



Joseph's Journey

PART 2: JOSEPH'S CALLING

In Part 1, Joseph Toronto has recently been baptized, and the missionaries have counseled him to travel to Nauvoo. However, Joseph chooses to stay on his ship in Boston Harbor. When a fierce storm blows in and his ship collides with another, Joseph falls overboard.

BY AMY WEIR

(Based on the life of Joseph Toronto)

Why should I desire more than to perform the work to which I have been called? (Alma 29:6).

Joseph kicked his legs and arms and tried to stay afloat in the stormy sea. But not knowing how to swim, he knew he probably wouldn't last long. The rain made it impossible for him to see what had happened to his ship, and the waves kept pushing him deeper under the water. As he waved his arms around, hoping someone would see him, his hand hit something. It was a wooden barrel that must have gone overboard with him. He grabbed it and hung on, knowing that it was his only chance for survival.

After what seemed like several hours, the storm calmed, and Joseph saw his ship coming for him. After his men helped him on board, he went straight to his cabin. He changed into some dry clothes and lay on his bed in exhaustion, thinking about what had happened. He knew that finding the barrel had been a miracle.

Joseph remembered the Bible story of Jonah, the prophet who had run away from what God had commanded him to do. Jonah had tried to sail far away from the wicked people he was supposed to preach the



gospel to, only to be thrown overboard and swallowed by a whale. The whale spat him out on a beach three days later. Jonah repented and went to teach the wicked people.

God saved Jonah from drowning because He had a job for Jonah to do. Did God save Joseph from drowning because Joseph had a job to do? Joseph thought of the missionaries who had wanted him to go to Nauvoo. He thought of how he had stayed in the harbor instead. Joseph asked Heavenly Father for forgiveness, then went on deck as the ship arrived at its destination on the other side of the harbor.

After a few days, Joseph found a buyer for his damaged ship. Along with his life savings, he had \$2,600 in gold coins, which made him a very rich man. But Joseph wasn't tempted to spend the coins on himself. Instead, he put the money in some

small cans, tied them around his waist, and headed for Nauvoo.

It took three weeks of wagon rides and walking to get there. During the hot, rough journey Joseph looked forward to meeting other members of the Church. He imagined Nauvoo as a beautiful community with friendly people who would welcome and accept him.

But when he arrived in Nauvoo, the town was in disarray. The people were poor, and a half-built temple stood at one end of town with hardly anybody working on it. The people were certainly friendly, and they did accept him, but Joseph began to wonder why God wanted him in this broken-down town. He missed his ship and the open water—what was he supposed to do now?

To be continued . . . ●

"The great test of life is to see whether we will hearken to and obey God's commands in the midst of the storms of life. It is not to endure storms, but to choose the right while they rage."⁴

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency

