

**By Weldon Rohner**  
(Based on a true story)

*Pray to thy Father which is in secret;  
and thy Father which seeth in secret shall  
reward thee openly* (Matthew 6:6).

**J**oseph swung at the baseball and missed.  
Again.

“Strike three!” the umpire called. “You’re out.”

Joseph trudged back to his team with his shoulders slumped. How would he ever hit a ball this season? They had only one game left.

“Good try,” his coach said. Joseph shrugged and plopped down on the bench. He was so tired of striking out! He’d worked hard all season long, going to every practice and staying late most days. He even practiced at home whenever he could.

His coach once told him he had one of the best swings on the team. So why couldn’t he hit the baseball?

The next batter from his team swung hard and smashed the ball with a loud crack. Up, up, up it went. A home run.

Joseph sighed. He didn’t need to hit a home run. Just a normal hit. He said a silent prayer to Heavenly Father, asking that somehow he’d be able to hit the ball before the season ended. Tomorrow would be his last chance.

Later that night the missionaries visited Joseph’s house. Mom had signed up weeks ago to have them over for dinner. While they ate, Elder Seeley

*Joseph gripped the  
bat and took a deep  
breath. This was  
his last chance.*

started talking about baseball.

Joseph sat up straight and paid very close attention. Apparently Elder Seeley was some kind of a baseball star back home before his mission. Nobody in Joseph’s family had known that before.

Mom seemed very interested too. She turned to Elder Seeley and asked, “Would it be OK if we all went outside so you could give Joseph a few tips on his swing?”

“Absolutely,” Elder Seeley said.

The moment dinner was done, Joseph raced to get his baseball and bat. Joseph couldn’t wait to see what the missionary might teach him.

Outside, Elder Seeley pitched a few balls and watched Joseph swing. “You’re swinging way too fast,” he said. “Slow it down, nice and easy.”

Elder Seeley also taught Joseph how to grip the bat better and the best height to hold his elbow.

“Let’s see that swing again,” Elder Seeley said and pitched one more time. Joseph swung and heard the crack of the ball hitting his bat. The ball flew over the back fence. He’d done it! He’d actually hit the ball!

Mom and the missionaries cheered.

A peaceful feeling came over Joseph. He was going to hit the ball in the game tomorrow. He just knew it.



# Hoping for a



The next day Joseph stepped up to the batting plate and took a deep breath. He tried to remember everything Elder Seeley taught him.

The first pitch came. He swung and missed.

“Strike one!” the umpire called out.

Joseph didn’t let it bother him. He still had two more strikes.

The next pitch flew out of the strike zone.

“Ball one!” cried the umpire.

Joseph took another deep breath. He could do this. He still felt that same warm feeling inside.

The pitcher let the ball fly. Joseph focused and swung.

His bat smacked hard against the ball and sent it flying. Joseph stared in wonder for a moment as the baseball soared away. Then he dropped the bat and ran toward first base as fast as he could.

A cheer rose from the crowd.

Joseph skidded to a stop on the base and smiled. Heavenly Father had answered his prayer. The answer hadn’t come in the way he’d expected, but Joseph knew Heavenly Father had sent someone to help him. ♦



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