

BM#05 "Hearken to the Truth and Give Heed Unto It"
1 Nephi 16-22

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I. Introduction

In this lesson we will address the challenges that Lehi and his company experienced as they continued their journey in the wilderness. We will address the setbacks they encountered that try their faith, as well as the blessings they received. The setbacks included the breaking of Nephi's bow; the death of Ishmael; and, the continued murmuring of his two brothers. The blessings of the Lord included the Liahona, blessings of their raw food; and the Lord instructing Nephi how to build a ship. The blessing of having the scriptures [Brass plates] served as a source of comfort and strength to the group. Nephi especially drew strength from the words recorded by Isaiah.

II. 1 Nephi 16

In this chapter, we learn how the Lord guided the families of Lehi and Ishmael according to their faith and diligence in keeping the commandments.

The four brothers, along with Ishmael's family, have returned and the weddings have occurred. (Thanks to Zoram, all of Ishmael's daughters now have mates.) Gratitude has been expressed to the Lord for the arrival of Ishmael and his family and now the families are ready to leave the Valley of Lemuel and proceed on their journey.

Joseph Fielding Smith and Robert L. Millet state,

"[t]he Lord [had] commanded Lehi to commence his journey into the wilderness the next morning,...[however] the Lord, who consistently unfolds the destiny of men in piecemeal

fashion, did not give him the direction he should pursue. This undoubtedly became a matter of fervent prayer on Lehi's part during the night hours. We can but imagine his astonishment and pleasure the next morning upon finding in his doorway the brass ball of 'curious' (i.e. skillful) workmanship which would become his compass throughout his journey to the promised land. This seeric device...was [however]...not a compass in the conventional sense." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol.1.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987, [11th Printing, 1999], 124).

In the Dictionary of the Book of Mormon, written by George Reynolds, the "Liahona" [Alma 37:38] is contrasted with the familiar mariners compass.

"The [spindles on the brass ball] pointed the way that Lehi's company should travel while the needle in the mariner's compass points to the north. The one showed the way Lehi should go (1 Nephi 16:10), the other informs the traveler which way he is going. The one was especially prepared by the Lord for Lehi and his companions and was used through faith only (1 Nephi 16:29; Alma 37:40); the other can be used by all men, whether believers in the true God, pagans or infidels. At times, also, writing would miraculously appear...giving directions (1 Nephi 16:29) or reproving for sin as the company most needed (1 Nephi 16:26-27)." (*A Dictionary of the Book of Mormon.* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1891, [Fourth Edition, 1954], 170 [Scripture reference added]).

The unique quality of faith upon which the Liahona operated acted to facilitate or delay their journey according to their response to its guidance and direction.

Alma 37:40-42

40 And it [Liahona] did work for them according to their faith in God; therefore, if they had faith to believe that God could cause that those spindles should point the way they should go, behold, it was done; therefore they had this miracle...

41 ...[If] they were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey;

42 Therefore, they tarried in the wilderness, or did not travel a direct course, and were afflicted with hunger and thirst, because of their transgressions.

In B.C. 73, more than five hundred years later, the Prophet Alma, will make direct reference to Lehi, his company, and the Liahona, as he taught his son, Helaman, and us.

Alma 37:43-46

43 And now, my son, I would that ye should understand that these things are not without a shadow; for as our fathers were slothful to give heed to this compass (now these things were temporal) they did not prosper; even so it is with things which are spiritual.

44 For behold, it is as easy to give heed to the word of Christ, which will point to you a straight course to eternal bliss, as it was for our fathers to give heed to this compass, which would point unto them a straight course to the promised land.

45 And now I say, is there not a type in this thing: For just as surely as this director did bring our fathers, by following its course, to the promised land, shall the words of Christ, if we follow their course, carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise.

46 O my son, do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way; for so was it with our fathers; for so was it prepared for them, that if they would look they might live; even so it is with us. The way is prepared, and if we will look we may live forever.

Will we be able to profit from the experience of Lehi and his group as they followed the Liahona while traveling in the wilderness as we make the journey to our heaven home by following the word of Christ? Or will we be slothful and neglect the promptings of the spirit? Spencer W. Kimball reminds each of us that the Lord has given us a Liahona of our own.

Spencer W. Kimball states,

"The Lord gave to...every person, a conscience which tells him every time he starts to go on the wrong path. He is always told if he is listening; but people can, of course, become so use to hearing the messages that they ignore them until finally they do not register anymore.

"You must realize that you have something like the...Liahona, in your own system. Every child is given it. When he is eight years of age, he knows good from evil, if his parents have been teaching him well. If he ignores the Liahona that he has in his own makeup, he eventually may not have it whispering to him. But if we will remember that every one of us has the thing that will direct him aright, our ship will not get on the wrong course and suffering will not happen...if we listen to the dictates of our own Liahona, which we call the conscience." ("Our Own Liahona," in *Ensign*, November 1976, 79).

After the group had been travelling in "nearly a south-southeast direction," having departed from a place "we did.. call Shazer (1 Nephi 16:13), an event occurred that had an important effect upon all concerned.

1 Nephi 16:18, 20

18 And it came to pass that as I, Nephi, went forth to slay food, behold, I did break my bow, which was made of fine steel; and after I did break my bow, behold my brethren were angry with me because of the loss of my bow, for we did obtain no food.

20 And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael did begin to murmur exceedingly, because of their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness; and also my father began to murmur against the Lord his God; yea, and they were all exceedingly sorrowful, even that they did murmur against the Lord.

According to the scriptures, for the first time, Father Lehi also began to murmur, along with Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael. The loss of food had an affect on stalwart Lehi. The focus of their murmuring was the Lord.

To add to their adversity, the record records says that the bows of "my brethren...[also] lost their springs, it began to be exceedingly difficult, yea, insomuch that we could obtain no food." (1 Nephi 16:21).

Nephi "did speak much unto my brethren, because they had hardened their hearts again, even unto complaining against the Lord their God" (1 Nephi 16:22).

Marion D. Hanks states,

"This situation is sometime present in almost every business, every college, every governmental unit in the land, in many homes, in churches, where there is a crown prince and heir apparent, the boy who is ready to step up. Lehi was the prophet, but he was old. Nephi had already been designated to succeed. He had seen angels and had talked with the spirit of the Lord. He had had marvelous experience. The time was here, now, for him to take over—his dad was wavering. The old man had lost it. What does [Nephi] do?" ("Steps to Learning," in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year*, May 4, 1960, 7)

1 Nephi 16:23

23 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and arrow, with a sling and with stones. And I said unto my father: Whither shall I go to obtain food?

