

IN THE WILDERNESS; TO THE PROMISED LAND

1 Nephi 16-18

And now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had made an end of speaking to my brethren, behold they said unto me:

A Thou hast declared unto us hard things,

B more than we are able to bear. 2

C And it came to pass that I said unto them that I knew that I had spoken hard things against the wicked, according to the truth;

D₁ and the righteous have I justified,

D₂ and testified that they should be lifted up at the last day;

D₁ wherefore, the guilty taketh the truth to be hard,

D₂ for it cutteth them to the very center. 3

C And now my brethren, if ye were righteous and were willing to hearken to the truth, and give heed unto it, that ye might walk uprightly before God,

B then ye would not murmur because of the truth, and say:

A Thou speakest hard things against us. 4

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did exhort my brethren, with all diligence, to keep the commandments of the Lord. 5 And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord; insomuch that I had joy and great hopes of them, that they would walk in the paths of righteousness. 6

Now, all these things were said and done as my father dwelt in a tent in the valley which he called Lemuel. 7

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, took one of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also, my brethren took of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also Zoram took the eldest daughter of Ishmael to wife. 8

And thus my father had fulfilled all the commandments of the Lord which had been given unto him. And also, I, Nephi, had been blessed of the Lord exceedingly. 9

And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord spake unto my father by night, and commanded him that on the morrow he should take his journey into the wilderness. 10

A And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning, and went forth to the tent door,

B to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither

C we should go into the wilderness. 11

D And it came to pass that we did gather together whatsoever things we should carry into the wilderness,

D and all the remainder of our provisions which the Lord had given unto us; and we did take seed of every kind that we might carry into the wilderness. 12

C And it came to pass that we did take our tents and depart into the wilderness, across the river Laman. 13

B And it came to pass that we traveled for the space of four days, nearly a south-southeast direction,

A and we did pitch our tents again;

- A and we did call the name of the place Shazer. 14
- B And it came to pass that we did take our bows and our arrows, and go forth into the wilderness
- C to slay food for our families;
- C and after we had slain food for our families
- B we did return again to our families in the wilderness,
- A to the place of Shazer.
- A And we did go forth again in the wilderness, following the same direction,
- B keeping in the most fertile parts of the wilderness, which were in the borders near the Red Sea. 15
- C And it came to pass that we did travel for the space of many days,
- D slaying food by the way, with our bows and our arrows and our stones and our slings. 16
- A And we did follow the directions of the ball,
- B which led us in the more fertile parts of the wilderness. 17
- C And after we had traveled for the space of many days,
- D we did pitch our tents for the space of a time, that we might again rest ourselves and obtain food for our families. 18
- A And it came to pass that as I, Nephi, went forth to slay food,
- B behold, I did break my bow,
- C which was made of fine steel;
- B and after I did break my bow,
- A behold, my brethren were angry with me because of the loss of my bow, for we did obtain no food. 19
- B And it came to pass that we did return without food to our families, and being much fatigued, because of their journeying, they did suffer much for the want of food. 20
- C And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael did begin to murmur exceedingly,
- D because of their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness;
- E and also my father began to murmur against the Lord his God;
- F yea, and they were all exceedingly sorrowful,
- E even that they did murmur against the Lord. 21
- D Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, having been afflicted
- C with my brethren because of the loss of my bow, and their bows having lost their springs,
- B it began to be exceedingly difficult,
- A yea, insomuch that we could obtain no food. 22

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did speak much unto my brethren, because they had hardened their hearts again, even unto complaining against the Lord their God. 23

A₁ And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow, with a sling and with stones.

A₂ And I said unto my father: Whither shall I go to obtain food? 24

A₃ And it came to pass that he did inquire of the Lord, for they had humbled themselves because of my words; for I did say many things unto them in the energy of my soul. 25 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father; and he was truly chastened because of his murmuring against the Lord, insomuch that he was brought down into the depths of sorrow. 26

B And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord said unto him: Look upon the ball, and behold the things which are written. 27 And it came to pass that when my father beheld the things which were written upon the ball, he did fear and tremble exceedingly, and also my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and our wives. 28

C And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball,

D that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them. 29

E And there was also written upon them a new writing,

F which was plain to be read,

F which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord;

E and it was written and changed from time to time,

D according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it.

