

LESSON 3

Obedience Brings Blessings

Introduction

Our obedience to God's commandments is one way that we demonstrate our gratitude for His marvelous blessings. The Savior is a perfect example of obedience. Our desire to be

obedient grows as our love for God increases. Obedience to the commandments makes it possible for God to provide the help we need as we seek to accomplish difficult tasks.

Background Reading

- Thomas S. Monson, "Obedience Brings Blessings," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 89–92.
- Robert D. Hales, "If Ye Love Me, Keep My Commandments," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 35–38.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Nephi 2:2–4, 9–13, 16, 19–20; Mosiah 2:20–24, 41

Through our obedience, we show our gratitude to God and receive His greatest blessings

Display the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and invite a student to read it aloud:



"How can we ever repay the debt we owe to the Savior? He paid a debt He did not owe to free us from a debt we can never pay. Because of Him, we will live forever. Because of His infinite Atonement, our sins can be swept away, allowing us to experience the greatest of all the gifts of God: eternal life.

"Can such a gift have a price? Can we ever make compensation for such a gift?" ("Earthly Debts, Heavenly Debts," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 43).

Give students a moment to discuss possible answers to the last question asked by Elder Wirthlin. Encourage students to look for principles and doctrines during the lesson that help to answer this question.

Invite students to silently read Mosiah 2:20–24. Ask them to look for what King Benjamin taught about how we should view ourselves in relation to God.

- Why do you think King Benjamin taught that no matter what we do, we are still "unprofitable servants" of God?
- Though we can never repay our debt to God, what do these verses suggest we can do to show our gratitude for all that He has done for us? (Help students identify the following principle: **When we recognize our eternal debt to God, we desire to serve Him and keep His commandments.**)

Tell students that one of the great scriptural accounts of obedience to God is found at the beginning of the Book of Mormon, which records how the prophet Lehi and

his family responded when they were asked by God to do something very difficult. Ask a student to read 1 Nephi 2:2–4 aloud.

- Why would it have been difficult for Lehi’s family to obey God’s command to leave Jerusalem?

Invite students to study 1 Nephi 2:9–13, 16, looking for differences between the attitudes and behaviors of Laman and Lemuel and those of Nephi in response to this commandment. (*Note:* This activity will encourage students to practice the important scripture study skill of comparing and contrasting.)

- What words and phrases describe Laman and Lemuel’s response? (They were stiffnecked, they murmured, and they did not know the dealings of God.)
- How did Nephi respond to the commandment to leave Jerusalem? (He was humble; he desired to know the things of God; he had faith in the words of his father, who was a prophet; and he prayed.)
- Why did Nephi respond to the words of his father differently from his brothers?

Give students a moment to ponder whether they are more like Laman and Lemuel or like Nephi when they are asked by the Lord or the leaders of His Church to do something difficult.

Invite a student to read 1 Nephi 2:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify the Lord’s promise to Nephi.

- What statement in these verses summarizes what the Lord promised Nephi? (Make sure that students understand the following principle: **If we keep the commandments, we will prosper in the land.** You might point out that this is one of the most oft-repeated themes in the Book of Mormon. You might encourage students, as they study the Book of Mormon, to watch for the many ways this theme is repeated.)
- What qualities did the Lord commend in Nephi? Why do you think these qualities are important for each of us to have in our relationship with the Lord?
- Though obedience may not always result in temporal prosperity, what blessings can we expect as a result of obedience to the Lord? (To help answer this question, consider reading Mosiah 2:41.)

2 Nephi 31:6–10, 15–16; Mosiah 15:7; 3 Nephi 11:11; 12:19–20, 48

Following the Savior’s example of obedience helps us come unto Him and the Father

Display the following statement by Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Of all the lessons we learn from the life of the Savior, none is more clear and powerful than the lesson of obedience” (“If Ye Love Me, Keep My Commandments,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 35).

- What examples from the Savior’s life illustrate His obedience?

To help students further discuss this question, ask them to read Mosiah 15:7 and 3 Nephi 11:11, looking for what Jesus was willing to do in order to obey His Father.