Marion D. Hanks continues,

"It is a simple thing, isn't it? This is what Goethe meant when he said, 'If you treat an individual as he is, he will stay as he is. But if you treat him as if he were what he could be and ought to be, he will become what he ought to be.' This means that Nephi went to his father and said, 'Dad, the Lord has blessed you. You are his servant. I need to know where to go to get food. Dad, you ask him, will you?' Oh, he could have gone to his own knees. He could have taken over.

"I count this one of the really significant lessons of life in the book, and I repeat, the pages are full of them. A son who had strength enough, and humility enough and manliness enough to go to his wavering superior and say, 'You ask God, will you?' because somehow he knew this is how you make men strong, that wise confidence in men builds them. Lehi asked God and God told him, and Lehi's leadership was restored." ("Steps to Learning," in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year*, May 4, 1960, 7)

Lehi responds to the admonition of his son and inquires of the Lord.

1 Nephi 16:24-27, 29

24 And it came to pass that he [Lehi] did inquire of the Lord, for they had humbled themselves because of my words; for I did say many things unto them in the energy of my soul.

25 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father; and he was truly chastened because of his murmuring against the Lord, insomuch that he was brought down into the depths of sorrow.

26 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord said unto him: Look upon the ball, and behold the things which are written.

27 And it came to pass that when my father beheld the things which were written upon the ball, he did fear and tremble exceedingly, and also my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and our wives.

29 And there was also written upon them [ball] a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it. And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things.

As Nephi sought the counsel of his father, Lehi, in turn, sought direction from the Lord and was duly chastised for his murmuring, despite his prior humbling in response to Nephi's previous words of admonition. Lehi repented and the Lord, in turn, gave the answer to Nephi's inquiry.

Nephi goes forth in faith and was able to slay sufficient wild beasts to meet the needs for the families.

1 Nephi 16:32

32 And it came to pass that I did return to our tents, bearing the beasts which I had slain; and now when they beheld that I had obtained food, how great was their joy! And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord, and did give thanks unto him.

An important lesson had been learned. Despite the adversity we may experience, it is important that we do not complain against the Lord. If we do, it is as if we have cut off the

very limb upon which we are standing. The Lord will be displeased with us and we may expect that he will chastise us accordingly.

The record notes that they had travelled for "many days" (1 Nephi 16:33), when another event occurs at a place called Nahom, that again lead to the murmuring of those among the group. Despite the Lords continued love and patience, it is amazing how quickly we forget the blessing He bestows on us.

1 Nephi 16: 34-36

34 And it came to pass that Ishmael died, and was buried in the place which was called Nahom.

35 And it came to pass that the daughters of Ishmael did mourn exceedingly, because of the loss of their father, and because of their afflictions in the wilderness; and they did murmur against my father, because he had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem, saying: Our father is dead; yea, and we have wandered much in the wilderness, and we have suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and after all these sufferings we must perish in the wilderness with hunger.

36 And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me; and they were desirous to return again to Jerusalem.

When we experience the harsh realities of life, including starvation and death of loved ones, many of us are prone to blame others for our circumstances. Somehow we are under the impression that when life gets difficult, that it is someone else's fault. It is as if we are saying, "Someone must be to blame for our circumstances." It is not unusual that during these times, God is also included on the list. It is striking to me that one name is often omitted from the list. It is our own name. While it is true that during our lives, events occur that are outside of our control, but in many circumstances, the event is the direct result of our having made bad choices. Certainly the death of Ishmael was an event outside of their control, but the response of many in the group was not. Ishmael, like each of the others, had made the decision to leave Jerusalem. He understood the wickedness that was present and the prophets that Jerusalem was going to be destroyed and that many would be taken into captivity. Each had made a choice to

follow the counsel of Lehi and depart from the city. This truth could not be ignored. In this circumstance, no one was to blame except themselves. However, Laman and Lemuel, with the additional support of the sons of Ishmael, wanted someone to pay for their suffering.

1 Nephi 16:37-38

37 And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael: Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren.
38 Now, he says that the Lord has talked with him, and also that angels have ministered unto him. But behold, we know that he lies unto us; and he tells us these things, and he worketh many things by his cunning arts, that he may deceive our eyes, thinking, perhaps, that he may lead us away into some strange wilderness; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure. And after this manner did my brother Laman stir up their hearts to anger.

How tragic it is when we reach the point in our psychic that our irrational anger becomes projected upon another individual or group. Like the scapegoat in Moses' day, they now become the perpetrator of all our unhappiness. When this was carried to the extreme, homicide become a real possibility. It seems that Laman had now reached this point in his rage.

Fortunately for both Lehi and Nephi, the Lord was watching over his servants and would not allow them to be harmed.

1 Nephi 16:39

39 And it came to pass that the Lord was with us, yea, even the voice of Lord came and did speak many words unto them, and did chasten them exceedingly; and after they were chastened by the voice of the Lord they did turn away their anger, and did repent of their sins, insomuch that the Lord did bless us again with food, that we did not perish.

It appears that nothing short of hearing the voice of the Lord, his chastisement, and the restoration of food, was sufficient to bring them once again to repentance.

III. 1 Nephi 17

The record states that from this point the families are no longer traveling in a south-southeastern direction, but are traveling in a "nearly eastward" course of travel.

Also, the record indicates a change in attitude even their was no outward change in their circumstances.

1 Nephi 17:1-2

1 ..And we did travel and wade through much affliction in the wilderness; and our women did bear children in the wilderness.

2 And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, our women did give plenty of suck for their children, and were strong, yea, even like unto the men; and they began to bear their journeyings without murmurings.

It is noteworthy that even though they continue to experience "much" afflictions in the wilderness and "did live upon raw meat," the women had sufficient milk for their children and also became strong "even like unto the men," something else occurred. They bore their afflictions "without murmurings" (1 Nephi 17:1-2). It appears that everything had remained the same, except they stopped murmuring, and when they did, things improved.

1 Nephi 17:3

3 And thus we see that the commandments of God must be fulfilled. And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them; wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness.

It would appear from Nephi's words, that "to murmur," at least for them, was to be guilty of breaking one of God's

commandments. Therefore, when they stopped murmuring, God was then able to greatly bless them.

