but you and I both know it most certainly is not. To see your dreams become reality demands a partnership with the Divine, the One who knows you inside and out. It requires a mammoth amount of patience, incredible trust, and immense hope that God will do all that He has said He will do. Your dreams may not turn out exactly as you planned; they may just turn out better and sweeter and more glorious than you ever could have believed possible. I hope they do. I hope that at the end of your days you stand before the King, the Dream Giver, and celebrate a life well lived, a life well dreamed. May this book be a guide, a compass, or maybe even a kick in the pants for you to answer the call of your Dream Giver because, sister, you were created to dream!

Tiffany

She Dreams Declaration

*She dreams of sunlight, strong winds, and victory.
She dreams of a majestic story, a whimsical mystery.*

*She dreams of life abundant, so free and wild.
She dreams of the Father's call to her, "Beloved child."*

*She dreams of slaying dragons, saving the day,
She dreams of taking her place, at the feet of Yahweh.*

*She dreams in vivid colors, jewel tones, and pastels.
She dreams of freedom and truth, like the clangs of the
Liberty Bell.*

*She dreams of teaching, leading, and serving.
She dreams of a journey of which she is deserving.*

*She dreams of grace, mercy, and hope.
She dreams of thriving not just learning to cope.*

*She dreams of rushing peace like a river.
She dreams of the one and only Dream Giver.*

-Tiffany Bluhm



1

You Were Born for This

Do you ever look at someone who has achieved something great and think, “She was born to do that”? We look at Deborah in the Book of Judges; Queen Esther; Mary, the mother of Jesus; Joan of Arc, Eleanor Roosevelt; Harriet Tubman; Frida Kahlo; Mother Teresa; Margaret Thatcher; Serena Williams; or Joanna Gaines and we are in awe of who each woman is, what she has overcome, and what she has achieved. We think to ourselves, *Snaaap, she is KILLING it! She is one wise and powerful woman.*

As we think about women who have defied the odds and pursued their dreams, we can sometimes assume, perhaps subconsciously, that those marvelous women possess some sort of special “unicorn powers” or superpower gifts that you and I would never have access to. The truth is, the women that you and I admire, both past and present, have a beating heart just like ours. Each one of them has or has had insecurities, fears, and setbacks just like you and me. The one thing we know for sure of each woman that we look up to is this: *she dreams.*

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She dreams impossible dreams. She fights to see them come to pass, and she doesn't take no for an answer when it comes to the fulfillment of those dreams. She believes she was created to dream; and dear friend, so are you and I.

No matter who you are or where you've come from, no matter how many Benjamins you have in your bank account or mothballs you have in your pockets, no matter how bold you are or how shy, no matter how perfect your pedigree or how sketchy your past—you, lovely one, were born for a lifetime of beauty and hope. Within you are unlimited dreams to pursue as you live your wild life. You are here on purpose for a purpose. No matter the details surrounding the story of your birth or beginnings (trust me on this one), you were born to dream of a better, sweeter, fairer existence for you and the world around you.

Other folks may say you are a screwup. Your parents might think you are crazy as a box of rocks (a common expression in my home, thanks to a popular children's movie), or you might believe the nonsense that you are just here to live your ordinary life. Quiet. Inconsequential. Never making waves. Never pushing back. Never raising a ruckus. Never chasing after the next best thing.

Well, sister, I'm not buying it. I've read a book on it, and from Genesis to Revelation I've discovered that you and I were built to dream about the impossible, the out of reach, the beautiful, the lovely, the someday, the not yet. We were created to dream about things that matter, things that spark joy—to find ways to serve others, ways that push us to our limits, ways that help us face our insecurities and hang-ups. *All of it.*

Hear me now: the Dream Giver—the One who built us, created us, handcrafted us—chose to entrust us with gifts, skills, and abilities that are unique to each of us. Even when those precious skills and gifts of yours aren't activated in a particular season of life, it doesn't mean

they aren't yours. It doesn't mean the One who gave them to you has taken them away. It doesn't mean they are worthless and can never be used for any good work. Our God is so very good to us. He is a Giver of good gifts; and when He gives a gift, He knows the power and magnitude the gift has. We, His beloved and cherished daughters, must unwrap each gift and use it. How and when we use our gifts is important, but first and foremost, we must recognize that we were created to dream.

