

Lesson
18

Heavenly Father Helps Us Obey His Commandments

Purpose To help the children understand that Heavenly Father and Jesus will help them obey the commandments.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study 1 Nephi 3:7; 17; 18:1–4. Be prepared to tell the account of Nephi building a ship.
2. If you are able, make a copy of the handout of 1 Nephi 3:7 for each child. Cut the handout apart on the dotted lines. Place the strips in an envelope for each child.
3. Be prepared to sing the first and second verses of “Nephi’s Courage” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 120); the words are included at the back of this manual.
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Book of Mormon for each child, where available.
 - b. A pencil and a piece of paper or card for each child.
 - c. Chalkboard, chalk, and eraser.
 - d. Picture 3-37, Nephi Subdues His Rebellious Brothers (62044; Gospel Art Picture Kit 303).
5. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities that you will be using.

Suggested Lesson Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

Nephi Obeyed the Commandments

Attention activity

Tell the children to do what you are doing. Then do several actions, such as stand up, put your hands on your hips, turn around, and so forth. Sit down. Thank the children for obeying.

- What does it mean to obey?

Explain that when we do as we are asked, we are obeying or being obedient.

Review

Tell the children that you are thinking about a man who was obedient. He willingly obeyed the Lord’s commandment to leave Jerusalem with his father.

He also willingly obeyed the commandment to return to Jerusalem to get the brass plates.

- Who was this man? (Nephi.)

Explain that when Nephi was commanded to return to Jerusalem to obtain the brass plates, he knew this was a hard thing to do, but he told his father that he would obey. Briefly review the story from lesson 17.

Show the children a copy of the Book of Mormon and tell them that the words that Nephi told his father are written in this book. See that each child who can read has a copy of the Book of Mormon. Help them find 1 Nephi 3:7.

Song

Sing or say the words to the first verse of “Nephi’s Courage” with the children.

Read 1 Nephi 3:7 to the children. Explain that it says the same thing as the last three lines of this song. Have the children sing or say those lines again. Help the children understand that the Lord will help them obey his commandments.

The Lord Taught Nephi How to Build a Ship

Scripture story

Tell the children that the Book of Mormon contains several wonderful stories about Nephi. Then tell the following in your own words.

Lehi and his family traveled in the wilderness for eight years. Traveling and living in the wilderness was difficult. They had to live in tents and hunt for food. Finally they came to a land by the sea. They named the land Bountiful. They were happy to be there because there was fruit and honey to eat. They pitched their tents by the seashore.

After Lehi and his family had been in the land of Bountiful for many days, the Lord told Nephi to build a ship so the family could cross the sea to the promised land. Nephi believed that the Lord would help him. Nephi asked him where he could find the ore to make the tools he needed to build the ship. Nephi was told where to find the ore and was able to make the tools.

When Nephi’s brothers, Laman and Lemuel, saw that he was going to build a ship, they started to complain. They didn’t believe that Nephi could build a ship. They refused to help. They did not believe that the Lord would tell Nephi how to build a ship.

But Nephi knew that the Lord would help him. He will always help us to obey his commandments. Nephi obeyed his directions.

Nephi told Laman and Lemuel that if they would obey the commandments and do what the Lord asked, he would help them too. Laman and Lemuel did not want Nephi to tell them what to do. They wanted to throw him into the sea, but Nephi was filled with the power of God. He told his brothers not to touch him. Laman and Lemuel were frightened. Nephi told them to repent and obey the commandments and their parents.

Then Nephi touched his brothers and shocked them so they would know that the Lord was helping him.

Picture discussion

Show picture 3-37, Nephi Subdues His Rebellious Brothers.

- How do you think Laman and Lemuel felt?

Explain that Laman and Lemuel repented. They helped Nephi build the ship.

- How did the Lord help Nephi? (He told him where to get the ore to make tools. He taught him how to build the ship. He protected him from his brothers.)

Explain that even though Nephi didn't know how to build a ship, he believed that the Lord would help him if he obeyed his commandments.

Sing or say the second verse of "Nephi's Courage" with the children.

Chalkboard discussion

Draw a simple smiling face and a frowning face on the chalkboard. Talk with the children about what makes them happy. Help the children understand that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ want us to be happy, and this is why they have given us commandments to obey. Ask questions about how obeying the commandments brings happiness such as the following:

- Which of these faces shows how Nephi felt when he obeyed the commandment to build the boat?
- How does coming to church help us feel happy?
- How does loving and serving our family members help us be happy?

The Lord Will Help Us Obey the Commandments

Story

Explain that just as the Lord helped Nephi, he will help each of us if we have faith in him and are willing to obey his commandments. Have the children listen as you relate a story about how Heavenly Father helped a young girl obey the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Ma-ling had a little food stand on the street near the river. Every day she would sell her rice and fish to the people who stopped at her shop. Each night as she returned to her home on the houseboat and counted the money she had earned, she would sigh and shake her head, for it was barely enough to buy rice for her family and fish to sell the next day.

One day Ma-ling met the missionaries, and they taught her the gospel. They taught her about Heavenly Father's commandments and about keeping the Sabbath day holy. Ma-ling talked to Heavenly Father in prayer and promised him that she would not open her stand on Sunday anymore. She wanted to keep the Sabbath day holy and not work on Sunday.

From that time on, each night as Ma-ling counted her money, she found she had more money than ever before. She was able to buy more food to share with her family, and she was able to buy more fish to sell. Heavenly Father blessed Ma-ling because she kept the Sabbath day holy. Ma-ling was happy because she obeyed the commandments.

Discussion

- What commandment did Ma-ling obey?
- How did Heavenly Father help her?

Tell the children that just as Heavenly Father helped Nephi and Ma-ling, he will help each of them obey his commandments.

Summary

Teacher testimony

If appropriate, tell the children of a time when Heavenly Father helped you to obey a commandment. Bear your testimony that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love us and will help us obey the commandments.

Give each child a piece of paper or a card and a pencil. Have the children draw a smiley face on it. Then invite the children to choose a commandment to obey during the week, such as being a peacemaker, helping Mother and

Father, being kind to a brother or sister, or sharing with friends. Have or help each child write the commandment he chose on his card. Tell the children to be prepared next week to report on how they felt when they obeyed.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for your children. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see “Class Time” in “Helps for the Teacher.”

1. Talk with the children about some of the commandments, such as reverence, prayer, kindness, honesty, Word of Wisdom, and so forth. Explain that each person finds some commandments easier to obey than others. Emphasize that Heavenly Father will help each of us to obey the commandments if we are really trying to and if we ask for his help.
2. With the children, sing or say the words to “Choose the Right Way” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 160) and other songs about commandments, such as “Love One Another” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 136) or “When We’re Helping” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 198); the words for these three songs are included at the back of this manual.
3. Toss a beanbag or small stuffed animal to a child; then ask him a question from the lesson, such as:
 - What did the Lord tell Nephi to build?
 - How did Laman and Lemuel react when Nephi told them about building the ship?
 - Can you name a commandment that you can obey now?
 - What can we do if we need Heavenly Father’s help? (Pray.)
 - What did the Lord tell Nephi to do that was hard?
 - How did Nephi get tools?
4. Have the children pretend they are digging for ore, making tools, and building the ship as Nephi did.
5. For older children: Make a written copy of 1 Nephi 3:7 for each child. Cut it apart by lines and have the children glue the strips in order on a piece of paper. Encourage them to memorize the scripture.

1 Nephi 3:7

I will go and do the things
which the Lord hath commanded,
for I know that the Lord
giveth no commandments
unto the children of men,
save he shall prepare a way for them
that they may accomplish the thing
which he commandeth them.