It would appear that the noun, "Murmur", covers a continuum of emotional objections or complaining. It includes the occasional, "its too hot; its too cold," to the extreme of wanting to put an individual to death. Certainly, when it become habitual, and moves into the range of "evil speaking of the Lord's anointed," we have already crossed the line. We are now guilty of having broken one of the Lord's commandments. The lesson that Laman and Lemuel taught each of us is that our words that begin with occasional objection, unchecked, can result in our committing even more serious sins.

1 Nephi 17:4

4 And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness.

If one were to transverse the route that is believed to be the route that Lehi and his group travelled, all things considered, it would take considerably less than eight years to complete. This is similar to the distance the Israelites traveled from Egypt to the Jordan River in Israel. It could have easily been completed in less than forty years. However, it was not the distance in miles, but the attitude of the people that required the extended period on the road. This was true for both groups.

Finally, Lehi and his company, reach the land, they called "Bountiful, because of its much fruit and also wild honey; and all these things were prepared of the Lord that we might not perish" (1 Nephi 17:5). Nephi states that they had suffered in their travel, "many afflictions and much difficulty, yea, even so much that we cannot write them all, we were exceedingly rejoiced when we came to the seashore" (1 Nephi 17:6). It is here they will set up camp to rest before they continued their journey.

Nephi is directed by the Lord to "Arise, and get thee into the mountain," and "I arose and went up into the mountain, and cried unto the Lord" (1 Nephi 17:7).

It is while Nephi is on the mountain that he receives a directive from the Lord that will bring both suffering and challenge to the families.

1 Nephi 17:8-10

8 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people across the waters.

9 And I said: Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me?

10 And it came to pass that the Lord told me whither I should go to find ore, that I might make tools.

To state that Nephi's response to the Lord is uncommon is an understatement. What he does not say, is what many would have said. "I have never built a ship. I don't know the first thing about ship building. This ship has to be sufficiently sea worthy to be able to travel across the sea. If it leaks, all will perish. Isn't there another way for you to get us to the promised land?"

The faith and trust Nephi exhibits in his response to the directive of the Lord, sets him apart as truly one of the Lord's prophets, and as an example to each of us. His response to the Lord's request is simply "Where shall I go to find ore to make the tools so I can build the ship." Nothing more. No excuses. No questions expressing doubt. No complaining. Unlike Nephi, I fear that in this regard, I still have some qualities of Laman and Lemuel that I must overcome. Nephi's familiar, and yet silent words to the Lord's directive speak volumes, "I will go and do" (1 Nephi 3:7).

L. Tom Perry states,

"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 [or even more important the Lord knew that Nephi could build a ship!], and it is seldom the Lord will do something for us that we can do for ourselves.

"The Lord does help [He would provide the plans and the technical knowledge in order to build the ship] when we go to him in times of need, especially when we are committed to His work and respond to His will. But the Lord only helps those who are willing to help themselves. He expects

His children to be self-reliant to the degree they can be." ("Becoming Self-Reliant," in *Ensign*, November 1991, 64).

Nephi cannot build the ship without the help of his brethren, nor should he have to do all the work himself.

1 Nephi 17:17-18

17 And when my brethren saw that I was about to build a ship, they began to murmur against me, saying: Our brother is a fool, for he thinketh that he can build a ship; yea, and he also thinketh that he can cross these great waters.

18 And thus my brethren did complain against me, and were desirous that they might not labor, for they did not believe that I could build a ship; neither would they believe that I was instructed of the Lord.

In typical Laman fashion, with support from Lemuel, as well as the sons of Ishmael, they belittled Nephi. They focus only on his inexperience in building a sea worthy ship, thereby manifesting their lack of belief he was instructed by the Lord. They are deficient in that which Nephi had obtained: personal faith and trust in the Lord.

When they observed that the "hardness of their hearts" causes Nephi to sorrow, they became even more insolent. They continued, "We knew that ye could not construct a ship, for we knew that ye were lacking in judgment; wherefore, thou canst not accomplish so great a work. And thou are like unto our father, led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart" (1 Nephi 17:19-20).

Their taunting continued as they recall their hardships in the wilderness, including the suffering of their wives in bearing children, even to the point of saying, "it would have been better that they had died before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions" (1 Nephi 17:20). Their ridicule continued with "these many years we have suffered in the wilderness...we might have enjoyed our possession and the land of our inheritance...And we know that the people...in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments...and our father hath [miss]judged them, and hath led us away because we would hearken unto his words;" (1 Nephi 17:21-22).

To state that Nephi had no experience in building a ship and that they suffered greatly while traveling in the wilderness are the only facts in their pitiful argument. The balance is based on lies that they offer in order to defend their own sinful behavior. They are amongst those of the world whose temporal possessions mean everything to them. They subscribe to the hedonistic lifestyle that life should be one party after another. They are in complete denial of the wickedness that existed in Jerusalem because of their being wicked themselves. They choose to call evil, good and good, evil. While Lehi did strongly encourage them to depart from Jerusalem with the rest of the family, they have forgotten that when they returned to get Ishmael and his family, Nephi gave them the opportunity to return to Jerusalem. They did not go. Their response instead, at that time was to want to kill him, and only the pleading of two members of Ishmael's family and their mother had softened their hearts. They even asked Nephi to forgive them. (See 1 Nephi 7:15-20). The truth is that they had chosen not to return to Jerusalem.

Nephi attempts to enlighten his brethren by referring to their leaving Jerusalem to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. He stated: (1) The Israelites "would [not] have been led out of the hands of the Egyptians if they had not hearkened unto the words of the Lord? (1 Nephi 17:23); (2) They would [not] have been led out of bondage, if the Lord had not commanded Moses that he would lead them out of bondage?" (1 Nephi 17:24); and, (3) "You know that they were in bondage[and]...they were laden with tasks that were grievous to be borne; wherefore, ye know that it must be a good thing for them that they should be brought out of bondage" (1 Nephi 17:25)."

Nephi listed the miracles that accompanied the Israelites as they departed from Egypt. These included: (1) The parting of the waters of the Red Sea; (2) The drowning of the armies of the Pharaoh when they attempted to follow them; (3) They were fed with manna in the wilderness; and, (4) Water was miraculously provided by God when Moses struck a rock. (See 1 Nephi 17:26-29).

