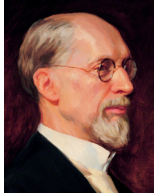


Experiences from the Camp of Israel

Experience No. 1

Elder George A. Smith (1817–75) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles recalled some of the conditions the Camp of Israel faced during its journey:



The Prophet Joseph took a full share of the fatigues of the entire journey. In addition to the care of providing for the Camp and presiding over it, he walked most of the time and had a full proportion of blistered, bloody, and sore feet, which was the natural result of walking from 25 to 40 miles a day in a hot season of the year. But during the entire trip he never uttered a murmur or complaint, while most of the men in the Camp complained to him of sore toes, blistered feet, long drives, scanty supply of provisions, poor quality of bread, bad [corn bread], [spoiled] butter, strong honey, maggoty bacon and cheese, etc. . . . Yet we were the Camp of Zion, and many of us were prayerless, thoughtless, careless, heedless, foolish, or devilish, and yet we did not know it. Joseph had to bear with us and tutor us like children. There were many, however, in the Camp who never murmured and who were always ready and willing to do as our leader desired. (George A. Smith, in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 287–88)

- Why do you think members of the camp responded so differently to the same circumstances?
- What can help us keep a positive attitude when we experienced difficulties in our attempts to follow the Savior?

Experience No. 2

Read Doctrine and Covenants 103:20 and the following statement by President Heber C. Kimball (1801–68) of the First Presidency:

Notwithstanding our enemies were continually breathing threats of violence, we did not fear, neither did we hesitate to prosecute our journey,



for God was with us, and His angels went before us, and the faith of our little band was unwavering. We know that angels were our companions, for we saw them. (Heber C. Kimball, in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 288–89)

- How do you think this blessing would have impacted you if you had been part of the Camp of Israel?
- What are some ways the Lord helps His followers do difficult things today?

Experience No. 3

When the Camp of Israel was only a day's journey from Jackson County, five men with weapons approached them. The men boasted that more than three hundred others were on their way to attack the camp. As camp members discussed what to do, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, "Stand still and see the salvation of God."

Twenty minutes later, a heavy rainstorm ripped through the camp. The storm caused the waters of a nearby river to rise significantly, preventing their enemies from crossing and attacking. Many members of the Camp of Israel found shelter in a small church nearby. After a moment, a rain-soaked Joseph Smith entered the church and exclaimed, "God is in this storm!"

The morning after the storm, members of the camp found their tents and supplies soaked and scattered, but no men had attacked (quoted and summarized from *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*, vol. 1, *The Standard of Truth, 1815–1846* [2018], 203–04).

- If you had been part of the Camp of Israel, how might this experience have impacted your feelings about the Prophet Joseph Smith?
- What can this experience teach you about God during the difficult moments in your life?