

Put Your Helmet On

In my excitement to ride that four-wheeler, I heard some very clear words of warning.

By Samuel J. Palmer

On a rare break from working on our family farm in southern Idaho, my brother, several of his friends, and I went to a motorcycle park outside of Boise, Idaho. We rode up and down the backcountry on our motorcycle for hours, having a lot of fun. It was a wonderful break from the rigors of our busy summer.

One of my brother's friends had a four-wheeler. At the time, four-wheelers were very expensive, so there were very few of them on the trails. Knowing this was a rare opportunity to ride one, I asked the owner if I could take it for a short ride. He kindly said, "You bet!"

Because we had been taking a short break to eat and have a drink of water, I did not have my helmet on when I asked him if I could ride the four-wheeler, so when he said yes, I excitedly climbed onto it without much thought for safety. I pulled the rip-cord ignition and felt the engine come alive beneath me. I was so excited; this was my first ride on a four-wheeler!

It soon turned into a first for me in learning a lesson I had not anticipated that day. I put the four-wheeler into gear, and it lurched forward as if it were just as excited to have me ride it as I was to be on it. Just as it went forward I heard a voice say to me very clearly, "Put your helmet on." I thought the voice was my brother or maybe one of

his friends. I turned and looked at them, but they were all facing away, sitting on the tailgate of our pickup, talking and laughing, paying no attention to me.

I stopped the four-wheeler, got off, and put on my helmet. I thought very little of the voice and its directions until a short time later. Once I was back on the four-wheeler, with my helmet on, I rode up a ravine to access the trails. I had a blast! It was so much fun. After about 10 minutes I began the descent back down the ravine to my brother and his friends.

On my way down I neglected to pay attention to the ruts carved into the trail from motorcycles that had ridden on it after a rainstorm. Unfortunately, the four-wheeler's right front tire settled into a rut, which made a 45-degree turn to the left of the trail in front of me. Before I could apply the brakes, the four-wheeler pulled hard to the left, but I did not. I flew over the handlebars and landed several feet down the trail. I landed directly on top of my head.

Fortunately, I had not been moving at a very high speed, so the impact was not very painful, nor did I hurt myself in any way. As the four-wheeler sat just off the trail, idling quietly, I pulled my helmet off to inspect the damage. I noticed the top of the helmet was scratched



ILLUSTRATION BY ROGER MOTZKUS

and damaged severely from the impact on the hard trail. In an instant I remembered the voice that had said, "Put your helmet on," and I uttered a quiet prayer of gratitude to my Heavenly Father.

It has been very rare for me to actually hear a voice prompt me, but on that day a voice protected and preserved me. I know it was the Holy Ghost. I do not

know why I was preserved from the harm and pain I might have experienced, but one thing I do know: our Heavenly Father lives and is mindful of all of His children. I know God loves us. I know He loves me. I am deeply grateful for the gift of the Holy Ghost and its protective promptings. **NE**

