

BKM Lesson 3: The Vision of the Tree of Life 1 Ne. ; 12:16-18; 15 (See L3 [Study Guide](#))

Purpose: To help us understand the symbols in the vision of the tree of life and the application of these symbols to our own lives.

1. The symbols in the vision of the tree of life [1 Nephi 8](#); [1 Nephi 11](#); and [1 Nephi 15](#)

- 1 Ne. 8:2; [1 Ne. 10:17](#); 1 Ne. 11:6. Lehi said, “Behold, I have dreamed a dream” †1. Lehi’s Dream
- 1 Ne. 11:7-11. “7 After thou hast beheld the tree ... thou shalt also behold a man descending out of heaven ... ye shall bear record that it is the Son of God. 8 ... the Spirit said unto me: Look! And I looked and beheld the tree ... 10 ... What desirest thou? 11 And I said unto him: To know the interpretation thereof ...”
- 1 Ne. 11:21-15. The angel asked “Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw? ... 25 ... I beheld that the rod of iron ... was the word of God, which led to ... the tree of life”.
- 1 Ne. 11:13-21, 24, 26-33. Nephi “saw the birth, ministry, and Atonement of Jesus Christ.” (*Lesson Manual*)

†2. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland †3. Elder Neal A. Maxwell

What influence does the love of God have in our lives?

- 1 Ne. 15:36 and [D&C 14:7](#). “Whose fruit is... the greatest of all the gifts of God”. “Eternal life ... greatest of all”.
- How did Lehi and Nephi describe the tree of life and its fruit? †4. Tree of Life and It’s Fruit
- 1 Ne. 8:12. The fruit “filled my soul with exceedingly great joy ... I [desired] that my family should partake”.

The rod of iron

- 1 Ne. 8:19-20. “And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of a river, and led to the tree... And I also beheld a strait and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree ... and ... by the head of a fountain”
 - 1 Ne. 11:25. “I beheld that the rod of iron ... was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to ...”
- Where can we find the word of God? How does the word of God help us come unto Christ?
How does it keep us on the path to eternal life? †5. President Ezra Taft Benson †6. President Ezra Taft Benson

The river of filthy water, the mist of darkness, and the great and spacious building

- 1 Ne. 8:13, 23, 26-27. “I beheld a river of water; and it ran along ... near the tree”.
- [1 Ne. 12:17](#). The “mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which blindeth the eyes”.
- 1 Ne. 8:23. Because of the great mist of darkness, many “wandered off and were lost.”

Why might Satan want our eyes to be blinded to the love of God? To the Atonement? To the word of God?
In what ways does Satan try to blind our eyes?

- 1 Ne. 8:19. The rod of iron “extended along the bank of the river”, serving as a protection between the strait and narrow path and the filthy water. It also gave the people something to cling to when they were in the mist of darkness (1 Ne. 8:24, 30). (*Lesson Manual*)

What can we learn from this about how the word of God can help us?

- 1 Ne. 11:34-36; [1 Ne. 12:18](#). The “large and spacious building” was “the world and the wisdom thereof”.
- 1 Ne. 8:26. The “great and spacious building ... stood ... in the air, high above”; **not built on the rock of Christ.**

How can pride keep a person from receiving eternal life?

- 1 Ne. 8:26-28. “And after they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those ... scoffing at them”.
- How can we receive strength to withstand such peer pressure?

2. The people in the vision of the tree of life

- 1 Ne. 8:21. Lehi “saw numberless concourses of people, many ... pressing forward” seeking the path to the tree.

†7. Categories of people in the Tree of Life vision

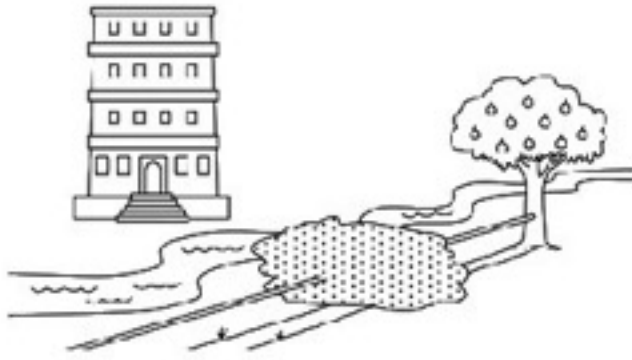
How are these categories manifest in the world today?

