

LEHI'S DREAM *and You*

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You live in a time of war, the spiritual war that will never end. War itself now dominates the affairs of mankind. Your world at war has lost its innocence. There is nothing, however crude or unworthy, that is not deemed acceptable for movies or plays or music or conversation. The world seems to be turned upside down (see 2 Peter 2:1–22).

Formality, respect for authority, dignity, and nobility are mocked. Modesty and neatness yield to slouchiness and shabbiness in dress and grooming. The rules of honesty and integrity and basic morality are now ignored. Conversation is laced with profanity. You see that in art and literature, in drama and entertainment. Instead of being refined, they become coarse (see 1 Timothy 4:1–3; 2 Timothy 3:1–9).

You have decisions almost every day as to whether you will follow those trends. You have many tests ahead.

LEHI'S DREAM

In 1 Nephi 8, read about Lehi's dream. He told his family, "Behold, I have dreamed

a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision" (1 Nephi 8:2).

You may think that Lehi's dream or vision has no special meaning for you, but it does. You are in it; all of us are in it (see 1 Nephi 19:23).

Lehi's dream or vision of the iron rod has in it everything a young Latter-day Saint needs to understand the test of life. Lehi saw:

A great and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 11:35–36; 12:18).

A path following a river (see 1 Nephi 8:19–22).

A mist of darkness (see 1 Nephi 12:16–17).

An iron rod which led through the mist of darkness (see 1 Nephi 11:24–25).

The tree of life, "whose fruit was desirable to make one happy" (1 Nephi 8:10; see 1 Nephi 11:8–9, 21–24).

Read it carefully; then read it again.

If you hold to the rod, you can feel your way forward with the gift of the Holy Ghost, conferred upon you at the time you were confirmed a member of the Church. The Holy

Ghost will comfort you. You will be able to feel the influence of the angels, as Nephi did, and feel your way through life.

The Book of Mormon has been my iron rod.

Lehi saw great multitudes of people “pressing forward” (1 Nephi 8:21) toward the tree.

The great and spacious building “was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit” (1 Nephi 8:27).

One word in this dream or vision should have special meaning to you young Latter-day Saints. The word is *after*. It was *after* the people had found the tree that they

became ashamed, and because of the mockery of the world they fell away.

“And *after* they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost. . . .

“And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And *after* they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; [that was the test, and then Lehi said] but we heeded them not. [And that was the answer]” (1 Nephi 8:28, 33; emphasis added).

At your baptism and confirmation, you took hold of the iron rod. But you are never safe. It is *after* you have partaken of that fruit that your test will come.

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THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

I think now and then of one of my classmates—very bright, good looking, faithful in the Church, and drenched with talent and ability. He married well and rose quickly to prominence. He began to compromise to please the world and please those around him. They flattered him into following after their ways, which were the ways of the world.

Sometimes it is so simple a thing as how you groom yourself or what you wear.

Somewhere in little things, my classmate's grasp on the iron rod loosened a bit. His wife held on to the rod with one hand and on to him with the other. Finally, he slipped away from her and let go of the rod. Just as Lehi's dream or vision predicted, he fell away into forbidden paths and was lost.



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*An unseen power will hold your hand
as you hold to the iron rod.*
.....

INSIDE THE GREAT AND SPACIOUS BUILDING

Largely because of television, instead of looking over into that spacious building, we are, in effect, living inside of it. That is your fate in this generation. You are living in that great and spacious building.

You will be safe if you look like and groom like and act like an ordinary Latter-day Saint: dress modestly, attend your meetings, pay tithes, take the sacrament, honor the priesthood, honor your parents, follow your leaders, read the scriptures, study the Book of Mormon, and pray, always pray. An unseen power will hold your hand as you hold to the iron rod.

Will this solve all your problems? Of course not! That would be contrary to the purpose of your coming into mortality. It will, however, give you a solid foundation on which to build your life (see Helaman 5:12).

The mist of darkness will cover you at times so much that you will not be able to see your way even a short distance ahead. You will not be able to see clearly. But you can *feel* your way. With the gift of the Holy Ghost, you can *feel* your way ahead through life. Grasp the iron rod, and do not let go. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, you can *feel* your way through life (see 3 Nephi 18:25; D&C 9:8).

SECRET COMBINATIONS IN OUR DAY

We live in a time of war, that spiritual war that will never end. Moroni warned us of secret combinations (see Ether 8:20, 23–24). Atheists and agnostics make nonbelief their religion and today organize in unprecedented ways to attack faith and belief. They are now organized, and they pursue political power. You will be hearing much about them and from them. Much of their attack is indirect in mocking the faithful, in mocking religion. Their arguments

are not so different from those in the Book of Mormon (see Jacob 7:1–21; Alma 1:1–15; Alma 30:6–60).

You who are young will see many things that will try your courage and test your faith. All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Let me say that again: All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Be careful that you do not fall into the category of mocking.

The Lord promised, “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30).

Embedded in that dream or vision is the “pearl of great price” (Matthew 13:46).

Lehi and Nephi saw:

A virgin bearing a child in her arms.

One who should prepare the way—John the Baptist.

The ministry of the Son of God.

Twelve others following the Messiah.

The heavens open and angels ministering to them.

The multitudes blessed and healed.

The Crucifixion of the Christ.

All of this they saw in dream or vision. And they saw the wisdom and pride of the world opposing His work (see 1 Nephi 11:14–36; see also 1 Nephi 1:9–14).

And that is what we face now.

You live in an interesting generation where trials will be constant in your life. Learn to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost. It is to be a shield and a protection and a teacher for you. Never be ashamed or embarrassed about the doctrines of the gospel or about the standards that we teach in the Church. You always, if you are faithful in the Church, will be that much different from the world at large.

You have the advantage of being assured that you can be inspired in all of your decisions.

As we think of you young Latter-day Saints and think of the Book of Mormon and think of the dream or vision that Lehi had, we see that there are prophecies in there that can be specifically applied to your life. Read it again, beginning with the eighth chapter of 1 Nephi, and read on to the



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counsel that is given. The Book of Mormon talks about life after death: what happens to the spirit (see Alma 40:11–12) and what happens in the spirit world (see 2 Nephi 2:29; 9:10–13; Alma 12:24). All of the things that you need to know are there. Read it, and make it a part of your life. Then the criticism or mocking of the world, the mocking of those in the Church, will be of no concern to you as it is of no concern to us (see 1 Nephi 8:33). We just move forward doing the things which we are called to do and know that the Lord is guiding us.

You are better than we were. I have the conviction that against what was surely coming and the prophecies that were given, the Lord has reserved special spirits to bring forth at this time to see that His Church and kingdom are protected and moved forward in the world. **NE**

From a Brigham Young University devotional given on January 16, 2007.