



ABANDONED SEEDS

IN

ROCKY PLACES

*The truck driver drove away angry. Who would
take the time to separate tiny seeds from
gravel and tar?*



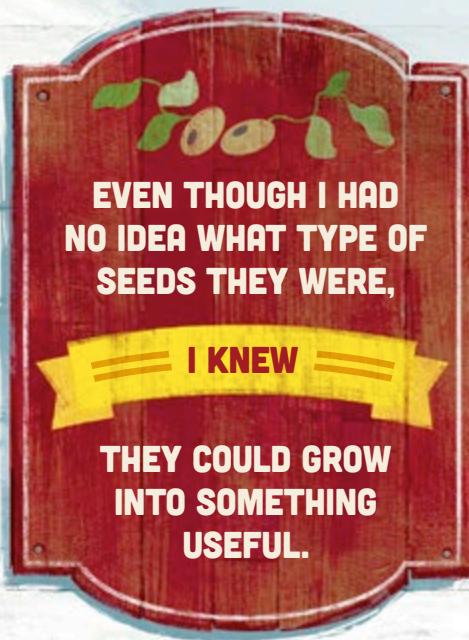
By Elder
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Of the Seventy

One day when I was 14 years old, a loud sound from the street caught my attention. I hurried to investigate and found a truck with huge sacks of seeds lumbering up the road. One of the sacks had tumbled off the truck and burst open.

The recently paved street was covered with tar and fresh gravel. This caused an enormous mess as thousands of seeds mixed with the road material. After the driver stopped and examined the situation, he expressed his frustration and drove away angry. He didn't think the seeds were worth the hassle of picking them up out of the tar and gravel.

For me, though, those discarded seeds were a treasure I couldn't pass up. I lived on a farm. Even though I had no idea what type of seeds they were, I knew they could grow into something useful. So I grabbed a five-gallon bucket and scooped up as many as I could, gravel and all.

I ran home to show my family my newfound treasure. Though we'd never planted string beans before, my dad recognized the seeds for what they were. He walked me to a back corner of our farm. "This is your area now," he said. "Plant those seeds and help them grow."



WORKING THE FARM

I was excited! I'd never had my own area of the farm to work before. That year my little corner was better watered and better weeded than any other part of our entire farm. While the rest of my farm chores still felt like work, taking care of my own corner with the string beans each day felt like fun.

The plants grew and grew. We ended up with so many string beans that we had enough to freeze and eat all year long.

The best part was that I used only a tiny portion of the seeds from my bucket. I had enough seeds in there to keep me going for years. Every year I planted more string beans and every year our family enjoyed a good harvest.

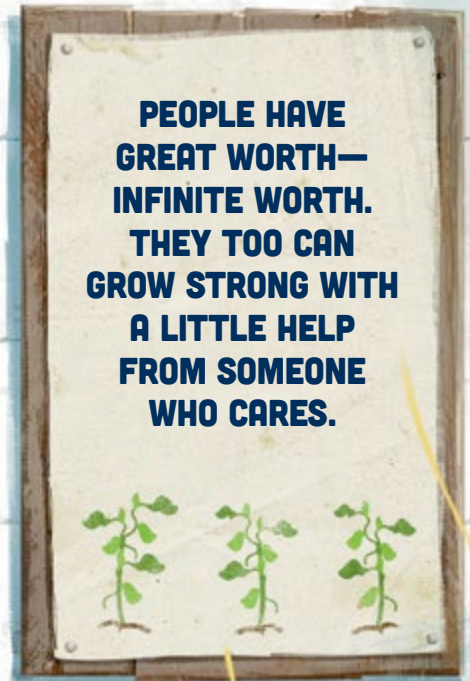
OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

When I was about to leave on my mission, I looked at my bucket of

seeds. The seeds were still mixed in with tar and gravel, but they were still as valuable as ever.

Every seed still had potential. It didn't matter if the seeds were surrounded by tar and gravel or if they were grimy on the outside. The harvest was the same with these seeds as with any other string bean seed. They only needed somebody to see their worth.

Looking down into my bucket, I realized that those seeds were like Heavenly Father's children. Sometimes people "fall off the truck" into rough places and nobody seems to want them. But we all have the same divine potential, no matter our circumstances. We all need to recognize that potential in others and help nurture it along.



SHARPEN YOUR SICKLE



The scriptures teach us to thrust in our sickle with all our might (see D&C 4:4). I used a sickle constantly on our farm. For me, I learned it wasn't enough to only swing a sickle hard. The sickle also had to be sharp in order to cut. If it was dull, I'd spend a lot of effort swinging it without much success.

On the farm, we kept a file on hand to sharpen our sickle every day. In missionary work and indeed in all areas of life, we need to keep our spiritual sickles sharp so that we can achieve our own best potential. Reading scriptures daily, praying, and keeping all other commandments help us stay sharp and useful.

A GREAT HARVEST

Many years later I was reading in Jacob 5 about the allegory of the tame and wild olive trees when I remembered this experience from my youth. In the allegory, the master had a place in “the nethermost part of the vineyard” (Jacob 5:19) that was poorer than the rest.

His servant wondered why they would even want to spend time in that part of the vineyard (see Jacob 5:21), yet the master of the vineyard saw its potential and chose to labor there. These efforts ultimately yielded a great harvest.

Back when I was 14, my corner of the farm also happened to be the poorest on

our property. And yet this corner still yielded a great harvest as a result of the time and effort I spent there working with the abandoned seeds.

The Lord has given each of us a corner of His vineyard to tend, and we are all responsible for our corner. Whether we are full-time missionaries or brand new Beehives, we each have something to take care of. We must learn to recognize the potential in our own corner

of the vineyard, no matter where we might be. We need to help it grow.

We also need to see the worth in those children of God who, at first glance, might seem to be less desirable or who have already been rejected by others. Just like my bucket of castaway seeds, such people have great worth—infinite worth. They too can grow strong with a little help from someone who cares. **NE**

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