"Notwithstanding they being led by the Lord, their God, their Redeemer," by both day and night, the children of Israel "hardened their hearts and blinded their minds, and reviled against Moses and against the true and living God" (1 Nephi 17:30). Next, "after they had crossed the river

Jordan he did make them mighty unto the driving out of the children of the land, yea, unto the scattering them to destruction" (1 Nephi 17:32).

Nephi reminds his brothers of this important truth.

1 Nephi 17:35

35 Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But behold, this people [those whose lands they conquered] had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fullness of the wrath of God was upon them; and the Lord did curse the land against them, and bless it unto our fathers; yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and he did bless it unto our fathers unto their obtaining power over it.

When the people are righteous, the Lord will bless them. However, we they "reject every words of God," they are then "ripe in iniquity," and face destruction by the Lord.

1 Nephi 17:41

41 And he did straiten them in the wilderness with his rod; for they hardened their hearts, even as ye have; and the Lord straitened them because of their iniquity..

Joseph Fielding Smith and Robert L. Millet state,

"To 'straiten' is to make narrow. The Lord, by the 'rod of [his] mouth' (D&C 19:15), straitens Israel in order that they might walk in that path which is straight and narrow." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol.1*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987, [11th Printing, 1999], 136).

God, in his infinite patience, offered Israel and us, the opportunity to make the corrections necessary in our lives to be obedient to His commandments. He, through his infinite knowledge, knows that as we keep the commandments we will be blessed. If we choose to act in rebellion against his counsel, we, like those before us, will eventually suffer destruction. It is this lesson that Nephi was trying to convey to his brethren.

Nephi reminded them of the Lord's effort to chasten Israel by reminding them of the time that God sent "fiery flying serpents" upon them. When they were bitten, they became extremely ill, death followed. (See 1 Nephi 17:41). The Lord instructed Moses to make a brazen serpent symbolic of Jesus Christ, and those who looked, were healed. (See Numbers 21:6-9). Alma, a prophet of ancient America, reminds us that the brazen serpent was symbolic of Jesus Christ. If we turn our hearts to him and his atonement, we may be spiritually saved and receive eternal life. (See Alma 33:18-22).

Nephi then states this sad conclusion regarding many of the children of Israel, "the labor which they had to perform was to look; and because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished" (1 Nephi 17:41).

Nephi states that the people in Jerusalem, if they have not already been destroyed, will be and all but a few will survive and they will be led away into captivity. (See 1 Nephi 17:43.) Nephi now speaks his harshest words yet regarding the need for his brethren to repent or face being cast off forever.

1 Nephi 17:44-45, 47

44 Wherefore, the Lord commanded my father that he should depart into the wilderness; and the Jews also sought to take away his life; yea, and ye also have sought to take away his life; wherefore, ye are murderers in your hearts and ye are like unto them.
45 Ye are swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder.

47 Behold, my soul is rent with anguish because of you, and my heart is pained; I fear lest ye should be cast off forever. Behold, I am full of the Spirit of God, insomuch that my frame has no strength.

Nephi gave to his brethren the words the Lord would have him speak in order to bring his brethren to repentance. Their response was not to bend their will to the Lord, but instead to kill his messenger! They were angry with Nephi, and thought to kill him by drowning him in the sea; and they approached him that they might accomplish their desire. (See 1 Nephi 17:48.)

Nephi tells them that he was full of the Spirit of the Lord and "whoso shall lay his hands upon me shall wither even as a dried reed" (1 Nephi 17:48.) They withdraw from him. He then reminds them of the power that God has and the strength of his faith, that he can build the ship. (See 1 Nephi 17:50-51.) Nephi now concludes speaking with them.

1 Nephi 17:52

52 And it came to pass that I Nephi, said many things unto my brethren, insomuch that they were confounded and could not contend against me; neither durst they lay their hands upon me nor touch me with their fingers, even for the space of many days. Now they durst not do this lest they should wither before me, so powerful was the Spirit of God; and thus it had wrought upon them.

Surely, Nephi's life was preserved by the power of the Lord and by his faith in preventing his brethren from acting against him.

As time passed, Nephi was instructed by the Lord to reach out his hand toward his brethren and the Lord would shake them. Acting upon the direction of the Lord, Nephi does as the Lord instructed him. This is their response.

1 Nephi 17:55

55 And now, they said: We know of a surety that the Lord is with thee, for we know that it is the power of the Lord that has shaken us. And they fell down before me, and were about to worship me, but I would not suffer them, saying: I am thy brother, yea, even thy younger brother; wherefore, worship the Lord thy God, and honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee.

This experience was of sufficient power and impact upon them to convince his brethren to now assist him in building the boat. It is noteworthy that the words of Nephi, even quoting from the scriptures, were not sufficient to humble them. It took an outward demonstration of the Lord's power, confirming that Nephi was his servant, to bring about their cooperation. Nephi's statement regarding his brethren was true when he said, "Ye are past feeling, that ye could not feel his words [scriptures];" (1 Nephi 17:45). Only when the Lord shook them, were they able to recognize the Lord's power!

IV. 1 Nephi 18

Finally the ship is finished. It was unique for it was "not built after the manner of men; but [Nephi] did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown me" (1 Nephi 18:2). It is a testament to each of us that when we are willing to accept a calling from the Lord, that he will bless our effort so that we might successfully complete the responsibility he has given us. All the Lord needs is our willingness to follow his directions, and he will then do all the rest. Note the response of his brethren.

1 Nephi 18:4

4 ...after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine; wherefore they did humble themselves again before the Lord.

The voice of the Lord came to Lehi, "that we should arise and go down into the ship" (1 Nephi 18:5). All their provisions were aboard and the families, including two sons, Jacob and Joseph who had been born in the wilderness, set sail to the promised land.

Unfortunately, after the ship had been driven for many days, my brethren and the sons of Ishmael, "began to make themselves merry, insomuch that they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness, even that they did forget by what power they had been brought thither; yea, they were lifted up unto exceeding rudeness" (1 Nephi 18:9).

Bryan Richards states,

"The sin which brought this punishment to Lehi's family was the rebellious spirit and exceeding rudeness that they exhibited. This term, 'exceeding rudeness,' may be unusual for us but probably conveys a disrespect for God, a lewdness of speech and action, and a selfish, indulgent spirit. In this context, it could be used to accurately describe the tone and content of many recent TV programs and movies—'exceeding rudeness,' with respect to God. We must be careful, therefore, that we don't force the Spirit to leave us because of the things we watch in our homes. If we fill our minds with the 'exceeding rudeness' of today's entertainment, our spiritual compass will cease to work." (www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/1Nephi-18).