You Do You

So many of us are built for far more than we may be doing in this season, and that is okay. What is not okay is denying our longing to do more at some point in our lives. I recently listened to a podcast about a woman who experienced restlessness when her kids were little. She thought her days were lovely overall and she adored her children and being a mother, but she felt that something was missing. I've felt that rub as well, and I know I'm not alone. I've talked to countless women—with and without children, single and married—who long to do something “bigger” despite whatever busy or barren season they currently find themselves in. I've also talked to women whose lives seem “big” by the world's standards yet feel they are missing out on the truly important everyday experiences of life and home. Wherever you find yourself, you may find that your day-to-day reality no longer excites you in the way it used to and you know deep in your heart that you are ready for something different—some kind of change that will renew and energize you. The woman on the podcast discovered she was made to create and now finds deep satisfaction in her work as a calligrapher. I teared up as she shared about her business that has expanded over the years.

The truth is that every woman is stronger than she thinks she is and built for rewarding work—whether that work is inside or outside the home. I have found this to be true in my own life. Once upon a time, when I was up all hours of the night with a colicky eight-week-old, I launched a little blog. I called it *Learn How to Mom* because my husband always joked that I was literally “learning how to mom” with one newly adopted three-year-old from Uganda and one squishy little baby fresh from my womb (who left me with such a sea of stretch marks on my belly that I’m tempted not to even consider anything but an arctic parka when I go swimming in public). I wrote on and on about life as a mama, giving suggestions for how not to lose your sanity when your baby has a blow-out in one of those fancy-pants baby carriers at the grocery store when you know that folks are already looking at you and thinking you could use a shower yourself.

I had always wanted to write poignant pieces that would inspire others to live the life God had designed for them, and I decided it was time. Why that led me to talk about life with little ones was beyond me, but that was my season; and I thought to myself that if the Lord was good enough to show me Himself in that crazy but wonderful season of my life, then I might as well share His encouragement with others.

I decided that even if my audience turned out to be just two of my girlfriends, I would write. I wrote every chance I could. In my season of zero to little sleep, often choosing to write instead of showering or doing dishes, I lovingly and often frantically typed my tale of how I was holding on to God’s goodness and grace through all of the celebrations and challenges—especially the discouraging times. I would lie awake in bed with a laptop computer atop my blankets, hammering away on the keys as I wrote about experiences and emotions that I believed needed to be shared. All day long I would

scribble ideas on envelopes that most likely held a bill I needed to pay or on crumpled paper towels left beside the sink. I am the first to admit these blogs were... well... as the cool kids say, “basic.” Again, I was operating on very little sleep and most certainly was clocking my ten thousand hours; but friend, I did not lack conviction. In fact, I was full of it. Conviction and passion kept me focused. (This is when I discovered my undying love for coffee. Pure coincidence, of course.)

*Each of our souls is built for more than we
can possibly imagine; and pursuing our
God-given dreams, however big or small
they may seem, opens us to a bright and
shining life of meaning and purpose.*

So after birthing my own baby, I also birthed a blog and a full-time job; and my husband and I had recently bought a new house that needed all sorts of renovating. It was not the time to be dreaming about new ventures, but I knew I would be like a dying star if I didn't pursue them. You see, I deeply believe each of our souls is built for more than we can possibly imagine; and pursuing our God-given dreams, however big or small they may seem, opens us to a bright and shining life of meaning and purpose.

I know I'm a better person—which for me includes being a better wife and mama—when I first connect with the Lord and then do what I believe I was uniquely created to do. The same concept applies to you: when you are *killing* it at whatever it is you slay, there is a chance

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you feel most like yourself—the *you* that you know deep down in your bones God made you to be.

I hope you are hearing me, dear one. May you never let your dreams, however possible or impossible they may seem, pass you by without grit, a big ol' heart, and a whole lot of humility. Now, I do not mean to confuse contentment in Christ with pursuing your dreams. Rather, as we abide in Christ, He stirs us to act, dream, create, and do. The Dream Giver calls us, leads us, speaks to us, restores us, heals us, fulfills us, and entrusts us with dreams.

My kids' favorite book, *The Plans I Have for You*, says it like this,

You are my hands and my feet there on Earth.

I've given you a purpose—it's been there since birth!

So if you are a painter, bust out the brushes. If you are a writer, sharpen that pencil or get out that computer. If you are a runner, grab those nifty running shoes. If you are a singer, then saaang, girrrl. If you are a helper, start helping. If you are a giver, give generously. If you are a peacemaker, build bridges toward peace. Do what makes you uniquely you! You do you, friend. No one else can. You'll never regret doing what you love—unless it's illegal or harmful. That would be bad. Go ahead and regret that—or better yet, don't do it. But if something sparks joy in you and blesses others, then go ahead and get at it! Because you, my darling, were created to pursue the dreams of your heart.