Invite students to take turns reading 2 Nephi 31:6–10, 15–16 aloud while class members look for what we can learn from the Savior’s example about the importance of obedience and the blessings that come from obedience.

- What can we learn from the Savior’s example about the importance of obedience? What can we learn from His example about the blessings that come from obedience? (Make sure students identify this principle: **As we follow the Savior’s example of obedience to His Father, we will remain on the narrow path that leads to salvation.**)

Display the following statement by Elder Robert D. Hales, and ask a student to read it aloud:



“Spiritually mature obedience is ‘the Savior’s obedience.’ It is motivated by true love for Heavenly Father and His Son. . . . Our love of the Savior is the key to Savior-like obedience” (“If Ye Love Me, Keep My Commandments,” 36–37).

- Why is love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ “the key” to obeying the commandments?

Point out that the resurrected Jesus Christ taught the Nephites about the purposes of obeying the commandments. Ask students to silently read 3 Nephi 12:19–20, 48 to discover these purposes.

- According to these verses, what did the Savior say were the reasons we have been given the commandments? (Students should identify the following principle: **As we come unto Christ and keep the commandments, we will become more like Him and our Father in Heaven, and we will be saved.**)
- In what ways has your obedience helped you to come to the Savior?

Give students a moment to ponder what they might do to be more obedient to Heavenly Father’s commandments so they can be more like Him and His Son.

1 Nephi 3:4–7, 15–16; 4:1–2; 7:12; 17:1–31; 18:1–4

The Lord provides help to those who are obedient

Invite students to consider a time when keeping a particular commandment of God seemed difficult or when fulfilling a Church calling or assignment seemed challenging. Remind students that Nephi and his brothers faced danger and possible death when God commanded them to return to Jerusalem to obtain the brass plates. Ask students to read 1 Nephi 3:4–7 and identify a principle that they learn from Nephi’s example that can increase their own capacity to be obedient.

- What principle can we learn from Nephi’s response to a difficult commandment from God? (Write the following principle on the board as students discover it: **If we seek to do what the Lord commands, He will prepare a way for us to accomplish it.**)

To help students understand this principle, write the following references on the board and give students time to search them, looking for how Nephi responded when seeking to accomplish the difficult things he was commanded to do: 1 Nephi 3:15–16; 4:1–2; 7:12. After students share what they discovered, explain that Nephi later described some ways in which the Lord helps those who keep His commandments. Ask students to read 1 Nephi 17:1–4 and identify the ways the Lord helps us. Also ask students to highlight Nephi’s phrase “and thus we see,” which is used throughout the Book of Mormon to prepare the reader to give particular attention to the words that follow.

As students share their responses, write the following words on the board:

Nourish
Strengthen
Provide means

Invite students to take a few minutes to scan the account in 1 Nephi 17:5–31; 18:1–4, looking for examples of how the Lord nourished, strengthened, or provided means for Lehi’s family.

- In what ways did the Lord nourish or strengthen Lehi’s family? How did He provide means to help them?
- What blessings given by the Lord to Lehi’s family are similar to blessings we need today?
- When have you experienced the Lord’s help in one of these ways as you have endeavored to obey Him?

Remind students that the Lord asks for our obedience so that He can provide us with rich blessings in our efforts to become like Him. Share the following statement by President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973):



“The most important of all the commandments of God is that one that you are having the most difficulty keeping today. ... Put that aright and then you start on the next one that is most difficult for you to keep. That’s the way to sanctify yourself by keeping the commandments of God” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* [2000], 30).

Invite students to think about a commandment that they find difficult to obey. Encourage them to make a plan to become more obedient in order to more fully qualify to receive the Lord’s help.

Student Readings

- 1 Nephi 2:1–20; 3:4–7, 15–16; 4:1–2; 7:12; 17:1–31; 18:1–4; 2 Nephi 31:6–10, 15–16; Mosiah 2:20–24, 41; 15:7; 3 Nephi 11:11; 12:19–20, 48.
- Thomas S. Monson, “Obedience Brings Blessings,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 89–92.