When Nephi began to speak to them, once again they became angry with him and stated, "We will not that our younger brother shall be a ruler over us" (1 Nephi 18:10). They then bound him with cords and treated him with much harshness. The response of the Lord was swift to their actions, the compass ceased to work and a great and terrible storm arose. The storm continued for four days, before the brethren "began to see that the judgments of God were upon them, and that they must perish save that they should repent of their iniquities" (1 Nephi 18:15). Finally, they loosed the bonds with which he had been bound.

During this time, his father and mother had sought Nephi's release, but to no avail. Also the pain of his younger brothers as well as the pleadings of Nephi's wife and children did not have any effect upon them.

1 Nephi 18:20

20 And there was nothing save it were the power of God, which threatened them with destruction, could soften their hearts; wherefore when they saw that they were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea they repented of the thing which they had done, insomuch that they loosed me.

Nephi response to his brother's actions toward him is exemplary for each of us when we are in the depths of our trials.

1 Nephi 18:16

16 Nevertheless, I did look unto my God, and I did praise him all the day long; and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine afflictions.

Finally having sailed "for the space of many days," they arrived at the promised land. The land was fertile and their seeds grew abundantly. They found animals upon the land, including the cow and the ox, and the ass and the horse, and the goat, and the wild goat, and all manner of wild animals along with all manner of ore, both of gold, and of silver, and of copper. (See 1 Nephi 18:25.)

V. 1 Nephi 19

Nephi received a commandment from the Lord. He was to:

1 Nephi 19:1-2

1 ...wherefore I did make plates of ore that I might engraven upon them the record of my people. [This record will be known as the Large Plates of Nephi]...And upon the plates which I made I did engraven the record of my father, and also our journeying in the wilderness, and the prophecies of my father; and also many of mine own prophecies have I engraven upon them.
2 And I knew not at the time when I made them that I should be commanded of the Lord to make these plates; wherefore, the record of my fathers, and the more part of our proceedings in the wilderness are engraven upon those first plates of which I have spoken..."

Nephi was later commanded to make a second group of records know as the Small plates of Nephi which contained the more spiritual events and doctrine. When the 116 pages were lost, they contained the translation that Martin Harris and Joseph Smith had made from the Large Plates. Thus, under the Lord's direction, Nephi had compiled two records that covered the same period of time, with the small plates containing the more spiritual record. Joseph was commanded not to re-translate the Large Plates, but instead to translate the record found on the Small plates to replace the pages that had been lost.

Now Nephi makes reference to the very God of Israel whom men trample under their feet, who will be born upon the

earth, "according to the words of the angel, in six hundred years from the time my father left Jerusalem" (1 Nephi 19:7-8).

1 Nephi 19:9-10

9 And the world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught; wherefore they scourge him, and he suffereth it; and they smite him and he suffereth it. Yea, they spit upon him, and he suffereth it, because of his loving kindness and his long-suffering towards the children of men.

10 And the God of our fathers, who were led out of Egypt, out of bondage, and also were preserved in the wilderness by him, yea, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, yieldeth himself, according to the words of the angel, as a man, into the hands of wicked men, to be lifted up, according to the words of Zenock, and to be crucified, according to the words of Neum, and to be buried in a sepulchre, according to the words of Zenos, which he spake concerning the three days of darkness, which should be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, more especially given unto those who are of the house of Israel.

Here Nephi bore his witness that the Lord God Jehovah of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ of the New Testament, Our Savior and Redeemer.

Because of those who crucified the God of Israel,...they shall wander in the flesh, and perish, and become a hiss and bywords, and be hated among all nations...when that day cometh,...that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers. (See 1 Nephi 19:13-15.)

Nephi continued to teach his brethren the words "which were engraven upon the plates of brass, that they might know concerning the doings of the Lord..." (1 Nephi 19:22).

1 Nephi 19:23

23 And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written

by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning.

VI. 1 Nephi 20 - Isaiah 48

Terry Ball and Nathan Winn introduce our next three sections,

"Isaiah 48 and 49 are the first of Isaiah's writings to appear in the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 20). Nephi quoted the chapters to his brethren that he 'might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer' (1 Nephi 19:24).

Isaiah begins with a divine dialogue that demonstrates God's patience, determination, and mercy. The Lord speaks to those who "are come forth out of the water of Judah (48:1), or the waters of baptism (1 Nephi 20:1), who act as if they are righteous and obedient but in truth are not (48:1-2). Though they are stubborn and obstinate, with brows like brass and necks like iron, the Lord will yet declare that which is to come even to this hypocritical portion of the covenant people, lest they ascribe God's work to their idols or to their own genius (48:3-8). Moreover, the Lord assures these rebellious people that He will not cut them off immediately, reminding them that they were refined and chosen in the furnace of affliction (48:9-11). Rather, He invites them to hearken and come unto Him, their Creator and Redeemer (48:12-19). He encourages them to flee Babylon, promising them that if they do, He will provide for them, even as He provided water to flow out of the rock for their forefathers in the wilderness (48:20-22)." (*Making Sense of Isaiah*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2009, 134-135).

With the above summation of Isaiah 48 to guide our study, we will examine the verses in the Book of Mormon in comparison with the verses in Isaiah.

Monte S. Nyman reminds us,

"Every verse in this chapter is quoted differently in the Book of Mormon. Some of these differences are significant." (*Great Are the Words of Isaiah*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980, 168).

1 Nephi 20:1-2	Isaiah 48:1-2
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<p>1 Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are come forth out of the waters of Judah, <u>or out of the waters of baptism</u>, who sware by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, yet they sware not in truth nor in righteousness.</p> <p>2 <u>Nevertheless</u>, they call themselves of the holy city, <u>but they do not stay themselves upon the God of Israel</u>, who is the Lord of Hosts; yea, the Lord of Hosts is his name.</p>	<p>1 Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness.</p> <p>2 For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts in his name.</p>
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Isaiah is not speaking to the Gentiles of the surrounding nations. He is speaking to those of Israel who had made sacred covenants of obedience with the "Lord of Hosts" by entering into "the waters of baptism," including latter-day Israel. In spite of presenting themselves as members of his kingdom or "the holy city," they have failed to keep their sacred promises. Certainly the similarity between ancient Israel and Laman and Lemuel would not have been lost to them.