Your Past Won't Break You

Many of us feel our past mistakes disqualify us from opportunities, promotions, and second chances; but I propose that no matter who you are or what you've experienced, the screams of failure, grief,

and defeat tucked in your mind will not break you and might be the making of you, proving to be quite handy as you dream impossible dreams. I've found this to be true in my own life.

In 1986, I was abandoned at birth. At two days old, without a mother to nurse me or a father to rock me to sleep, I was left in a home for orphaned children and became one of twenty-five million orphans in India. Trust me on this one: abandoned in your most vulnerable moment will make you question if you are valuable, let alone valuable enough to do something great.

In 1994, a little girl in my third-grade class told me we couldn't be friends because my skin was dirty and brown. It was the first time I ever wept over the color of my skin. It felt wrong to simply be me. I was judged by the color of my skin and not the content of my character. It wasn't the last time someone would remind me I was different and didn't belong, but it was the first; and that first experience of prejudice made me question if I fit in this world.

In 2007, I moved to Manchester, England, to pursue a relationship with a tall English gentleman I met at a summer wedding and with whom I fell in love. I never dreamed I would one day grow up and move six thousand miles from home to be with the man of my dreams. He was everything I hoped for. After I quit my job and booked a one-way ticket to England, you can imagine my surprise when Prince Charming informed me three days after making the move, "Tiffany, I have no desire for you." Mic drop. I left his house and didn't know whether to go left or right to get back to my place. Through tears I wandered the streets of Manchester looking for my way back home so I could weep in private. From that experience I wondered if I was capable of making any good choices for myself.

Actually, I did make a good choice, and I married my husband, Derek, in 2009. Then in 2013, after a two-year adoption process, we

traveled to Uganda to meet our son, Lucius, who was twelve months old at the time—born to another woman but birthed in my heart. His mother hemorrhaged to death after giving birth to him, and he was placed in a children’s home at three days old. For three months, I held him, cuddled him, and let his little laughs seep into every corner of my heart. A week before our court date, in which I would become his legal guardian, we were informed that due to unforeseen circumstances we would no longer be able to adopt him. With a nursery ready at home and his name tattooed on my heart, I kissed his forehead and said good-bye knowing I would never see him again.

Each of these experiences has deeply affected my outlook on life and love. They are my series of unfortunate events. My past experiences, stacked on top of one another, add up to some heartache. Aching defeat. I would be lying if I didn’t admit they affected how I viewed myself. At times, I felt that my past experiences would prohibit my opportunity to be loved, lead others, have a family, or see my dreams come true. Our hard moments and pain become a filter we see through, causing our feelings of doubt, shame, and loss to shape our view of the world and everyone in it.

*Our messy moments aren’t the
defining line of our story. They are
merely twists in the narrative.*

We do our best to hush the screams of failure, defeat, or grief, but perhaps within those experiences is our greatest asset. A tension to be managed, not ignored. Our pain, if we lean into it, will teach us

endurance. We'll discover that we are stronger than we think we are and that what God has for us will not pass us by because of our past. Our messy moments aren't the defining line of our story. They are merely twists in the narrative. You and I must never believe the lie that the dark days will dampen the bright ones to come.

The *New Yorker* published an article on what it means to be resilient, and it boils down to this: "Frame adversity as a challenge, and you become more flexible and able to deal with it, move on, learn from it, and grow. Focus on it, frame it as a threat, and a potentially traumatic event becomes an enduring problem; you become more inflexible, and more likely to be negatively affected."² You see, how we perceive our past difficulties matters.

The honest-to-goodness truth is that each of us seeks a new ending to the broken storyline of our lives. We either look for others to fix our broken pieces, or we look to our accomplishments or work to make us feel better; but none will satisfy. No external force will fix our inner brokenness. Only Jesus, by His grace and goodness, can tenderly sustain us—and eventually heal us.

The Making of You

As our Good Companion sustains us and begins the process of healing, we can allow our pain to be a teacher, making us into the women we are meant to be. I learned this through each of the painful experiences I shared.

Working through my abandonment issues provided an intimate communion with my own frailty, and my hunger for love and acceptance was—and continues to be—satisfied in Jesus. Eight years ago I was able to visit the orphanage where I was left and found that no answer to any of my burning questions would ever fix me. Knowing

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that Jesus loves me would be what calmed my questioning heart, not facts. As Christ healed my abandoned heart, my understanding of loss grew within me compassion for the left behind and the underserved. I would not trade that for the world. It has undoubtedly shaped the way I love people.

The Lord really decided to show off a year ago when the woman who ran the orphanage and took me in at two days old tracked me down. She was in the States visiting family and found me through mutual friends I had no idea we shared. I met her and heard how she felt deeply compelled to care for a baby and then her burning desire was met when a newborn was placed in her arms. She loved me as her own. After hearing that story I discovered that peace can be applied retroactively. Experiences you and I had ten, twenty, or even forty years ago can be rewritten as we allow hope to rise from our broken memories.

