



Now There Is Hope

*Because of what happened on that first Christmas,
I received the ultimate gift.*

By Jessica Martin

It was Christmastime, and I was 17 years old. My parents had divorced, and I had many stresses that I was trying to deal with. Each day it seemed harder to deal with the simple tasks of everyday life. At this time, when hope seemed lost, I found myself at the seminary building. I explained my frustrations to my Father in Heaven on my knees in an empty classroom.

As I spoke to my Heavenly Father in tears, I felt impressed to thank Him for the beauty of the day and even for the struggles I was facing. I also talked with a caring seminary teacher and asked for a priesthood blessing from my bishop. I began to study the scriptures more thoroughly and read other good literature by our modern-day prophets.

Finally, as I was putting up a humble, two-foot-tall Christmas tree in my room, I placed on top of it a shining silver star that my mother had given me. As I placed it

there, I looked and saw a Mormonad poster with a picture of the Savior that simply said, “Now There Is Hope.” I looked from the star and then back to the painting of the Savior. It suddenly made sense to me. Because of what happened on that first Christmas, because of my Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, there was now hope.

I began thinking of all the gifts Heavenly Father had given me, and joy began to fill my heart. I was grateful and began thanking Him for my trials. I began to view my struggles as gifts given to me to strengthen me, and I thanked Heavenly Father for trusting me enough to give me these trials to overcome.

As I listened to the song “Joy to the World,” I let my mind dwell upon the line “Let earth receive her King!” (*Hymns*, no. 201).

I finally started to understand and receive in my heart the gift of Jesus Christ, the Savior, who paid the ultimate price. This is the gift I received that Christmas. **NE**

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