

THE WATERMELON LESSON

By Jennie Lovell

A broken watermelon gave me an opportunity to teach—and be taught—about God’s love and the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

My family was asked to bring fruit to a party. So my three children and I went shopping, buying a large watermelon that seemed perfect for the job.

Upon our return home, my children proceeded to bring in our groceries. Somehow, Haven, my youngest, ended up carrying the watermelon. It was much too big and heavy for her to carry, and she could barely get her little arms around it. Just as she stepped into the house, she lost her grip. The watermelon hit the floor and cracked open.

I was angry at first. I thought of the money that would be wasted if the watermelon was inedible. I stepped back from the doorway and struggled to control the fire building inside me. The thought came to me that instead of getting angry, I could take the opportunity to teach my children.

I picked up the split watermelon, rinsed it off, and then sat Haven on the counter beside me. My boys watched closely to see if I was going to lose my temper. I took a deep breath and said to Haven, “How did you feel when you dropped that heavy watermelon?”

Haven looked up at me, her eyes brimming with tears. “I was sad. I knew I let you down.”

I replied, “How is the melon?”

The boys interjected, “It’s busted!”

“Is the fruit still good?”

Haven said, “I think so.”

“Can we save it? Can it be cleaned? Will it still taste the same?”

“Yes!” my children shouted.

I began spooning the watermelon into a bowl. I explained that Heavenly Father knows that we sometimes have challenges or trials that seem too heavy to carry. But we don’t have to

carry them alone. When we ask our Father in Heaven for help, He will help us carry our burden, and our trials will make us stronger. When we make mistakes, He can also help us become clean again. That’s why He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to atone for our sins. There is no burden too heavy that Jesus Christ cannot help us carry. All we must do is repent and rely on Him for strength.

I finished scooping all the watermelon, and Haven quietly asked, “Mom, aren’t you mad at me?”

My eyes filled with tears, and my heart swelled. “No,” I answered. “How can I be mad at you when you were doing your best to help? The Savior can forgive us when we mess up. Just like He can mend what is broken in us, we can fix this watermelon.”

She wrapped her arms around my neck and said, “Thanks, Mom. I love you.”

That watermelon was the sweetest-tasting I have ever eaten. I am so thankful for a merciful Father in Heaven who can turn a broken watermelon into a teaching moment—who can turn anger into love. ■

The author lives in Texas, USA.