Working through my ongoing experience of discrimination has taught me to never let someone else define my worth, no matter how powerful they may appear. No one has the power to define me or you without our consent. It doesn't matter who they are, the color of their skin, or the wealth and privilege they lord over us. Discrimination has deep roots of fear, and the only thing that can put fear in its place is love. First John 4:18 (NIV) tells us, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." Someone may do their best to rob us of opportunity or convince us that we're disqualified because of our skin or gender or age or any other distinguishing characteristic, but they can never define the value of our souls. The Author of Love settled that score long ago.

Working through my experience with Prince Charming taught me that I am enough. Although my childhood feelings of

abandonment and rejection were amplified as Prince Charming called it quits, I discovered no one could fulfill me but the King. The Englishman wasn't going to fix what was broken whether he stayed with me or left me. As I healed from my heartache, I didn't expect a prospective suitor to throw me out with the garbage or be my king. I would not allow a man to have that kind of power over me. I approached potential relationships with a heart to share my life with someone who loved Christ and who would care for me. At the time of this writing, I've been married to Derek for nearly ten years. I am so very grateful for Prince Charming's unfortunate exit from my life because of the lessons I learned. Lessons accessible only through the pain of heartbreak. While we may prefer to avoid pain and loss, it can make way for beauty and redemption we never thought possible.

Working through losing Lucius taught me that love, not DNA, makes a family and that it is always worth the fight to place the lonely in families. While my husband and I did not come home with Lucius, we did come home with Jericho, who was two-and-a-half years old when he joined our little family. In the Old Testament, Jericho was the first city God promised to His chosen people. As our first child, we thought it fitting to name him after the gift God gave to His people. Both Jericho and I were left in vulnerable moments, but together we make a family. Love is a powerful force that squelches the flames of shame and rejection and makes room for belonging and significance. Love makes way for truth and vision over lies and confusion.

Four years ago when I had my biological son, one of my own flesh and blood, I met the first person I've ever shared DNA with. He has my eyes and my natural hair. I'm Indian, and there are literally a billion of us, but this Indian lives in my home and calls me mama. My past experience of abandonment gave me a hunger for a healthy family.

I share all of this to say that my past failures and experiences gave me opportunities for personal growth I would not have had otherwise, and I've had the honor to share what I've learned about the companionship and redemptive ways of Jesus with others through my ministry of writing and speaking. My painful experiences truly have been the making of me, not the breaking of me.

The human experience is not easy, yet deep in our pain there are lessons to be learned and strength to be gained. We must reassess the limitations and disqualifications we've come to accept in our lives if we are to be women who dream God-sized dreams. Our adversity may quite possibly be the source of our greatest assets—our crown jewels, if you will. Adversity shapes us, molds us, and makes us the brave, resilient, beautiful souls we are intended to be.

Bigger Than Us

Sometimes the dreams of God become our own when we least expect it. We may be discontent or living a life we love, and all the while the Lord is preparing our hearts for even greater things than we can imagine. We may not sense it, but He is setting the stage for something glorious, wondrous, and perhaps even downright terrifying.

Moses, a hero of the Old Testament, knew a thing or two about God-sized dreams. Like us, he was chosen for great and mighty plans before he was even born. The Lord placed him in Egypt on purpose for a purpose. Moses would foreshadow the coming King who would redeem us all. When he was growing up, I bet Moses had no idea of all God planned. Before we see Moses do extraordinary things in the name of justice and freedom, we see his rocky beginning, the place where all good stories start. We read about those beginnings in Exodus 1 and 2:

^{1:8}Eventually, a new king came to power in Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph or what he had done. ⁹He said to his people, "Look, the people of Israel now outnumber us and are stronger than we are. ¹⁰We must make a plan to keep them from growing even more. If we don't, and if war breaks out, they will join our enemies and fight against us. Then they will escape from the country."

¹¹So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves. They appointed brutal slave drivers over them, hoping to wear them down with crushing labor. They forced them to build the cities of Pithom and Rameses as supply centers for the king. ¹²But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more the Israelites multiplied and spread, and the more alarmed the Egyptians became. ¹³So the Egyptians worked the people of Israel without mercy. ¹⁴They made their lives bitter, forcing them to mix mortar and make bricks and do all the work in the fields. They were ruthless in all their demands.

¹⁵Then Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, gave this order to the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah: ¹⁶"When you help the Hebrew women as they give birth, watch as they deliver. If the baby is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live." ¹⁷But because the midwives feared God, they refused to obey the king's orders. They allowed the boys to live, too.