C And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things. 30

B And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did go forth up into the top of the mountain, according to the directions which were given upon the ball. 31

A₁ And it came to pass that I did slay wild beasts,

A₂ insomuch that I did obtain food for our families. 32 And it came to pass that I did return to our tents, bearing the beasts which I had slain; and now when they beheld that I had obtained food, how great was their joy!

A₃ And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord, and did give thanks unto him. 33

And it came to pass that we did again take our journey, traveling nearly the same course as in the beginning; and after we had traveled for the space of many days we did pitch our tents again, that we might tarry for the space of a time. 34 And it came to pass that Ishmael died, and was buried in the place which was called Nahom. 35

A And it came to pass that the daughters of Ishmael did mourn exceedingly, because of the loss of their father,

B and because of their afflictions in the wilderness;

C and they did murmur against my father,

D because he had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem, saying:

A Our father is dead;

B yea, and we have wandered much in the wilderness, and we have suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and after all these sufferings we must perish in the wilderness with hunger. 36

C And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me;

D and they were desirous to return again to Jerusalem. 37

A And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael:

B Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren. 38

C Now, he says that the Lord has talked with him, and also that angels have ministered unto him.

D But behold, we know that he lies unto us; and he tells us these things,

C and he worketh many things by his cunning arts, that he may deceive our eyes,

B thinking, perhaps, that he may lead us away into some strange wilderness; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure.

A And after this manner did my brother Laman stir up their hearts to anger. 39

And it came to pass that the Lord was with us, yea, even the voice of the Lord came and did speak many words unto them, and did chasten them exceedingly; and after they were chastened by the voice of the Lord they did turn away their anger, and did repent of their sins, insomuch that the Lord did bless us again with food, that we did not perish. 17:1

And it came to pass that we did again take our journey in the wilderness; and we did travel nearly eastward from that time forth.

A And we did travel and wade through much affliction in the wilderness; and our women did bear children in the wilderness. 2

B And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, our women did give plenty of suck for their children, and were strong, yea, even like unto the men; and they began to bear their journeyings without murmurings. 3

C And thus we see that the commandments of God must be fulfilled.

D And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth
nourish them, and
strengthen them, and
provide means

C whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them;

B wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness. 4

A And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness. 5

- A₁ And we did come to the land
- A₂ which we called Bountiful,
- A₃ because of its much fruit and also wild honey;
- B and all these things were prepared of the Lord that we might not perish.
- C And we beheld the sea, which we called Irreantum, which, being interpreted, is many waters.
6 And it came to pass that we did pitch our tents by the seashore;
- B and notwithstanding we had suffered many afflictions and much difficulty, yea, even so much that we cannot write them all, we were exceedingly rejoiced
- A₁ when we came to the seashore;
- A₂ and we called the place Bountiful,
- A₃ because of its much fruit. 7
- A And it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had been in the land of Bountiful for the space of many days, the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying:
- B Arise, and get thee into the mountain.
- B And it came to pass that I arose and went up into the mountain, and cried unto the Lord. 8
- A And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people across these waters. 9
- A And I said: Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me? 10
- A And it came to pass that the Lord told me whither I should go to find ore, that I might make tools. 11
- B And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make a bellows wherewith to blow the fire, of the skins of beasts;
- B and after I had made a bellows, that I might have wherewith to blow the fire,
- C I did smite two stones together that I might make fire. 12
- C For the Lord had not hitherto suffered that we should make much fire, as we journeyed in the wilderness; for he said:
- D I will make thy food become sweet, that ye cook it not; 13
- I D And I will also be your light in the wilderness;
II and I will prepare the way before you,
- III E if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments;
- III E wherefore, inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments
- II F ye shall be led towards the promised land;
I and ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led.[1] 14
- F Yea, and the Lord said also that: After ye have arrived in the promised land,

G ye shall know that I, the Lord, am God; and that I, the Lord, did deliver you from destruction;

G yea, that I did bring you out of the land of Jerusalem. 15

H Wherefore, I, Nephi, did strive to keep the commandments of the Lord, and I did exhort my brethren to faithfulness and diligence. 16

And it came to pass that I did make tools of the ore which I did molten out of the rock. 17

