February 3–9

2 Nephi 1-5

"We Lived after the Manner of Happiness"

The scriptures can open the door to personal revelation. As you read 2 Nephi 1– 5, you may find that the Lord has something specific that He wants to teach you.

Record Your Impressions

Create a Note

If you knew your life was coming to an end, what final messages would you want to share with those you love most? When the prophet Lehi felt he was nearing the end of his life, he gathered his children together one last time to prophesy and share the gospel truths he cherished with the people he cherished. He taught of liberty, obedience, the Fall of Adam and Eve, redemption through Jesus Christ, and joy. Not all of his children accepted his final testimony, but those who did—along with the millions who read it today—found in his testimony principles for living "after the manner of happiness" (2 Nephi 5:27).

Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

2 Nephi 2

I am free to choose eternal life.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson said: "God intends that His children should act according to the moral agency He has given them. … It is His plan and His will that we have the principal decision-making role in our own life's drama" ("Free Forever, to Act for Themselves," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 16). In his teachings about agency, Lehi identified essential conditions that make agency possible and enable us to reach our divine potential, including the following:

- 1. A knowledge of good and evil (2 Nephi 2:5)
- 2. A law given to mankind (2 Nephi 2:5)
- 3. Opposing, enticing choices (2 Nephi 2:11)
- 4. Power to act (2 Nephi 2:16)

As you read 2 Nephi 2, what do you learn about each of these conditions of agency and their relationship to each other? What would happen to our agency if one or more of these conditions were missing? What else do you learn about agency from Lehi's words?

2 Nephi 2:22-29

The Fall and the Atonement of Jesus Christ are essential parts of Heavenly Father's plan.

Many people see the Fall of Adam and Eve as a tragic event. However, Lehi's teachings about the Fall reveal why it was a necessary part of the Father's plan for our eternal progression. As you read these verses, look for why the Fall needed to happen in order for us—Heavenly Father's children—to progress. How did the Savior's atoning sacrifice redeem us from the Fall?

See also Moses 5:9–12; 6:51–62; "Fall of Adam and Eve," Gospel Topics, topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

² Nephi 3:6-24 Joseph Smith was foreordained to restore the gospel.

The last part of 2 Nephi 3 contains a prophecy given by Joseph of Egypt about a future seer who would share his name (see verses 14–15)— Joseph Smith. It also has a lot to say about Joseph Smith's mission. What do verses 6–24 say that Joseph Smith, a "choice seer," would do to bless God's people? How has Joseph Smith's work been "of great worth" to you?

One important part of Joseph Smith's mission was to bring forth the writings of the seed of Joseph, which are contained in the Book of Mormon. What do you learn from this chapter about the importance of the Book of Mormon?

See also Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24–38 (in Bible appendix).

^{2 Nephi 4:15–35} I can turn to God in my weakness.

Nephi had recently lost his father. The responsibility for leading his family now rested on him. He felt surrounded by temptation and was discouraged because of his sins. Even if your circumstances are different from Nephi's, you may relate to some of his thoughts and emotions recorded in 2 Nephi 4:15–35. What helped Nephi in his afflictions? How can Nephi's response to his challenges help you face your struggles?

^{2 Nephi 5} Happiness is found in living the gospel.

How would you define happiness? Nephi wrote that his people lived "after the manner of happiness" (2 Nephi 5:27). You might look for choices Nephi and his people made that led to happiness—ways they supported each other and their families, what they valued in their community, and so on. What do you learn that can help you build a life of happiness, as the people of Nephi did?

² Nephi 5:20-21 What was the curse that came upon the Lamanites?

In Nephi's day the curse of the Lamanites was that they were "cut off from [the Lord's] presence ... because of their iniquity" (2 Nephi 5:20– 21). This meant the Spirit of the Lord was withdrawn from their lives. When Lamanites later embraced the gospel of Jesus Christ, "the curse of God did no more follow them" (Alma 23:18).

The Book of Mormon also states that a mark of dark skin came upon the Lamanites after the Nephites separated from them. The nature and appearance of this mark are not fully understood. The mark initially distinguished the Lamanites from the Nephites. Later, as both the Nephites and Lamanites each went through periods of wickedness and righteousness, the mark became irrelevant as an indicator of the Lamanites' standing before God.

Prophets affirm in our day that dark skin is not a sign of divine disfavor or cursing. The Church embraces Nephi's teaching that the Lord "denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female" (2 Nephi 26:33). President Russell M. Nelson declared: "The Lord has stressed His essential doctrine of equal opportunity for His children. … Differences in culture, language, gender, race, and nationality fade into insignificance as the faithful enter the covenant path and come unto our beloved Redeemer" ("President Nelson Remarks at Worldwide Priesthood Celebration" [June 1, 2018], newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

See also "Till We All Come in the Unity of the Faith" (video, ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit will help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some ideas.

2 Nephi 1:13-25

What do these verses teach us about a righteous parent's greatest wishes for his or her children?

2 Nephi 3:6

Read together "Seer" in the Bible Dictionary. How was Joseph Smith a seer? Why are we grateful for the work that Joseph Smith accomplished? (see 2 Nephi 3:6–24).

2 Nephi 4:20-25

As you read 2 Nephi 4:20–25 together, pause after each verse, and invite family members to share when they have experienced or felt what Nephi describes. What has God done for our family?

2 Nephi 5

What are some of the ways your family is living "after the manner of happiness"? As your family reads 2 Nephi 5, you could discuss the things the Nephites cared about: family (verse 6), the commandments (verse 10), the scriptures (verse 12), education (verse 15), temples (verse 16), work (verse 17), and Church callings (verse 26). One way to do this is to find objects that represent some of these things and talk about how we show that we, like the Nephites, value these same things.

For more ideas for teaching children, see this week's outline in *Come*, *Follow Me—For Primary*.

Suggested song: "Praise to the Man," Hymns, no. 27.

Improving Our Teaching

Be observant. If you pay attention to what is happening in your children's lives, you will find excellent teaching opportunities. Comments your children make or questions they ask can also be opportunities for teaching moments. (See *Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 16.)