<p>1 Nephi 20:4-6, 8</p> <p>4 And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;</p> <p>5 And I have even from the beginning declared to thee; before it came to pass I showed <u>them</u> thee; <u>and I showed them for fear</u> lest thou shouldest say--Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them.</p> <p>6 Thou hast <u>seen and</u> heard all this; and will ye not declare</p>	<p>Isaiah 48:4-6, 8</p> <p>4 And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;</p> <p>5 And I have even from the beginning declared to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee; lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.</p> <p>6 Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare</p>
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<p><u>them? And that I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.</u></p> <p>8 Yea, and thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.</p>	<p>it? I have shewed thee new things, and thou didst not know them.</p> <p>8 Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knowest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.</p>
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Reg Christensen states,

"A neck like an 'iron sinew' is a neck that does not bend or bow down in humble prayer. A brow of brass implies thick headedness, or an unwillingness, to ponder and accept the counsel of God. Rather, the stubborn rationalize away inspired counsel and are prone to give credit to false gods of their own design and purpose..." (*Unlocking Isaiah. American Fork: Covenant Communications, Inc., 2013, 220*).

The traits that Isaiah noted are found not only in ancient Israel, but among the covenant members of today. These qualities interfere with our receiving the blessings the Lord has for us. The following incident illustrates this concept:

On Wednesday, a young mother gave birth to a new baby. The baby came out blue and not breathing at all. After working on her for a long time, the hospital staff finally got her to breathe. The anxious father asked the doctor if she would be okay. The doctor's reply was "I don't know." Two days later, the doctor told the parent "that they were doing everything they knew how to do, but it seemed as though she didn't have the will to struggle and survive." He continued, "Her outcome was grim and unless something drastically changed, they did not think she would make it. If she did survive, she would be in the hospital at least an extra 10 days to two weeks and there could be retardation." At this point, a priesthood blessing was offered and the following morning, Saturday, it was given. Later that afternoon, the doctor spoke to the parents and said, "he wasn't sure what had happened, but all of a sudden their infant was responding to

treatment and if she continued to improve, she would most likely be able to go home the following Monday." Some knew that the blessing the infant had received was the reason for her improvement, and offered personal prayers of gratitude to a kind and merciful Heavenly Father. Her mother's response was different. She said, "Oh yeah, [she] survived not because of anything even connected to a God, who doesn't exist anyway, but because of the knowledge of skilled doctors and nurses who were just doing their job" (Personal communication on file).

While some would agree with the infant's mother; others see another option. While the improvement of her infant is not in opposition to the care and expertise of the attending doctors, it is the mother's own disbelief and prior disappointments that, for her, ruled out the ability to recognize the tender mercies of a loving Father in Heaven. Sometimes, we have eyes, but we can't see; ears, but we can't hear. When we are spiritually blind to the miracles around us and deaf to the witness of the spirit, we are more receptive to feelings of disappointment and abandonment. We then are more easily influenced by "other voices" that tend to lead us in a downward spiral of emotions. Despondency, despair, and anger are often the result.

If we want to draw closer to the Lord and to be guided by his spirit, we need to take the necessary steps in our lives that will lead us to be more receptive to his guidance. If we close ourselves off from even a consideration of heaven sent direction or intervention, we will surely miss blessings that would have been ours.

<p>1 Nephi 20:9-10</p> <p>9 <u>Nevertheless</u>, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off.</p> <p>10 <u>For</u>, behold, I have refined thee, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.</p>	<p>Isaiah 48:9-10</p> <p>9 For my name's shake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.</p> <p>10 Behold, I have refined thee, <u>but not with silver</u>; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.</p>
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W. Cleon Skousen states,

"Nevertheless, the Lord now declares that He will not allow his anger and sense of justice to completely cut them off even though their abominable behavior deserves it. The Lord says He will 'defer' his judgment so that his calling as a Savior may not be nullified. His name is Jesus the Christ (the latter word is Greek for Savior). Therefore, He will be their Savior for his name's sake, and He will put Israel through an extended course of training and discipline rather than cut them off" (*Isaiah Speaks to Modern Times*. Salt Lake City: Ensign Publishing Company, 1984, [Second Edition, First Printing, February, 1993], 606).

Like the prophets who have gone before us, we of modern Israel, will also have to undergo our trials of faith through the adversities that we will experience. It is "in the furnace of affliction" where we will be refined in order to become the individuals we have the potential to be. As we endure and learn from our individually designed trials, we will come closer to our Heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, and thereby become more usable servants.

1 Nephi 20:18	Isaiah 48:18
18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.	18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

The singular desire of Our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, is for his children/brothers and sisters to be obedient to his commandments. Their purpose is not for control, but because of their foreknowledge, they know that our obedience to heavenly counsel will bring us the greatest amount of joy and happiness, here and hereafter.

1 Nephi 20:20-22	Isaiah 48:20-22
20 Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter to the end of the earth; say ye: The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.	20 Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter <u>it even</u> to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

<p>21 And they thirsted not; he led them through the deserts; he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave the rock also and the waters gushed out.</p> <p>22 <u>And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also,</u> there is no peace, said the Lord, unto the wicked.</p>	<p>21 And they thirsted not <u>when</u> he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.</p> <p>22 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.</p>
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The directive to Israel and to us is to "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans" or the wickedness and idolatry that Babylon represented then and the spiritual wickedness represented in Babylon or the world today. If it were apparent to us, as it is to Our Lord, we would forsake the wickedness of the world with "singing" and rejoicing." Just as the Lord brought water to the parched lips of the children of Israel while they were in the desert; he now brings words of spiritual peace and direction that will bring relief to our parched souls and will protect us from the addictions and diseases rampant in the world today.

VII. 1 Nephi 21-Isaiah 49

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet state,

"Isaiah 49 is a most remarkable prophecy, one intended by the spirit of revelation to embrace multiple fulfillments. The Book of Mormon version of the prophecy, which contains significant textual restorations, greatly enhances our understanding of Isaiah's prophecy, as well as a detailed description of Joseph Smith and the Story of the latter-day restoration. It can also be properly argued that his prophecy applies to Isaiah or that it is a description of major events in the history of the nation of Israel. Such interpretations are not inappropriate, as long as they do not obscure its greater meaning as it applies to Christ and Joseph Smith. Since Nephi lives a considerable time before the coming of Christ, it is appropriate that he view this prophecy primarily as it applied to the coming of the Savior. Since we live a considerable time after Christ's mortal ministry, it is appropriate that we see this prophecy primarily as it applies to events of our day.