- 1 Ne. 8:28, 32; [1 Ne. 12:17](#). Those not on the iron rod chose “strange roads” and “forbidden paths and were lost”.
- If we are moving toward “strange,” or “broad” roads, how can we return to the strait and narrow path?
How can we help others stay on the strait and narrow path?

Next Week: L4: “The Things Which I Saw While ... in the Spirit”; See L4: [Class Member Study Guide](#).

Read the Institute Book of Mormon Student Manual at: [Book of Mormon Student Manual](#): Religion 121-122. † •

BKM 3 Quotes



†1. **Lehi's Dream:** "Lehi received a vision and told his family about it (1 Nephi 8:2). After Nephi heard his father speak about the things in the vision, he also wanted to "see, and hear, and know of [those] things" (1 Nephi 10:17; ...). Because of Nephi's belief in Jesus Christ, his request was granted (1 Nephi 11:6). It is through Nephi's record of his experience that we know the interpretation of the vision." (*Lesson Manual*)

†2. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** "The images of Christ and the tree [are] inextricably linked. ... At the very outset of the Book of Mormon, ... Christ is portrayed as the source of eternal life and joy, the living evidence of divine love, and the means whereby God will fulfill his covenant with the house of Israel and indeed the entire family of man, returning them all to their eternal promises" (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 160, 162).

†3. **Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** "The tree of life ... is the love of God (see 1 Nephi 11:25). The love of God for His children is most profoundly expressed in His gift of Jesus as our Redeemer: 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son' (John 3:16). To partake of the love of God is to partake of Jesus' Atonement and the emancipations and joys which it can bring" ("[Lessons from Laman and Lemuel](#)," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 8).

†4. **Tree of Life and Its Fruit:**

- "Most sweet, above all" (1 Ne. 8:11)
- "White, to exceed all" (1 Ne. 8:11, 18)
- "Desirable above all" (1 Ne. 8:12; 15:36)
- Having "beauty ... exceeding of all" (1 Ne. 11:8)
- "Precious above all"; (1 Ne. 11:9; 15:36)
- "Most joyous to the soul" (1 Ne. 11:23; 8:10)
- "The greatest of all the gifts of God" (1 Ne. 15:36) (*Lesson Manual*)

†5. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** "Success in righteousness, the power to avoid deception and resist temptation, guidance in our daily lives, healing of the soul—these are but a few of the promises the Lord has given to those who will come to His word. Does the Lord promise and not fulfill? Surely if He tells us that these things will come to us if we lay hold upon His word, the blessings can be ours. And if we do not, then the blessings may be lost. However diligent we may be in other areas, certain blessings are to be found only in the scriptures, only in coming to the word of the Lord and holding fast to it as we make our way through the mists of darkness to the tree of life (see 1 Nephi 8:19-23)." ("[The Power of the Word](#)," *Ensign*, May 1986, p81)

†6. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** "It is not just that the Book of Mormon bears testimony of Christ, though it indeed does that, too. But there is something more. There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. The scriptures are called "the words of life" (D&C 84:85), and nowhere is that more true than it is of the Book of Mormon. When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance." ("[The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion](#)," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 7)

†7. **Categories of People in the Tree of Life Vision:**

- 1 Ne. 8:21-23. (Those who start on the path but then become lost in the mist of darkness.)
- 1 Ne. 8:24-28. (Those who hold to the rod of iron until they reach the tree and partake of the fruit, but then become ashamed and fall away.)
- 1 Ne. 8:30. (Those who hold to the rod of iron until they reach the tree and partake of the fruit, and who then remain faithful.)
- 1 Ne. 8:31-33. (Those who never start on the path but instead go directly toward the great and spacious building.) (*Lesson Manual*)

Recommended Reading:

- [BKM 3 Enrichment.pdf](#) contains more quotes and links to articles, blogs, and talks.
- [Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121-122](#), Select the links for Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.
- President Ezra Taft Benson, "[The Book of Mormon—Keystone of our Religion](#)," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986.
- Boyd K. Packer, "[The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ—Plain and Precious Things](#)," *Ensign*, May 2005, 6-9.