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## Young Men Can See Further

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**Abstract:** This article is a message to young men comparing the Book of Mormon to binoculars, which allow you to see ahead in order to avoid pitfalls and traps. It uses the story of Nephi and his brothers returning to obtain the brass plates to show that young men should fulfill all of their assignments even if they think they cannot.

# THE PRESIDING BISHOPRIC'S PAGE



## YOUNG MEN CAN SEE FURTHER

Binoculars are optical instruments through which we view distant objects more clearly than is possible with the normal eye. Because of the magnifying process, binoculars seem to reach out and bring objects closer to our vision. It is, therefore, possible to see further and to focus attention on interesting and important subjects. In military operations binoculars are used to perceive danger and also to avoid undesirable routes more susceptible to the will of the enemy. They help us view pitfalls and traps where the enemy waits in ambush.

The Lord in his great wisdom gave us another instrument to improve our vision. This instrument is far more valuable than binoculars. When we use it properly, it brings us nearer to God and will help us discern undesirable conditions and circumstances so that we may avoid them. This instrument is known as the Book of Mormon. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, ". . . the Book of Mormon is the most correct of any book on earth and the keystone of our religion, and man would get nearer to God by abiding its precepts, than by any other book." (*History of the Church*, 4:461.)

The Presiding Bishopric want the boys of the Aaronic Priesthood to get so near to the Lord that they will have the knowledge and desire to live clean, wholesome lives, to be preparing themselves for missionary service.

Let us focus our attention on one or two incidents in the life of a young man in the Book of Mormon. His name is Nephi, and he describes himself as being "exceeding young, nevertheless being large in stature. . . ." (1 Nephi 2:16.) Even though he was young he had developed great faith in God; and because of his desire to know God, he exerted great influence over those with whom he associated.

On one occasion after his father, Lehi, had been warned by the Lord of the destruction of Jerusalem, he with his family was commanded to leave Jerusalem and go into the wilderness where he would be led to a promised land. Later Lehi received another commandment from the Lord to send his sons back to Jerusalem. When he requested his sons to return to Jerusalem to obtain the Brass Plates from Laban which was a record of his forefathers, Laman and Lemuel, the two older brothers commenced mur-

muring about the request, saying, “. . . it is a hard thing which I [Lehi] have required of them; . . .” (*Ibid.*, 3:5.)

Do you ever murmur and complain when your bishop makes a request of you to speak at Sacrament meeting? Do you murmur about your ward teaching assignment? Do you murmur about the meetings you should attend? Do you murmur about requests the stake presidency make? Do you murmur about the Word of Wisdom? Do you ever say, “It is a hard thing which he requires of me”? Do you say, “I will do it, but it isn’t the right way”? Have you ever heard some of these expressions made after an assignment has been given: “We have never done it before.” “That is not our problem.” “Why change it, it is still working okay?” “We don’t have time.” “Has anyone else tried it?” As Laman and Lemuel murmured against their father Lehi, he stated as if to explain: “. . . I have not required it of them, but it is a commandment of the Lord.” (*Idem.*)

Let us now briefly analyze the reaction of Nephi, a young man of faith. He simply responded by say-

ing, “. . . 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.” (*Ibid.*, 3:7.) Because of Nephi’s faith and power of persuasion, his brothers, apparently reluctant, went with him back to Jerusalem on their assignment to secure the records recorded on Brass Plates from Laban. Upon their arrival they cast lots and Laman was their representative to meet with Laban to request the records.

You can imagine what kind of attitude Laman possessed as he made his request. Perhaps it was negative in its approach, and when his request did not bring the desired results and Laban thrust him out of the house, he had to flee for his life. He, with his brother Lemuel, was determined to give up and go back to their father, Lehi, and say it couldn’t be done.

Do we ever give up with our first attempt to fill an assignment? (*Continued on page 767*)

## WARD TEACHING SUPPLEMENT

### THE END OF THE WORLD

*The expression “the end of the world” has a dreadful connotation to many people as they visualize some awful catastrophe. In a real sense it is a condition and time that will be viewed with “fear and trembling” by those who reject Jesus Christ and his gospel plan. It will be a fearful time for those who are exponents of Lucifer’s philosophy of hate, murder, stealing, lying, adultery, etc. It will be a time when the air castles created by the evil designs of men will collapse and their false standards will crumble before the Prince of Righteousness, even Jesus Christ.*

*The literal meaning of the expression “end of the world” more specifically has reference to the destruction of the wicked. It is associated with the second advent of Jesus Christ when he comes to usher in the Millennium when “. . . Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.” (Tenth Article of Faith.) To those who are living righteously, it will be a great, glorious, and happy occasion; a time to rejoice with the triumph of good. Of this time the Lord has said “. . . there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.*

*“Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

*“Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.” (Luke 17:34-36.) It might also be said in our present manner of speaking, two shall be driving along the highway in an automobile; and one shall be taken, and the other left. Those taken would be caught up to meet him at his coming, while the wicked who are left will be burned as stubble.*

*In the final analysis we usually just have two choices in life—to do good or to do evil. For surely when the Savior said, “He that is not with me is against me”; would place apathy and omission in the category of wrongdoing as a stumbling block in the path of righteousness. Joshua’s challenge issued hundreds of years ago would seem applicable to us even today when he declared, “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15.)*

## Your Question

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his neighbor.

"Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads." (D&C 88:81-82.)

"And again, by way of commandment to the church concerning the manner of baptism—All those who humble themselves before God, and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church." (*Ibid.*, 20:37.)

Missionaries should also remember that before a person is baptized he or she should subscribe to the covenant of baptism as the Lord has given it by revelation.

## Presiding Bishopric's Page

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When things go wrong or when we first encounter resistance, do we run back to the one having made the assignment and say, "I quit, it can't be done"? Are we content with fifty percent performance, or do we have the faith to persevere and the imagination to try another approach? Here again it was necessary for Nephi to persuade his brothers to stay until "... we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us." (*Ibid.*, 3:15.)

This is a fascinating story that is found in the first few pages of the Book of Mormon that gives us insight to the unhappiness and trouble that can come to people because of disobedience, because of unfaithfulness. It is also a story of the importance of faithfulness, of keeping in tune with our Father in heaven, of studying the scriptures, developing a vision for righteousness, and to help us see further.

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