A a₁ And when my brethren saw that I was about to build a ship, they began to murmur against me, saying:

a₂ Our brother is a fool,

a₃ for he thinketh that he can build a ship; yea, and he also thinketh that he can cross these great waters. 18

b And thus my brethren did complain against me, and were desirous that they might not labor,

c for they did not believe that I could build a ship;

c neither would they believe that I was instructed of the Lord. 19

b And now it came to pass that I, Nephi, was exceedingly sorrowful because of the hardness of their hearts;

a₁ and now when they saw that I began to be sorrowful they were glad in their hearts, insomuch that they did rejoice over me, saying:

a₂ We knew that ye could not construct a ship, for we knew that ye were lacking in judgment;

a₃ wherefore, thou canst not accomplish so great a work. 20

B And thou art like unto our father,

C led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart;

D yea, he hath led us out of the land of Jerusalem,

E and we have wandered in the wilderness

F for these many years;

G and our women have toiled, being big with child; and they have borne children in the wilderness and suffered all things,

H save it were death;

H and it would have been better that they had died

G before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions. 21

F Behold, these many years

E we have suffered in the wilderness, which time we might have enjoyed our possessions and the land of our inheritance; yea, and we might have been happy. 22

D And we know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people;
 for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments, according to the law of Moses;
 wherefore, we know that they are a righteous people;

C and our father hath judged them, and hath led us away because we would hearken unto his words;

B yea, and our brother is like unto him.

A And after this manner of language did my brethren murmur and complain against us. 23

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake unto them, saying:

A₁ Do ye believe that our fathers, who were the children of Israel,

A₂ would have been led away out of the hands of the Egyptians

B if they had not hearkened unto the words of the Lord? 24

a Yea, do ye suppose that they would have been led out of bondage,

b if the Lord

c had not commanded

d Moses

e that he should lead them out of bondage? 25

f Now ye know that the children of Israel were in bondage;

f and ye know that they were laden with tasks, which were grievous to be borne;

e wherefore, ye know that it must needs be a good thing for them, that they should be brought out of bondage. 26

d Now ye know that Moses

c was commanded

b of the Lord

a to do that great work; and ye know that by his word the waters of the Red Sea were divided hither and thither, and they passed through on dry ground. 27

C But ye know that the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, who were the armies of Pharaoh. 28

D And ye also know that they were fed with manna in the wilderness. 29

Yea, and ye also know that

Moses, by his word according to the power of God which was in him, smote the rock, and there came forth water, that the children of Israel might quench their thirst. 30

AA

E And notwithstanding they being led, the Lord their God, their Redeemer, going before them, leading them by day and giving light unto them by night,

- F and doing all things for them which were expedient for man to receive,
- E they
hardened their hearts and
blinded their minds, and
reviled against Moses and against the true and living God. 31
- BB D And it came to pass that according to his word
he did destroy them;
and according to his word
he did lead them;
and according to his word
he did do all things for them;
and there was not any thing done
save it were by his word. 32
- C And after they had crossed the river Jordan he did make them mighty unto the driving out
of the children of the land, yea, unto the scattering them to destruction. 33
- CC B a And now, do ye suppose that the children of this land, who were in the land of promise, who
were driven out by our fathers, do ye suppose that they were righteous?
Behold, I say unto you, Nay. 34
Do ye suppose that our fathers would have been more choice than they if they had been
righteous?
I say unto you, Nay. 35
- b Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But
behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and
the fulness of the wrath of God was upon them;
- DD c and the Lord did curse the land against them,
and bless it unto our fathers;
- c yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction,
and he did bless it unto our fathers unto their obtaining power over it. 36
- b Behold, the Lord hath created the earth that it should be inhabited; and he hath created
his children that they should possess it. 37
- EE a i And he raiseth up a righteous nation,
ii and destroyeth the nations of the wicked. 38
- i And he leadeth away the righteous into precious lands,
ii and the wicked he destroyeth, and curseth the land unto them for their sakes. 39
- FF iii He ruleth high in the heavens, for it is his throne, and this earth is his
footstool. 40 And he loveth those who will have him to be their God.
- A₁ Behold, he loved our fathers, and he covenanted with them, yea, even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and
he remembered the covenants which he had made;
- A₂ wherefore, he did bring them out of the land of Egypt. 41
- And he did straiten them in the wilderness with his rod;
for they hardened their hearts, even as ye have;
and the Lord straitened them
because of their iniquity.
He sent fiery flying serpents among them; and after they were bitten he prepared a way that they
might be healed; and the labor which they had to perform was to look; and because of the
simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished. 42

