

A Reservoir of Testimony

During my freshman year of high school, my parents got divorced. For years, I had watched my dad not take the sacrament. I knew he struggled to keep the commandments, but I did not understand the extent or length of those struggles. It was only when my parents told me about his excommunication that my sister and I finally learned the details.

“I hate you!” I yelled over and over, sobbing. I was furious. *How could he do this to our family?* I thought. *How could he lie to us for so long?*

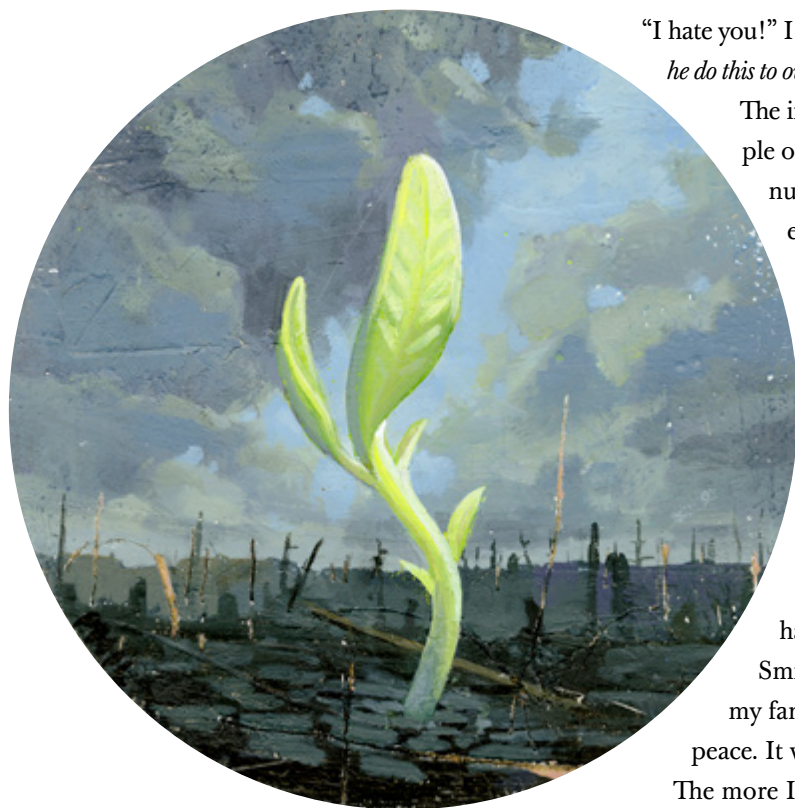
The initial shock and anger didn’t last long. Within a couple of weeks, my anger gave way to numbness. At first, numbness was a relief from the anger and pain I felt, but eventually my relief changed to desperation. I felt my life crashing down around me. More than ever before, I needed to feel connected to heaven. I needed to feel God’s love, guidance, peace, and healing.

Soon, general conference came. During one session, I listened and waited to feel God’s comfort. But it didn’t come. There in the dark chapel, I thought, *I cannot feel the Holy Ghost, but I’m sure He’s here. He has to be here.* As I thought this, I started remembering the many small witnesses I had received that the scriptures were true, that Joseph Smith was a prophet, that Heavenly Father had blessed my family, and that keeping the commandments brought peace. It was as if I had a reservoir of testimony.

The more I reflected on my past spiritual witnesses, the more I realized that even though I desperately wanted to feel the Spirit, it really didn’t matter that I could not feel His influence at that exact moment. I already had a store of quiet, constant witnesses that the gospel was true.

That knowledge sustained me and gave me the desire to continue keeping the commandments even when there seemed to be no immediate payoff. Gradually, I felt Heavenly Father’s and the Savior’s love more in my life. Staying close to Them, even when I couldn’t always feel Them near, brought me an undeniable peace and a stronger testimony of the Savior’s gospel. This continues to influence me now when I face uncertainty or heartache. I know I can trust Heavenly Father and the Savior, and that They will heal, uplift, and strengthen me and each one of us. ■

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