

Nobody's PERFECT

By Shauna Skoubye

I was surprised to read that Nephi, my hero, sometimes doubted himself.

I have always longed to be like Nephi: strictly obedient, extremely faithful, and deeply spiritual. In my eyes Nephi was the supreme example of goodness. Few things appealed to me more than the thought of growing up to be just like him, or at least beginning to possess even a portion of his excellence.

One day I was having a mini-crisis, caused by feelings of inadequacy. I had such ambitions and so many goals. But I just didn't seem to be getting anywhere. Through tears of hopelessness, I expressed these feelings to my father. He promptly stood up, walked over to the bookcase, and pulled out one of his copies of the Book of Mormon. Without saying a word, he opened it to 2 Nephi 4 and began reading verse 17.

Chills spread through my body like electricity as I listened to these powerful words: "O wretched man that I am!" My thoughts raced. How could Nephi, my hero and example, say that he was "wretched"? If he was wretched, what did that make me?

Again, the electricity rushed through me as my father read verse 28: "Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin." It felt to me as though the dark clouds of my mind had parted and cleared away to reveal the warmth and splendor of an open blue sky and bright sun. It is impossible to describe the way this verse illuminated my soul. Few

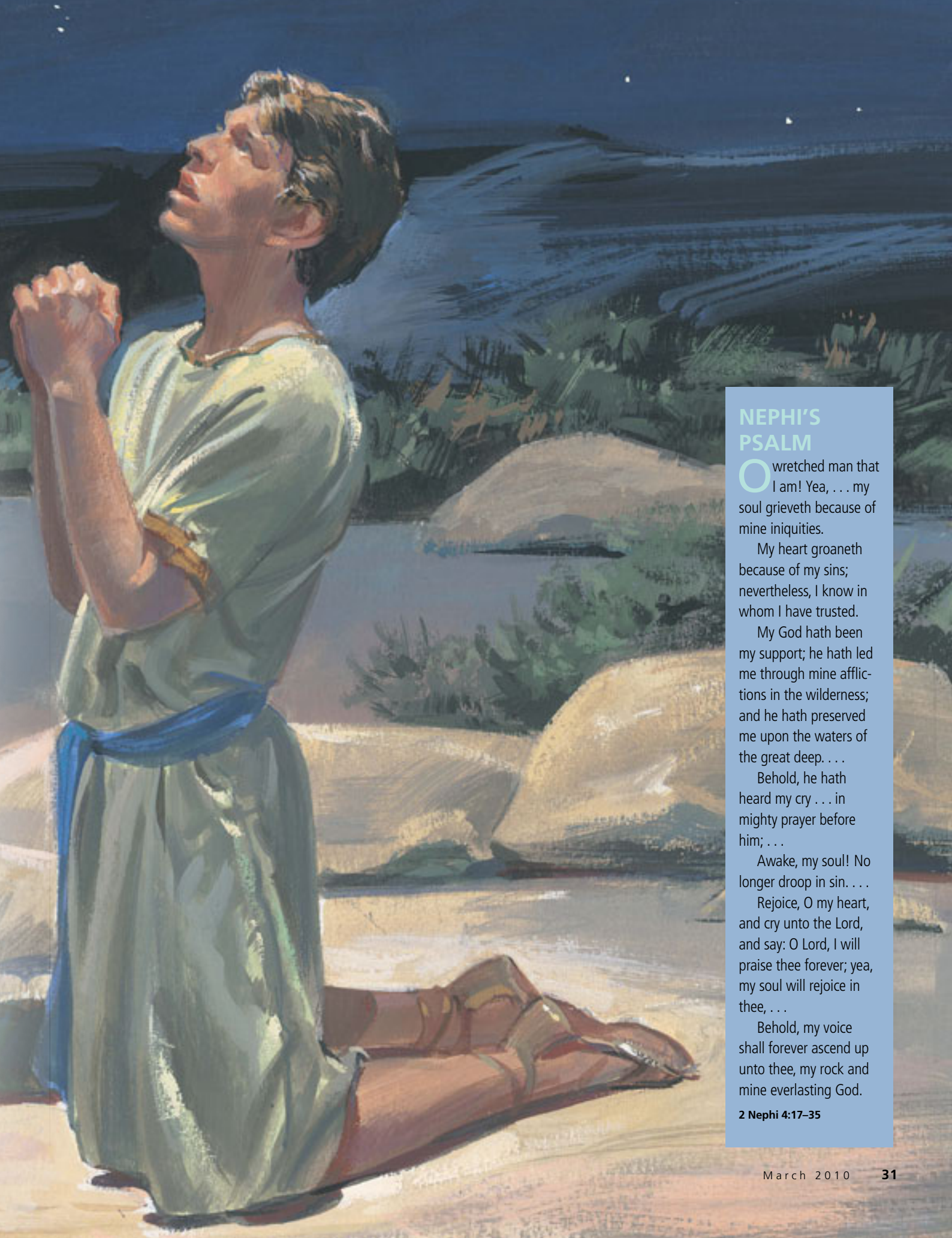
verses of scripture have filled me with as much hope, inspiration, and joy as this one did.

In verse 30, Nephi said exactly what I was thinking, only in more eloquent words. "My soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation." This verse brought with it feelings of peace and gratitude for the Lord's tender mercy and love.

My dad closed the book and explained that these verses are called Nephi's psalm. He then gently taught me that even the greatest men on earth are imperfect, and these men must recognize their imperfections or else they would be prideful and, therefore, not great.

I understood. Just because I had weaknesses didn't mean I was incapable of becoming like Nephi. Recognizing my weaknesses brought me closer to being the caliber of Nephi. Nephi was great because, as well as being obedient and faithful, he was humble and willing to admit his faults.

Ever since that experience, I have treasured these words of Nephi. Each time I read them, I experience the same thrills and inspirations as the first time I read them. The verses sing out to me that I am a daughter of God and capable of more than I could ever imagine. I know that if I'm faithful and press forward, untold blessings will be in store for me. **NE**



NEPHI'S PSALM

Owretched man that I am! Yea, . . . my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities.

My heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.

My God hath been my support; he hath led me through mine afflictions in the wilderness; and he hath preserved me upon the waters of the great deep. . . .

Behold, he hath heard my cry . . . in mighty prayer before him; . . .

Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. . . .

Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord, and say: O Lord, I will praise thee forever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, . . .

Behold, my voice shall forever ascend up unto thee, my rock and mine everlasting God.

2 Nephi 4:17–35