

Samaritan with a Screwdriver

By Heidi Bartle

I was busy gathering my things after teaching a Mia Maid lesson, and my husband, Garry, stood in the back of the room holding our one-year-old boy. Our three-year-old son, Zach, slipped past us into the crowded hall and followed someone toward the meetinghouse doors. Because my husband and I each thought the other had Zach, it took us a few minutes to realize he was missing.

Just as we realized he was gone, Zach appeared at the end of the hall. But something was wrong. His cheeks were red, he had tears streaming down his face, and he was clutching his right hand. Our bishop, who was ushering him toward us, looked concerned. A pit of guilt settled in my stomach. My son had gotten hurt, and I hadn't been there to help him.

The bishop had heard Zach's urgent cries and had hurried to his aid. Zach's predicament was immediately clear, but the solution was not. His fingers had become wedged between the heavy outer door and its frame. Opening or closing the door only exacerbated the injury; the swing of the door further pinched his fingers and pulled his hand, causing significant pain.

As the bishop and a couple in the ward frantically tried to figure out how they could release Zach's fingers, a brother from another ward that met in our building saw what was happening. He took a screwdriver from his pocket and inserted it into the space between the door and its frame. Then, using the screwdriver as a lever, he widened the gap enough to release Zach.

Amid sighs of relief, the brother explained that as he prepared for Sunday services that morning, he experienced what seemed like an odd prompting to bring a screwdriver to church. The impression was so strong and clear that he slipped the tool into the pocket of his dress pants.

This kind act of service resulting from heavenly inspiration touched me deeply and filled my heart with

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gratitude. Heavenly Father was watching over my three-year-old boy and prompted a good brother to respond. ■

In the Shadow of His Wings

By Paul B. Hatch

Having recently completed basic flying instruction in Phoenix, Arizona, I had certified after a few hours of solo flying to take my first solo flight across the state. This would entail a two-hour route from Phoenix to Tucson and back to Phoenix.

Excited by the anticipation of flying by myself 10,000 feet (3,000 m) above the earth and viewing the beauty of the clouds, mountains, valleys, and desert, I thought little



of my inexperience and any possible dangers that might await me.

I checked the weather, filed my flight plan, and gathered a radio, compass, and basic flight instruments. As is common at this stage of flight instruction, I still lacked training in the use of advanced instruments. But the older plane I would be flying had none of the sophisticated instruments that would allow a pilot to fly without visual cues.

I was a little nervous taking off by myself in my small yellow single-engine monoplane, but the flight from Phoenix to Tucson went well. I was thrilled with my new aerial skills.

Elated and confident and with only 120 miles (190 km) to go, I took off

from Tucson for Phoenix late in the afternoon. However, after I was barely airborne, I unexpectedly experienced strong wind currents that made it difficult to control the altitude of my plane. A dust storm suddenly engulfed me, and I could no longer see. Tossed side to side, I lost control and became frantically disoriented and afraid, realizing that I was dangerously close to the Catalina mountain range.

In a panic I thought of my life. I was engaged to be married the following month in the Mesa Arizona Temple. I had served an honorable full-time mission. I had always tried to obey the commandments and listen to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. If I ever needed divine

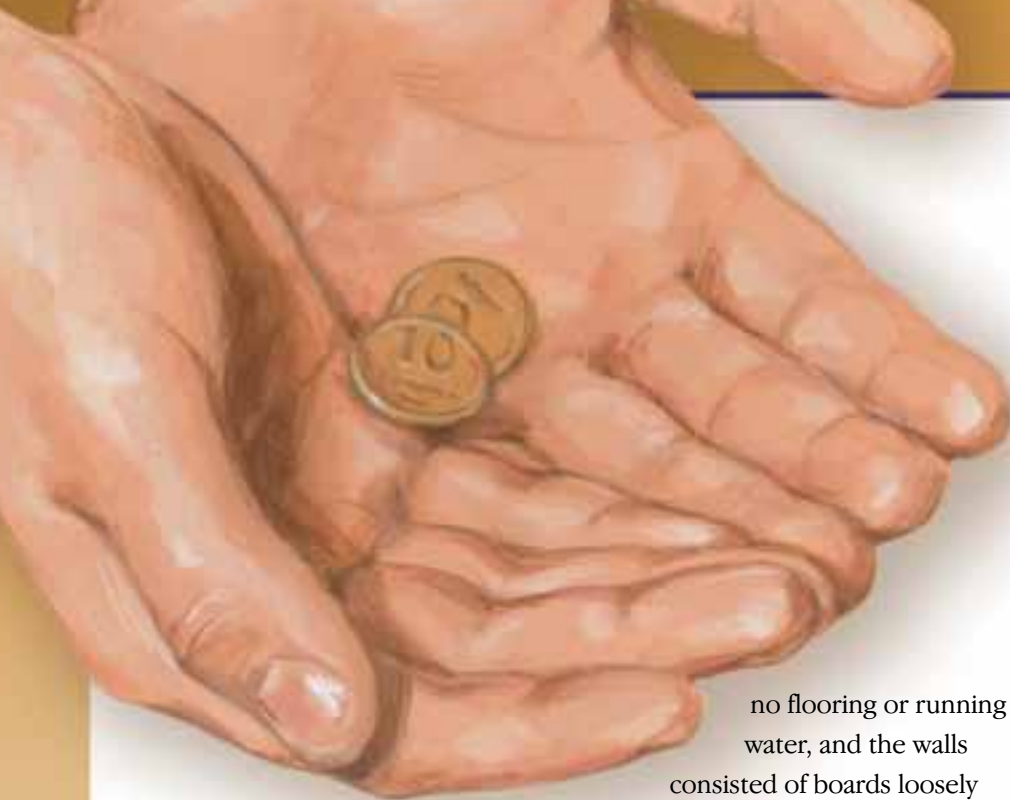
guidance, it was now. Almost despairing, I uttered a silent prayer. The Spirit immediately whispered to me, “Rely on your radio, your compass, and your instrument panel, and drop your altitude.”

