

Heaven's Power





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(Based on an experience from
the author's life)

The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven (D&C 121:36).

This really happened here?" Sharon murmured. The bronze statue showed Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery kneeling before John the Baptist to receive the Aaronic Priesthood.

"We don't know *exactly* where the event happened," Dad said, "but we know that Joseph and Oliver were praying somewhere near the river when John the Baptist appeared. The Melchizedek Priesthood was restored later by Peter, James, and John."

Sharon listened to the Susquehanna River gurgling behind the trees and felt warm sunlight shining on her face. A peaceful, happy feeling swelled inside her. She felt that way a lot lately.

She and her family were traveling with a group visiting some Church history sites. She had felt the Spirit in the Sacred Grove, at the Hill Cumorah, and now here in what was once called Harmony, Pennsylvania.

"I believe what happened here," she thought, "but I have a hard time *imagining* it." The word *priesthood* reminded her of her brother passing the sacrament or Dad giving her a blessing, not angels appearing.

As she climbed back into the car, she took one last glance toward the peaceful river and tried to picture the glorious event that had occurred. But it seemed like too much for her mind to grasp.

A week later, the tour group stayed at a campground with a fun playground. Sharon enjoyed running around after a long day in the car, and she hardly noticed when fireflies started coming out.

"It's getting dark. We should probably go in soon," her friend Emily said. "Come push me on the swing one more time."

Sharon agreed. As Emily gained momentum, Sharon pushed harder. "Faster!" Emily giggled.

Suddenly, Emily's little sister Darcy darted through the darkness—right into Emily's path. Emily's feet rammed into Darcy, and she crumpled to the ground.

Emily leaped from the swing and fell beside her motionless sister. "Darcy! Darcy! Are you OK?"

Darcy didn't respond. She looked like a limp potato sack lying on the ground.

Sharon's heart pumped wildly as she tried not to panic. "Stay here!" she told Emily. "I'll go get help."

Sharon found Emily's dad, and they ran back to the swings. Sharon breathed with relief as Darcy opened her eyes and whimpered. Then Darcy clutched her arm and screamed in pain.

"Emily, please go tell Uncle Steve that we need to give Darcy a blessing," Emily's dad said. He scooped Darcy into his arms and hurried toward their campsite.

Emily grabbed Sharon's arm. "Come with me!"

Sharon swallowed the lump in her throat as they explained to Emily's uncle what had happened. It scared her to see adults acting so worried. The three hurried back to Emily's campsite, Sharon silently praying that Darcy would be OK.

When they stepped inside the dimly lit trailer, Sharon saw Darcy lying calmly on the bed. A familiar, peaceful feeling came over her as Emily's dad whispered in Darcy's ear, "Uncle Steve and I are going to give you a blessing."

Sharon folded her arms and closed her eyes while the men placed their hands on Darcy's head. As she

listened to the reverent words, a warm feeling grew stronger and stronger until she was tempted to open her eyes and peek. It felt as though warm sunlight were filling the room.

She remembered standing on the banks of the Susquehanna River the week before, sunlight shining through the trees. She remembered the bronze statue of John the Baptist, Joseph, and Oliver, and suddenly she understood what had happened there. Though she couldn't see angels, she felt heaven's power streaming into the room.

Her heart burst with joy as tears trickled down her cheeks. The priesthood wasn't just something her brother used in church to pass the sacrament. It wasn't just something that helped her dad say comforting

words whenever he gave her a blessing. It was Heavenly Father's glorious power to lead, bless, serve, and perform miracles—all restored through a humble latter-day prophet.

The sacred places Sharon had visited flashed through her mind, including Carthage Jail, where the Prophet Joseph had been martyred. She cried harder as she realized that Joseph Smith had sacrificed everything so that heaven's power could be on earth today.

Emily's dad said, "Amen," and Sharon opened her eyes. She smiled to see she wasn't the only one wiping away tears. Everyone else had felt the power, too.

The next day as Sharon and her family ate breakfast at the picnic table, Emily walked over to their campsite. "Good morning, Emily," Sharon's mom greeted her. "How's Darcy?" Sharon's dad asked. Sharon had told her parents all about what had happened.

Emily's eyes danced. "My parents took her to the hospital to make sure she was OK, and do you know what the doctor said?"

Sharon shook her head.

"He looked at her arm and said that it was broken, but the X-rays proved him wrong. He said he'd never seen bruising like that without a broken bone, and he couldn't understand why hers wasn't broken." Emily smiled knowingly.

Sharon grinned back, grateful that *she* understood why. It all went back to a miraculous event that had happened on the banks of the Susquehanna River—the day the priesthood was restored. ●



"Although you cannot see the power of the priesthood, you can *feel* it, and you can see the results of it. The priesthood can be a guiding and protecting power in your life."

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Aaronic Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 30.