

TRACTOR, TRAILER, TRUCK

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About six weeks ago, I brought my 75 horse power Kubota tractor into town from the farm to haul away about 40 cubic yards of dirt that was piled up in Jens Jonsson's drive way. This tractor was purchased from Johnson Tractor of Spanish Fork about a year ago and has a front end loader that will hold about one yard of dirt. It has three times the horse power of my first Kubota that I purchased over ten years ago. It also weighs about three times as much. I'd guess that it weighs about three tons. With the loader, it cost about \$21,000.00. As I have often said, "The only difference between men and boys is in the cost of their toys."

I also purchased a 16 foot tandem axle trailer from Lone Peak Trailer, located at the Point Of The Mountain, to haul this tractor around. Compared to the weight of the tractor, the trailer is too light. I only found this out after buying it. But I have used it to take the tractor into Spanish Fork for service, and to bring it into our shop on Columbia Lane in Provo and, as mentioned above, to bring it into Provo to haul away Jens' dirt. Jens and Helen Jonsson are our good neighbors who live directly across the street from us on Lambert Lane.

Jens had been digging dirt from under his house to provide an outdoor stairwell entrance to his basement and had also been digging dirt away from the southeast corner of his lot to build a large storage shed in this area. He did all this dirt removal with shovel, bucket and wheelbarrow and stacked the dirt up on his concrete driveway.

Hauling all of this dirt away became a larger project than Jens and I had anticipated. The dirt was to be hauled over to the hilly and ravine like area located behind where John O. Beesly used to live. Tony Gleason owns a piece of this ravine and has been only too happy to have clean fill dirt dumped into it in the hope that it will eventually be filled to the point that some apartments could be built there.

I think that Jens had been digging the dirt out for about a month. Looking at the pile, I figured that it could be hauled away in no more than a couple of hours. However, I ended up making forty round trips with the tractor and loader to dispose of it.

About three mornings later, I decided to load the tractor onto the trailer and take it back to the farm. Ida -Rose was not home. I think that she had gone to Dr. Julia Myers office (her neurologist) for a check up. Donna Hill was out on the sidewalk (barefooted as is her custom) and I talked to her for awhile. Then she headed for her house and I mounted the tractor to drive it up the trailer's detachable pair of loading ramps. My Ford F150 truck was located down the hill from our house on the west side of the street at the southern boundary of our 1711 N. Lambert Lane property. Its parking brake was on and the gear shift lever was in park position. The trailer was hooked up behind the truck by means of a heavy duty ball hitch and two protective chains. The road slants rather downward here.

As the front wheels of the tractor arrived at the end of the ramp, the tractor weight on the back of the trailer tilted the front end of the trailer sharply upward and lifted the truck's rear wheels off the ground. This did not surprise me because this had happened every time that I had loaded the tractor onto the trailer. But in previous loadings, the truck and trailer were on level ground and, after tilting upward, the trailer would then dip downward as the tractor progressed into the trailer and then would lower the rear wheels of the truck to the ground.

But this time was different. The truck started moving, rapidly down the street with its rear wheels in the air towards Lambert Lane's intersection with the very busy University Parkway.

The first thing that flashed through my mind was a picture of the truck, trailer, tractor, and me in a bloody pile up in the middle of the intersection having been struck by both east and west bound vehicles as we straddled the Parkway from side to side.

Then I heard a voice, "steer for the trees, steer for the trees", meaning the trees on the south side of Free's lawn. I had no time to think. I merely obeyed. It was the tractor that I was riding and I had hold of its steering wheel but was not really conscience of what was happening. In steering for the trees, the tractor started to climb the right hand side rail of the trailer. The tractor rocked from side to side, nearly tipping over, and in a split second, in no way that I can explain, the front wheels of the truck were pointed uphill on Felker's side of the street and the rear of the trailer was dug into Free's lawn. We had come to a stop straddling Lambert Lane rather than the Parkway. Somehow, the tractor had quit running and was still on the trailer and the rear wheels of the truck were on the ground. I had been miraculously spared from serious injury or death and had not injured or

caused the death of others. Only the Lord and I (and possibly a guardian Angel) witnessed this event.

I am very grateful to Heavenly Father for saving my life in spite of my negligence. Being of an analytical mind, I should have recognized the danger of trying to load the tractor on a hill.

My life has been spared from dangerous situations several times during my nearly 68 years including other times that I have not used good judgement. I often thank Heavenly Father for protecting me from myself especially in instances where I need to repent and not repeat past mistakes.

This recent experience has, again, reinforced my testimony that we have a caring Father in Heaven who loves us. I am grateful to be one of his children. I also know that Jesus is the Christ and our Savior. Joseph Smith is what he claimed to be, the prophet of the restoration. In addition, we are most fortunate of all people to know that we have prophets to day to direct the affairs of the Lord's kingdom on earth.

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