Isaiah's detailed knowledge of the latter-day restoration, the role of Joseph Smith, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, sustain this conclusion. The word of God is most durable. We will here interpret the prophecy as it applies to the Prophet Joseph Smith, for such was the pattern of our Lords in the interpretation of Isaiah he gave among the Nephites (see 3 Nephi 21:9-11)." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol.1.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987, [11th Printing, 1999], 157).

Monte S. Nyman states,

"Chapter 49 is one of the most important chapters in the whole book of Isaiah, because it also clearly foretells the mission of the Latter-day Saints and the destiny of the land of America in connection with the house of Israel. Nephi interpreted the chapter as foretelling that the land of America would receive some of scattered Israel, while his brother Jacob applied it both to the Jews in Jerusalem and to the Gentiles. Chapter 49 is of such importance that it ought to be studied diligently by every member of the Church" (*Great are the Words of Isaiah.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980, 173-174).

If it is important for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to study, I believe this injunction also applies to all honest seekers of the truth.

<p>1 Nephi 21:1</p> <p><u>1 And again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.</u></p>	<p>Isaiah 49:1</p> <p>1 Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.</p>
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The additional verse found in the writings of Nephi taken from the writings of Isaiah on the brass plates which the

Nephites brought with them confirm that Israel will be "scattered abroad" including the Americas. Nephi, speaking to his brothers, gives further commentary.

1 Nephi 22:3, 5

3 Wherefore, the things of which I have read [Isaiah 49:1]... it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon the face of the earth, and also among all nations.

5 And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded, because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all the nations and shall be hated of all men.

Nephi, like Isaiah, saw in prophetic vision events that would occur in the future, including the mission of Jesus Christ during the meridian of time and his rejection by the Jews. He also saw the subsequent scattering of the house of Israel. Many, during the period of the scattering will be hated and persecuted by many nations. The Holocaust under Nazi Germany is just one example of the hatred of the Jews by other nations.

We learn that there will be one who was "called... from the womb" or selected before their mortal birth to perform a special mission regarding the gathering of scattered Israel. Who might this individual be? Some scholars have suggested Isaiah himself; Others, a member from the tribe of Ephraim who will have a major responsibility to assist in the gathering; Jesus Christ or even the Prophet of the Restoration, Joseph Smith.

Andrew C. Skinner states,

" ... taken together, the words Isaiah uses [49:1-9; 1 Nephi 21:1-9] to describe the helper of Israel in the latter days apply only to two beings: the Messiah and the Prophet Joseph Smith. Nephi and Lehi seem to know not only that Isaiah intended to prophesy of Jesus and Joseph Smith (see 2 Nephi 3), but also that the latter-day restoration of the gospel would help bring about the final redemption of Israel" (*"Nephi's Lessons to His People: the Messiah, the*

Land and Isaiah 48-49 in 1 Nephi 19-22" in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon. Edited by Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998, 107).

Jesus Christ is the orchestra leader of both the scattering and gathering of the house of Israel. Joseph Smith, as the guest soloist, was the instrument in the Lord's hand in bringing about the restoration of his church once again upon the earth. Heavenly messengers will come to Joseph and restore the sacred keys that will enable him, under the direction of Jesus Christ, to bring about the gathering of scattered Israel.

Lehi spoke to his sons regarding a vision of Joseph of Egypt of the last days.

2 Nephi 3:5-6, 15, 24

5 Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless, to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light--yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom.

6 For Joseph truly testified, saying: A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins.

15 And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation.

24 And there shall rise up one mighty among them, who shall do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith, to work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God, unto the bringing to pass much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren.

It is the position of this text that Joseph Smith, the Prophet of the Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days is the prophet and seer spoken of by Joseph of Egypt. He is of the tribe of Joseph, not Judah, which is the tribe through whom Jesus Christ was born. The branch broken off or separated from the land of Israel is the group consisting of Lehi and his family who left Jerusalem in B.C. 600 and were led by the Lord to the Americas. Joseph Smith was born on December 23, 1805. He was the third son, born to Joseph Smith, Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith. In his fifteen years, he sought through personal prayer, to know which of all the churches was true. He received a vision of God the Father and his son, Jesus Christ. He was instructed to join none of the churches. He received visits from heavenly visitors, including the angel Moroni, over the intervening years. On April 6, 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. The authority and organization was now upon the earth and would bring about the gathering of scattered Israel and the teaching of heavenly truths to the Gentiles under the direction of Jesus Christ himself.

1 Nephi 21:6	Isaiah 49:6
<p>6 And he said: It is light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, I also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.</p>	<p>6 And he said, It is <u>a</u> light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.</p>

David R. Minert states,

"The Savior... explains to the saints [members] that while they will be part of the important work of gathering Israel they will also be involved in the work of preaching the gospel to the gentile nations. As they bring the light of the gospel to the world, they will provide the means of salvation to those who will listen to their message (Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; D&C 86:11; LDS Hymns #329)" (*Simplified Isaiah for the Latter-Day Saints. Orem: Granite Publishing and Distribution LLC, 2006, 203*).

It is Jesus Christ who will orchestrate this great work upon the earth in the latter days through his prophet, Joseph Smith.

1 Nephi 21:14-16	Isaiah 49:14-16
<p>14 But, <u>behold</u>, Zion hath said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me--<u>but he will show that he hath not.</u></p> <p>15 <u>For</u> can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? <u>Yea</u>, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, <u>O house of Israel.</u></p> <p>16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.</p>	<p>14 But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.</p> <p>15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.</p> <p>16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.</p>

Monte S. Nyman states,

One symbolic meaning of the term "graven thee upon the palms of my hands" "would be that the covenant made by Christ (to atone for the sins of the world and to bring to pass the resurrection) would be sealed or completed by his being nailed to the cross. These nail prints in the palms of his hands would then be a sign to the world, and especially to the Jews, that he had kept his promise {see Isaiah 22:23, 25; Zechariah 12:10; 13:6; D&C 45:48-53}" (*Great Are The Words Of Isaiah*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980, 181).

The promise given by the Lord is directed to all, and especially to those who will experience great persecution over an extended period of time. Christ suffered pain that no man could ever suffer as the nails were driven into the palms of his hands and into his feet for this was but an extension of the pain that for him had begun in the garden of Gethsemane. A pain that He voluntarily bore for each of his Father's children, whether they choose to accept his offering or not.