¹⁸So the king of Egypt called for the midwives. "Why have you done this?" he demanded. "Why have you allowed the boys to live?"

¹⁹"The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women," the midwives replied. "They are more vigorous and have their babies so quickly that we cannot get there in time."

²⁰So God was good to the midwives, and the Israelites continued to multiply, growing more and more powerful.

²¹And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

²²Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River. But you may let the girls live."



^{2:1}About this time, a man and woman from the tribe of Levi got married. ²The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw that he was a special baby and kept him hidden for three months. ³But when she could no longer hide him, she got a basket made of papyrus reeds and waterproofed it with tar and pitch. She put the baby in the basket and laid it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River. ⁴The baby's sister then stood at a distance, watching to see what would happen to him.

⁵Soon Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her attendants walked along the riverbank. When the princess saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it for her. ⁶When the princess opened it, she saw the baby. The little boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This must be one of the Hebrew children," she said.

⁷Then the baby's sister approached the princess. "Should I go and find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" she asked.

⁸"Yes, do!" the princess replied. So the girl went and called the baby's mother.

⁹"Take this baby and nurse him for me," the princess told the baby's mother. "I will pay you for your help." So the woman took her baby home and nursed him.

¹⁰Later, when the boy was older, his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her own son. The princess named him Moses, for she explained, "I lifted him out of the water."

(Exodus 1:8–2:10)

It is heartbreaking to think of a mama laying her baby in a basket and sending him down a river in hopes he'll be rescued rather than die at the hands of evil, jealous men. Yet in His power and sovereignty God not only spared Moses' life but also had a plan for his life—from before he was even born. Like Jeremiah, who was set apart to be a prophet to the nations before his birth (Jeremiah 1:5), it is evident that God's hand was on Moses' life from day one.

Now, when your story begins in societal turmoil in a time when the haves and the have-nots are clearly defined, a time when the murder of baby boys is the order of the day, a time when discrimination is at an all-time high, your "normal" might not be healthy or life-giving. Your reality might be harmful to you and those around you, but it is all you know. Yet your steps are still guided by a divine hand.

The Egyptians who enslaved the Hebrew people raised Moses, who was chosen by God. As a royal he had the riches of earth, but God planned for him to live a life not of ease and riches but of sacrifice. God's plans and dreams for Moses, tucked in that baby in a basket, would change everything, not only for him but also for God's people of his day and generations to come.

I wonder if Moses had a clear sense that God had a mighty grip on his life. Or perhaps, like us, he found himself swept up into a story bigger than himself, authored by God for his good and not his demise. Perhaps he realized over time that God's miraculous ways would

She Dreams

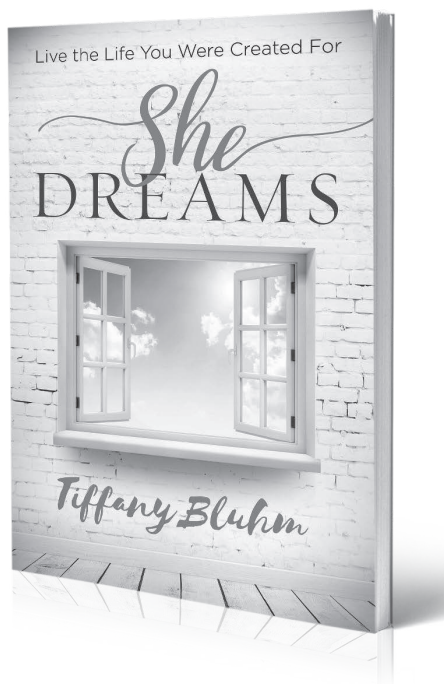
supersede any human plans or way of life he knew. But first he was just an innocent baby found in a basket on the riverbank.

You and I may not fully understand all that God has been working in and through us since our birth, but make no mistake, *He is working*. God has plans for us that won't be stopped. Why? Because He made us on purpose for a purpose.

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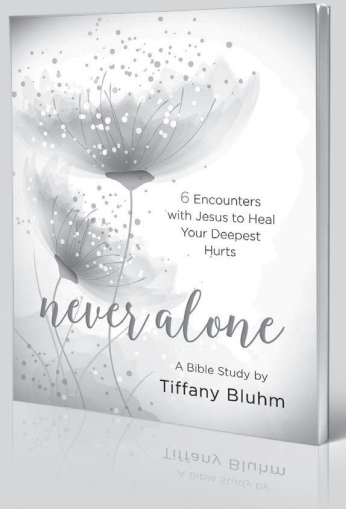
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