- AA And they did harden their hearts from time to time, and they did revile against Moses, and also against God;
- BB nevertheless, ye know that they were led forth by his matchless power into the land of promise. 43
- CC And now, after all these things, the time has come that they have become wicked, yea, nearly unto ripeness;
- DD and I know not but they are at this day about to be destroyed; for I know that the day must surely come that they must be destroyed, save a few only, who shall be led away into captivity. 44
- EE Wherefore, the Lord commanded my father that he should depart into the wilderness;[2]

and the Jews also
 sought to take away his life;
 yea, and ye also
 have sought to take away his life;
 wherefore, ye are murderers in your hearts and ye are like unto them. 45

Ye are swift to do iniquity
 but slow to remember the Lord your God.

Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice,
 but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words;
 wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder,
 which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder. 46

a And ye also know that by the power of his almighty word

- b he can cause
 c the earth that it shall pass away;

A yea, and ye know that by his word

- b he can cause
 c the rough places
 to be made
 smooth,
 and smooth places
 shall be
 broken up.

- d O, then, why is it, that ye can be so hard in your hearts? 47 Behold, my soul is rent with anguish because of you, and my heart is pained; I fear lest ye shall be cast off forever. Behold, I am full of the Spirit of God, insomuch that my frame has no strength. 48

And now it came to pass that when I had spoken these words, they were angry with me, and were desirous to throw me into the depths of the sea; and as they came forth to lay their hands upon me I spake unto them, saying:

A In the name of the Almighty God, I command you that ye touch me not, for I am filled with the power of God, even unto the consuming of my flesh; and whoso shall lay his hands upon me shall wither even as a dried reed; and he shall be as naught before the power of God, for God shall smite him. 49

B And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto them that they should murmur no more against their father; neither should they withhold their labor from me,

C for God had commanded me that I should build a ship. 50

- D And I said unto them: If God had commanded me to do all things I could do them. If he should command me that I should say unto this water, be thou earth, it should be earth; and if I should say it, it would be done. 51
- D And now, if the Lord has such great power, and has wrought so many miracles among the children of men,
- C how is it that he cannot instruct me, that I should build a ship? 52
- B And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said many things unto my brethren, insomuch that they were confounded and could not contend against me;
- A neither durst they lay their hands upon me nor touch me with their fingers, even for the space of many days.
- A Now they durst not do this lest they should wither before me, so powerful was the Spirit of God; and thus it had wrought upon them. 53
- B And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me:
- C Stretch forth thine hand again unto thy brethren,
and they shall not wither before thee,
but I will shock them, saith the Lord,
- D and this will I do, that they may know that I am the Lord their God. 54
- C And it came to pass that I stretched forth my hand unto my brethren,
and they did not wither before me;
but the Lord did shake them,
- B even according to the word which he had spoken. 55
- A And now, they said: We know of a surety that the Lord is with thee, for we know that it is the power of the Lord that has shaken us.
- And they fell down before me, and were about to worship me, but I would not suffer them, saying: I am thy brother, yea, even thy younger brother; wherefore, worship the Lord thy God, and honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee. 18:1
- A And it came to pass that they did worship the Lord,
- B and did go forth with me; and we did work timbers of curious workmanship.
- C And the Lord did show me from time to time after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship. 2
- D Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers
after the manner which was learned by men,
neither did I build the ship
after the manner of men;
- E but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me;
- D wherefore, it was not after the manner of men. 3
- C And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things. 4
- B And it came to pass that after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine;
- A wherefore, they did humble themselves again before the Lord. 5