I quickly descended several hundred feet. Visibility was still poor, but below me I could make out a highway and railroad tracks. By using my instruments and following visual landmarks, I was able to finally land at the airport in Phoenix after a harrowing two-hour experience.

I will always be grateful for the promptings of the Holy Ghost and the promise in Psalms: “In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge” (Psalm 57:1). ■

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The Muchacho's Mite

By Natalie Ross

My missionary companion and I were deciding where to tract when we spotted a woman entering a home. We were sure she was arriving home to prepare lunch because the suburbs of Buenos Aires, Argentina, were already shutting down for siesta. Before I realized it, my companion was teaching her a gospel principle, and I was testifying of its truthfulness. Narda enjoyed our message and invited us to return the following week.

When we arrived at Narda's home, her five children were sitting around the table waiting for us. Neither parent had full-time employment, and our hearts ached as we realized that they had barely enough to survive. Their humble home had

no flooring or running water, and the walls consisted of boards loosely

hammered together. Their only source of heat was a small single-burner stove.

However poor the family's circumstances, they were rich in a desire to learn more about God. Narda loved and studied the Bible and wanted her children to have a similar foundation. Twelve-year-old Cristian especially enjoyed listening to the missionary lessons. After we left a copy of the Book of Mormon with the family, he eagerly read the first few books. Narda's husband was also interested, but he was shy and listened from the bedroom.

Because of their financial situation, we hesitated to teach them about fast offerings and tithing. We wanted them to have a solid testimony of Jesus Christ and the Restoration before we introduced principles that would require more faith. But because the older children had begun reading

the Book of Mormon and attending church, they had questions that we needed to answer.

"Sister," said Cristian, "at church and in the Book of Mormon, everyone talks about fasting. What does fasting mean?" We taught and testified of the importance of fasting and then silently prayed that the family would accept this commandment.

Cristian later shared his testimony with us: "The other day, my mom gave me some money to buy candy. While walking to the store, I remembered your lesson on fasting, and I wanted to try it. But I only had 20 centavos. I decided to fast anyway and use those 20 centavos as my offering."

Narda discouraged Cristian from contributing such a small sum, but he was determined. He wanted to live

all of God's commandments and give what he could. A few weeks later he and two of his siblings were baptized. His parents joined the Church the following year.

Now whenever I think that I can't afford to give fast offerings, I remember Cristian and his faithfulness, and I realize that I have more than enough to give.

His offering reminds me of the widow's mite (see Mark 12:42-44). It may have been small, but Cristian gave because he truly loved God and wanted to obey. ■

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Did Jesus Really Visit the Americas?

By Carlos René Romero

In 1960 I met a young man at a party who told me that Jesus Christ had visited the Americas after His Resurrection. I found the idea incredible and wanted to know more, so I began searching in libraries and inquiring of the various religious denominations in my hometown of San Miguel, El Salvador.

I searched for almost three years but found nothing. When I mentioned to various religious leaders that I had heard of Christ's coming to the Americas, they told me I had been deceived. Because my search turned up no information, I eventually came to believe they were right.

One day two missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came to my home and said they had an important message for my family. I immediately remembered my previous inquiries and asked them, "Do you know if Jesus Christ came to the Americas?"

One of the young men said, "We bear witness of that."

At that moment I felt a great excitement in my mind and heart, and I asked, "How do you know that?"

He took a book out of his bag and said, "We know Christ came

here because of this book, the Book of Mormon."

What the missionaries taught me during that first discussion troubled me, and I doubted the account of the Prophet Joseph Smith's vision of the Father and the Son. However, the Book of Mormon intrigued me, and the missionaries kept teaching me the lessons.

One afternoon, the elders asked me, "Have you prayed to find out if what we are teaching you is true?"

I told them I had done so but had not obtained an answer.

"You must pray with real intent," they said.

I had been reading the Book of Mormon for several nights and had read about and believed in Jesus Christ's appearance to the Nephites, but I still could not accept Joseph Smith's vision. My internal struggle was terrible.

One night I knelt alone and opened my heart to God. I told Him that I needed to know if He had really manifested Himself to Joseph Smith. If He had, I promised Him I would be baptized into the Church and serve Him all my life.

When I arose early the next morning, the answer came to me through the Holy Ghost. My mind cleared, and my heart filled with peace. From that moment on, I have had no doubts whatsoever that Joseph Smith truly was a prophet of God, that the Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer.

I know that Christ came to the Americas after His Resurrection. My soul delights in this marvelous knowledge, taught to me with certainty by the power of the Holy Ghost. ■