1 Nephi 21:22 / Isaiah 49:22 [unchanged except]

22 Thus saith the Lord God [GOD], Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people;[:] and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

VIII. 1 Nephi 22 - Nephi's Commentary

We conclude this section, by highlighting some specific verses that Nephi shared with his brothers. We repeat 1 Nephi 21:22 / Isaiah 49:22 in order to highlight his commentary:

22 Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

Nephi speaking to his brothers provides the following commentary regarding the above verse.

1 Nephi 22:8

8 And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles, which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders.

The "marvelous work among the Gentiles," has direct reference to the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon the earth once again. The Church that Jesus had established upon the earth during the meridian of time built upon "apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;" (Ephesians 2:20), will be restored in the latter days.

The Old Testament Institute student manual states,

"The 'when' of the prophecy is now. Converts throughout the world have joined the Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] and then have gone throughout the world seeking to reclaim the house of Israel and bring them back to the

Lord." (*Old Testament Institute student manual 1 Kings–Malachi*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, Second Edition, 193–194).

The immediacy of gathering of Israel and teaching the Gentiles so that they may also enjoy every blessing promised to the faithful by the Lord underscores the importance of the writings of Isaiah and Nephi's commentary for they are directed to each of us in these latter days. Following the gathering of all, who are willing, into the fold of the Lord for protection and guidance, there will be great persecution upon the saints of God raged by the wicked.

1 Nephi 22:14

14 And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord. And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust, and great shall be the fall of it.

This destruction will occur, prior to the Second coming of the Lord. As Nephi taught his brethren.

1 Nephi 22:16

16 For the time soon cometh that the fullness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

At the time of Christ's return to the earth, with all his power and glory, those who would be candidates of the Telestial kingdom will be destroyed. Christ's return will thus mark the beginning of his Millennial reign upon the earth of a thousand years. Due to Christ's power, Satan will have no power to tempt the righteous.

1 Nephi 22:28, 31

28 But, behold all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent.

31 ...Wherefore, if ye [brethren] shall be obedient to the commandments, and endure to the end, ye shall be saved at the last day. And thus it is. Amen.

As the result of the Lord's love and patience, prior to his return, the way is prepared for all who will be obedient to receive the blessings he has reserved for those who are faithful.

IX. Conclusions

As we conclude this lesson, we pause for a few moments to reflect upon some of the highlights that remain upon our minds.

In 1 Nephi 16, we were introduced to the Liahona, which was divinely constructed in order to assist Lehi and his company as they travelled to the promised land. It operated according to their faith, giving direction when they were righteous and not functioning when they were unrighteous.

Also in this chapter, Nephi's steel bow broke. At the same time, the bows of his brethren also lost their spring. (See 1 Nephi 16:21.) As the group was dependent upon Nephi skills in hunting to obtain their food, they suffered for the loss of food. It is during this time that even Father Lehi begins to murmur. Nephi make a new bow and arrows and then, in a marvelous gesture of faith and trust, approaches his father and asks where he should go to find food? (See 1 Nephi 16:23.) The death of Ishmael leads to further sorrow and rebellion that required the voice of the Lord to restore peace.

In 1 Nephi 17, reports that when the "murmuring stopped," they were able to accomplish that which the Lord had directed them despite their adversity. They arrived at Bountiful which was an area where there was "much fruit and wild honey" (1 Nephi 17:5). Nephi is directed to build a ship and with faith and trust he proceeds, seeking only to know where to get ore so that he may fashion tools. Initially, the brethren refuse to assist him, berating him with their verbal taunts, but following a lesson from Israel's history and hearing the voice of the Lord, they repent and do assist him.

In 1 Nephi 18, the ship is finished and all are pleased with the workmanship. Under the Lord's direction, the families, after loading supplies, head for the promised land. After many days, the brethren with their wives act with "exceeding rudeness" (1 Nephi 18:9). Nephi calls them to repentance and they respond by binding him with cords. Because the spindles do not operate, they do not know how to direct the ship. Only after a fierce storm had raged for four days, and only when they feared for the loss of their lives, did they finally unloose him.

In 1 Nephi 19, we learn of two sets of plates. The Large Plates of Nephi and the Smaller plates of Nephi. The Smaller plates will contain the more spiritual aspects of their lives. It is from the writings of the Small plates of Nephi, not the Large Plates, that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery will translate when the 116 pages are lost. As a result of the Lord inspiring Nephi to make two records, and Mormon's abridgment of the two records, the efforts of those who sought to discredit the Book of Mormon were thwarted. In this chapter, Nephi records special events of Our Savior's death and resurrection.

In 1 Nephi 20 [Isaiah 48], we learn that those who had made sacred covenants were not faithful. Some manifested qualities of hard-headedness, and refused to follow the counsel of the Lord. At times, the Lord will try and test us, in order to humble us so that we may then become purged from sin. All of us are counseled to flee Babylon, or the world around us, which is representative of sin and wickedness.

In 1 Nephi 21 [Isaiah 49], we learn that Israel which has been scattered, will in the latter days, be gathered. This will be accomplished as a result of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith. As partakers of the Abrahamic covenant, they have the responsibility and privilege to assist in the gathering of Israel and will play an important part in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

In 1 Nephi 22 [Nephi Commentary Isaiah 49 and 50], we learn that the Lord will bring about a "marvelous work," the restoration of his gospel which will facilitate the work of the gathering. During these latter days, the saints [members] will experience great persecution. They are promised the Lord's protection, for any individual or

institution that fights against the Church of Jesus Christ eventually will be destroyed from within. As Christ returns to the earth, those who are wicked will be destroyed and Millennium, a time of peace and joy will begin.

Andrew Skinner states,

Nephi's message to his brothers is that the Lord will redeem Israel by restoring the gospel covenant [through the Prophet Joseph Smith] on the land that they, the family of Lehi, already inhabit...[Upon this land, their righteous ancestors] will be instrumental in redeeming the rest of Israel in the latter days, [and to Us], The God who gave home and promised redemption to the scattered remnant of Israel is the same Messiah who promises us all redemption from sin, and suffering and scattering. That is guaranteed if we look to him and remain faithful" (Nephi's Lessons to His People: The Messiah, the Land, and Isaiah 48-49 in 1 Nephi 19-22," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*. Edited by Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998, 117, 120).

Our next lesson [BM#06], will encourage each of us, as Lehi encouraged his son, to "choose liberty and eternal life through Jesus Christ, "the great Mediator of all men" (2 Nephi 2:27).