

Lesson Highlights

- *The Lord guides the families of Lehi and Ishmael according to their faith.*
- *Nephi demonstrates unwavering faith by fulfilling the Lord's command to build a ship.*
- *Laman and Lemuel bind Nephi, who shows courage and gratitude despite this trial. After they free him, he guides the ship to the promised land.*

A study of this lesson will inspire us to follow Nephi's example of faith and willing obedience.

Next Week:

Lesson 6:
 "Free to Choose Liberty and Eternal Life",
 2 Nephi 1-2

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Introduction

Read **1 Nephi 3:4** and think about what might have happened if Nephi had responded to the Lord's commandment with one of these statements:

"I don't want to."
 "I'll think about it."
 "I'll try."

How did Nephi respond?
 (1 Nephi 3:7)

"I WILL."

Nephi and his family were blessed as they traveled to the promised land because Nephi continued to have an "I will" attitude; he did not hesitate to obey the Lord's commandments.

The Lord guided the families of Lehi and Ishmael according to their faith and diligence.



Alma 37:38 The "ball, or director" that the Lord gave Lehi was called "Liahona", a compass that the Lord specifically prepared for him.

1 Nephi 16:10,29 The purpose of the Liahona was 1) to point the way they should go and, 2) to give them understanding of the ways of the Lord.

1 Nephi 16:28-29; Alma 37:40 The people needed to give faith, diligence and heed to the directions given in order for the Liahona to work.

Alma 37:41-42 Consequences that ensued when the people were unfaithful and disobedient included: 1) marvelous works of God ceased among them, 2) they did not progress in their journey, and 3) they suffered hunger and thirst while they were delayed or while they wandered without God's guidance.

Like the Liahona, some guides in our lives work according to our faith and diligence. These include the scriptures (Alma 37:38-46); the Holy Ghost; patriarchal blessings; teachings of living prophets; and our conscience.

President Spencer W. Kimball: "The Lord gave to...every person, a conscience which tells him everytime he starts to go on the wrong path. He is always told if he is listening; but people can, of course, become so used to hearing the messages that they ignore them until finally they do not register anymore. ...You must realize that you have something like the compass, like the Liahona, in your own system. Every child is given it. ... If he ignores the Liahona that he has in his own makeup, he eventually may not have it whispering to him. ...Our ship will not get on the wrong course... if we listen to the dictates of our own Liahona, which we call the conscience" (Ensign, Nov. 1976, 79).

1 Nephi 16:18,20 Laman and Lemuel reacted with anger (hardening their hearts) when Nephi broke his bow, and they began to murmur against the Lord and became sorrowful.

1 Nephi 16:20 Even Lehi joined in the murmuring and became sorrowful.

1 Nephi 16:22-23 Nephi encouraged his brethren not to harden their hearts and set an example by fashioning a bow and arrow and seeking guidance from his father.

We should learn from Nephi's response to this challenge. His example can help us when we face challenges, reminding us that we should trust in the Lord, work diligently to overcome the challenges, and avoid complaining against the Lord and His servants.

1 Nephi 16:23 After Nephi made a new bow, he asked Lehi where to go to obtain food.

1 Nephi 16:24-25 Lehi responded to his son's request by inquiring of the Lord.

1 Nephi 16:26-32 As a result of Lehi's humbling himself and turning to the Lord, Nephi was given direction to go forth to the top of a mountain, where he obtained food. We learn from the Lord's dealings with Lehi in this instance that the Lord will forgive and bless us when we humble ourselves and turn to Him.

Speaking of the Liahona, Nephi observed that "by small means the Lord can bring about great things" (**1 Nephi 16:29; see also Alma 37:6-7; D&C 64:33**). Think about how you have seen that this is true in your life. Think about how the knowledge of this principle can help you.



The last words written by Nephi in the Book of Mormon are a fitting description of his true character:

"The Lord commanded me, and I must obey"

(2 Nephi 33:15).

Elder Heber J. Grant said:

"No obstacles are insurmountable when God commands and we obey"

(Conference Report, Oct. 1899, 18).

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the Lehi family's experiences in the wilderness and in crossing the sea.

- Where do you stand on the Nephi/Laman scale?
- What can you do this week to move closer to the Nephi side of the scale?