- A And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father, that we should arise and go down into the ship. 6
- B And it came to pass that on the morrow, after we had prepared all things, much fruits and meat from the wilderness, and honey in abundance, and provisions according to that which the Lord had commanded us,
- C₁ we did go down into the ship,
- C₂ with all our loading and our seeds, and whatsoever thing we had brought with us, every one according to his age;
- C₁ wherefore, we did all go down into the ship,
- C₂ with our wives and our children. 7 And now, my father had begat two sons in the wilderness; the elder was called Jacob and the younger Joseph. 8
- B And it came to pass after we had all gone down into the ship, and had taken with us our provisions and things which had been commanded us,
- A we did put forth into the sea and were driven forth before the wind towards the promised land. 9
- And after we had been driven forth before the wind for the space of many days, behold, my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and also their wives began to make themselves merry, insomuch that they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness, yea, even that they did forget by what power they had been brought thither; yea, they were lifted up unto exceeding rudeness. 10
- And I, Nephi, began to fear exceedingly lest the Lord should be angry with us, and smite us because of our iniquity, that we should be swallowed up in the depths of the sea; wherefore, I, Nephi, began to speak to them with much soberness; but behold they were angry with me, saying: We will not that our younger brother shall be a ruler over us. 11 And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel did take me and bind me with cords, and they did treat me with much harshness; nevertheless, the Lord did suffer it that he might show forth his power, unto the fulfilling of his word which he had spoken concerning the wicked. 12
- A And it came to pass that after they had bound me insomuch that I could not move, the compass, which had been prepared of the Lord, did cease to work. 13 Wherefore, they knew not whither they should steer the ship, insomuch that there arose a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest, and we were driven back upon the waters for the space of three days; and they began to be frightened exceedingly lest they should be drowned in the sea;
- B nevertheless they did not loose me. 14
- C And on the fourth day,
 which we had been driven back,
 the tempest began to be exceedingly sore. 15
 And it came to pass that we were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea.
 And after we had been driven back upon the waters
 for the space of four days,
- D my brethren began to see that the judgments of God were upon them, and that they must perish save that they should repent of their iniquities;
- E wherefore, they came unto me, and loosed the bands which were upon my wrists, and behold they had swollen exceedingly; and also mine ankles were much swollen, and great was the soreness thereof. 16 Nevertheless, I did look unto my God, and I did praise him all the day long; and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine afflictions. 17
- F Now my father, Lehi, had said many things unto them, and also unto the sons of Ishmael; but, behold, they did breathe out much threatenings against anyone that should speak for me;

G and my parents being stricken in years,
 H₁ and having suffered much grief because of their children,
 H₂ they were brought down, yea, even upon their sick-beds. 18
 H₁ Because of their grief and much sorrow, and the iniquity of my
 brethren,
 H₂ they were brought near even to be carried out of this time to
 meet their God;

G yea, their grey hairs were about to be brought down to lie low in the
 dust; yea, even they were near to be cast with sorrow into a watery
 grave. 19

F And Jacob and Joseph also, being young, having need of much nourishment,
 were grieved because of the afflictions of their mother; and also my wife with
 her tears and prayers, and also my children,

E did not soften the hearts of my brethren that they would loose me. 20

D And there was nothing save it were the power of God, which threatened them with
 destruction, could soften their hearts;

C wherefore, when they saw that they were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea

B they repented of the thing which they had done, insomuch that they loosed me. 21

A a And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither
 I desired it.

b And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed
 the winds did cease, and
 the storm did cease, and
 there was a great calm. 22

a And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did guide the ship, that we sailed again towards the promised
 land. 23

And it came to pass that after we had sailed for the space of many days we did arrive at the promised land;
 and we went forth upon the land,
 and did pitch our tents;
 and we did call it the promised land. 24

And it came to pass that we did begin to till the earth, and we began to plant seeds; yea, we did put all our
 seeds into the earth, which we had brought from the land of Jerusalem. And it came to pass that they did
 grow exceedingly; wherefore, we were blessed in abundance. 25

And it came to pass that we did find upon the land of promise, as we journeyed in the wilderness, that there
 were beasts in the forests of every kind, both
 the cow and
 the ox, and
 the ass and
 the horse, and
 the goat and
 the wild goat, and
 all manner of wild animals, which were for the use of men.

And we did find all manner of ore, both
of gold, and
of silver, and
of copper.

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1. 1 Nephi 17:13. Roman numerals per DWP. Here we have an example of multiple structures, each emphasizing different aspects of the message.
 2. 1 Nephi 17:30-44 is a form of emphasized direct parallel, with the point of emphasis being verses 39-41.