

# I Became 14 Again

While on business in Rochester, New York, USA, I decided to make the short drive to Church history sites in Palmyra, about 25 miles (40 km) away. I especially wanted to see the Sacred Grove.

At the time, I struggled with frustrations at both work and home, and I longed for a sacred experience of my own that would confirm to me in some majestic way that Heavenly Father was mindful of me.

This was years before the Hill Cumorah Visitors' Center and the Palmyra New York Temple were built. I parked near the Smith family home, got out of the car, and followed the signs to the Sacred Grove. With a prayer in my heart, I walked along the path through the trees. I pondered as I walked, and I even knelt to pray. I felt calm, but I saw no

pillar of light and felt no overwhelming emotion. My worries and concerns still weighed on my mind.

Somewhat disappointed, I made my way to the reconstructed log home where the Smith family had lived. I imagined them working, reading scriptures, and praying there. I visited the upstairs room and the kitchen, with its brick fireplace, wooden table and chairs, plank floors, and simple furnishings. I was struck by the thought that it was in a home like this that a 14-year-old boy lived when, full of questions, he determined to go and ask of God.

As I stood in the doorway, ready to leave, I looked toward the Sacred Grove. I knew that Joseph Smith had gone into the nearby woods, prayed, and saw God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Suddenly, compassion

for Joseph washed over me. It was as if I was feeling what Joseph had felt before he prayed. I lacked wisdom, but I knew that I could ask of God and receive answers (see James 1:4–5). I remembered how I had prayed with faith as a teenager and felt peace and reassurance. I felt that same hope and love fill my heart. It was as if I was 14 again.

I bowed my head and offered a silent prayer of gratitude. I had received my answer. Heavenly Father *was* aware of me. And if I continued to trust Him, He would continue to respond. ■

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