Nephi demonstrated unwavering faith by fulfilling the Lord's command to build a ship.

1 Nephi 17:8-11, 1 Nephi 17:16-19, 1 Nephi 17:50-51; 1 Nephi 18:1-3; see also **James 2:17-18** Nephi's actions in response to the Lord's command to build a ship inspired this comment by **Elder L. Tom Perry**: *"This is one of the more interesting stories we have in the scriptures because it tells of an instance in which the Lord provided help but then stepped aside to allow one of His sons to exercise his own initiative. I have sometimes wondered what would have happened if Nephi had asked the Lord for tools instead of a place to find the ore to make the tools. I doubt the Lord would have honored Nephi's request. You see, the Lord knew that Nephi could make the tools, and it is seldom the Lord will do something for us that we can do for ourselves"* (Ensign, Nov. 1991, 64).

1 Nephi 17:17-22 Laman and Lemuel's reaction when they saw that Nephi was about to build a ship included murmuring against him, complaining, refusing to labor on the project, doubting his ability to build a ship, refusing to believe that the Lord was directing him, rejoicing as they saw his disappointment, and complaining that they should never have left Jerusalem.

1 Nephi 17:23-44 Nephi rebuked them by reminding them of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. The exodus of Lehi and his family was similar to the exodus of Moses and the Israelites as they followed a prophet to a promised land.

1 Nephi 17:45 Nephi told Laman and Lemuel that they *"were past feeling, that [they] could not feel [the Lord's] words"*.

Laman and Lemuel bound Nephi, who demonstrated courage and gratitude despite this trial. After they freed him, he guided the ship to the promised land.

1 Nephi 18:9 As they sailed toward the promised land, Laman, Lemuel, the sons of Ishmael, and their wives *"began to make themselves merry"*.

1 Nephi 18:10 Nephi's response to their actions was to become concerned that the Lord might smite them for their iniquity.

1 Nephi 18:9 The evil in this merrymaking was that they forgot the Lord and acted with rudeness. Contrast this verse with **D&C 136:28**.

1 Nephi 18:15-20 The power of God, threatening them with utter destruction was the only thing that would convince Laman and Lemuel to release Nephi.

Contrast **1 Nephi 18:20** with **1 Nephi 2:14; 1 Nephi 7:19-21; 1 Nephi 16:39; 1 Nephi 18:4** Laman and Lemuel became more hard-hearted as they rebelled against the Lord, repented, and then continued to rebel.

As you read the following quotation by Elder Packer, think about what it means to feel the words of the Lord, what causes people to become *"past feeling"*, and how you can prepare yourself to feel the words of the Lord. **Elder Boyd K. Packer** taught: *"The Holy Ghost communicates with the spirit through the mind more than through the physical senses. This guidance comes as thoughts, as feelings, through impressions and promptings. It is not always easy to describe inspiration. The scriptures teach us that we may 'feel' the words of spiritual communication more than hear them, and see with spiritual rather than with mortal eyes (see 1 Nephi 17:45)"* (Ensign, Nov. 1989, 14).

1 Nephi 17:46-47 When people harden their hearts against the truth like Laman and Lemuel, they are in danger of being cast off by the Lord.

1 Nephi 17:49 Nephi urged his brothers not to murmur against their father. Think about how murmuring affects your family. Then consider, if it is a problem that affects you, how you might overcome the practice of backbiting and speaking against family members.

1 Nephi 18:1-3 Nephi continued to pray for guidance as he built the ship.

1 Nephi 18:1,3-4 The Lord answered his prayers by showing him how to work the timbers to build a fine ship and by touching his brethren to help them repent.

D&C 82:7 The danger of returning to the same sin over and over again is that the Lord will hold us accountable for all instances of that sin--even those we had previously sought to repent of.

1 Nephi 18:21-25 The Lord blessed the people after Laman and Lemuel repented and loosed Nephi so that they could continue to sail to the promised land, where they landed, planted, and prospered.

1 Nephi 16:18-20,34-36; 1 Nephi 17:21 As the people traveled through the wilderness and across the sea, suffering, hardship and afflictions led many of them to murmur.

1 Nephi 18:16 Nephi's attitude was exemplary during these difficult times. Even when those around him complained against God, Nephi never wavered in his obedience and his love for the Lord.