

A BETTER TIME

WITH PRAYER AND THE SCRIPTURES



By Klarie Brown

Over spring break, I got to talk with my sister who is serving her mission in the Idaho Falls Mission. I told her that track was about to start and how excited I was. I told her how badly I wanted to beat the school record for the 1600-meter and 800-meter races.

"I probably won't be able to. The record time is pretty fast," I told my sister. The school record did seem impossible. I started thinking about the one girl I had never been able to beat. Maybe trying to keep up with her or even beating her would be a better goal.

My sister did not answer right away, but she seemed to be smiling through the phone. "I know I'm a missionary," she said. "So you might expect me to give you some kind of a challenge, but I really want you to try something. I want you to try to read your scriptures and pray every day. And if you do, God will bless you to do your best."

"I'll try," I said. I had not really been reading my scriptures every night, and I wasn't quite sure if, or how, reading would help me run.

The next few nights I read, prayed, and went to bed without really thinking about it. One night as I was brushing my teeth, I thought, "I'm not really getting anything out of reading the scriptures." Then I remembered President Russell M. Nelson's invitation to read the whole Book of Mormon and mark all references to Jesus Christ (see "Sisters' Participation in the Gathering of Israel," Oct. 2018 general conference [*Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 69–70]). So I started to mark the references to Christ as I read. I began to get more out of reading and to truly ponder the scriptures.

After 15 consecutive days of reading and praying every night, I had my first track meet. And I was super nervous. My first race was the 4x800-meter run. I was the anchor runner. When I started running the last leg, my team was in 7th place out of 10 teams. We finished in 3rd place. Had I gotten faster?

While I was waiting for the mile, I watched all the other races and prayed that I would do well. When we walked to the starting line, my heart was beating so fast I thought it would jump out of my chest. I prayed again and felt peace. We were all lined up, and I had a flashback from all the mile races I had run in the year before. I would be in first place the whole race, unsure if my pace was fast enough to beat the record. Then on the final stretch, I would get discouraged when a certain girl from another school would sprint ahead of me and take first place. So I decided to try to do that myself this time.

As the gun went off, I went straight behind the girl from the year before. We were in first and second place. My coach was at the 200-meter mark, and she told me my time and encouraged me. I wanted to run up ahead, but I knew that she would pass me on the last stretch if I did. She kept looking back at me like she was afraid of me.

On the last lap, I could hear the girl who was in third place trying to pass both of us. So I bolted. I ran as fast as I could. There were so many people cheering—my parents, teammates, and friends' parents.

When I passed the finish line, the first thing that came to my mind was, "Did I do it?" Then I turned and saw everyone else finish. I looked toward the girl I hadn't been able to beat before. Her eyes were big when she said, "Man, you got so much faster." I had won!

I was so happy. I couldn't believe I had actually done it! Then I realized that I hadn't done it alone. I said a quick prayer to thank Heavenly Father. Taking my sister's challenge helped me to be better at studying the scriptures. And I had a better relationship with Heavenly Father. I had also been able to get faster and smarter about my running. Heavenly Father listens to our prayers. And if we do our part and have faith, He will answer them. **NE**

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