

1 Nephi 16–22: Journey to Promised Land

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1. What was taken away after the apostles?

After Old Testament and the writings of the twelve apostles go forth “from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church...; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.... [and]... there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book....” (1 Ne 13:26–28)

a. taken away from the gospel

Greek philosophy: faith, repentance, revelation, God; theosis; unpaid officers

Greek philosophy: cautious acquaintance (1st), casual friends (2nd), close friends (3rd), courtship (4th), marriage (5th)

Marriage of Church and state at Nicea in AD 325. Central authority, paid clergy, force instead of persuasion was used to silence heresy, lavish churches, adopted ways of showing respect for emperor (incense, robes, gestures, processions).

b. covenants taken away

Baptism, sacrament, priesthood ordination, marriage had been ordinances or public witnesses of a covenant. Before AD 300, they were becoming sacraments given by a priest to bless a person with God’s grace.

Baptism for dead before AD 200, prayer circles, celibacy (not marriage)

c. taken away from the book

Jews removed from Old Testament (brass plates, JST, DSS, LXX), New Testament canon not fixed until after AD 400 (over 5000 manuscripts; 95% like our current New Testament).

“The worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within a hundred years after it was composed” (Scrivener)

“No single known historical church, denomination, or set of believers meets all the requirements for the great and abominable church. ... Such an agent would have had its origins in the second half of the first century and would have done much of its work by the middle of the second century.” About 150 years later a centralized, orthodox Catholic church began with the Nicene council in AD 325. In AD 1054, the Catholic Church split into the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches. (Robinson)

2. Journey to Bountiful



Note: U.S. cities are added to show equivalent relative distances from Salt Lake City (SLC).

After Lehi’s sons married the daughters of Ishmael, the Lord commanded Lehi to leave the valley of Lemuel (Grand Junction, CO). The next morning they found the Liahona. They traveled south-southeast for 4 days and camped at Shazer.

They then traveled many days slaying food with bows and slings along the way. They followed the directions of the Liahona, which led them in the more fertile parts of the wilderness, probably on the east side of the mountains. At their next camp (Mecca area), Nephi’s steel bow broke and their other bows had lost their spring. Even Lehi murmured along with Laman. Nephi made a bow and arrow. [Only the bow broke; Arrows and bows must match in weight, length and stiffness.] Nephi asked Lehi where to go for food and later returned with food.

After traveling many days they camped. Ishmael died and was buried at Nahom (mourn or consolation) about 1400 miles from Jerusalem (St. Louis, MO). LDS scholars found a burial place (NHM) or Nihm (see map).

Only the daughters mourned Ishmael’s death according to ancient Arab customs (Nibley 219). They murmured against Lehi and wanted to return to Jerusalem. Laman wanted to kill Lehi and Nephi. The voice of the Lord spoke many words to them and caused them to repent.

After leaving Nahom, they traveled “nearly eastward” [@ 19th parallel]. The Lord did not allow them to make fire (safety). The Lord made their uncooked food sweet and was their “light in the wilderness.” They waded through much affliction which included “famine,” thirst and “all manner of diseases” (Mos 1:17; Al 9:22). [Malaria and bad water] and their “women” (HEB word for wife) did bear children. This suggests that it may have taken only about a year to get to Nahom. They arrived in Bountiful, 8 years after leaving Jerusalem. The entire trip of 2100 miles (SLC to Washington DC) could have been made in 4-6 months.

“They were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence” and then the Liahona stopped working. “As they were unfaithful they did not prosper nor progress in their journey, but were driven back...; and therefore they were smitten with famine [thirst] and sore afflictions, to stir them up in remembrance of their duty.” (Al 37:41-43, Mosiah 1:17)

They camped “by the seashore” and called the land Bountiful “because of its much fruit and also wild honey.”

Some days later “the voice of the Lord” told Nephi to go up into the mountain where the Lord commanded Nephi to build a ship. Nephi asked where to find ore to make tools but not how to make them. This suggests that Nephi was a metal worker. Laman did not believe Nephi could build a ship and did not want to help. He murmured and mocked the “fool” Nephi.

Nephi referred to Moses’ journey in the wilderness and to the brass (bronze) serpent that Moses held up to heal all who looked at it. “Because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished.” Nephi said Laman and Lemuel were “murderers in [their] hearts” who had seen an angel and heard the voice of the Lord. They got angry and wanted to throw Nephi into the sea. Nephi commanded them not to touch him or they would wither. After many days, the Lord told Nephi to touch his brothers and the Lord did shake them. Then they began to help build the ship.

The Lord “did show [Nephi] from time to time” how to work the timbers. “Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things.”

On the ship, Laman and friends “began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness.” When Nephi spoke “to them with much soberness,” they were angry. They bound Nephi with cords and treated him “with much harshness”.

OED *rudeness* = 3. Roughness, harshness, or violence in action or in the treatment of others.

Earlier, Nephi had prayed and broke the cords. When I was a kid, my Dad threatened to tie me in bed at night, I said, “I’ll just break the ropes like Nephi. Then, what will you do?” He spanked me and left the room to laugh.

This time Nephi did not break the cords. “The Lord did suffer it that he might show forth his power.” The Liahona stopped working, a storm arose, and they were driven back for four days. Even though Nephi’s wrists and ankles were swollen and very sore, Nephi praised the Lord and did not murmur because of his afflictions. Laman threatened anyone who spoke for Nephi. Finally the fear of death caused Laman to loose Nephi. The storm stopped and the Liahona began working again. Many days later they arrived at the promised land.

The next four chapters parallel Nephi’s vision of tree of life.

| Events | 1 Nephi | |
|--|---------|-------------|
| Christ’s crucifixion. Jews to be scattered | 11 | 19 |
| His omniscience and love for covenant people | 12 | 20 (Isa 48) |
| Day of Gentiles; nursing fathers and mothers | 13 | 21 (Isa 49) |
| Restoration or Israel; good over evil | 14 | 22 |

3. Liahona (receive Holy Ghost)

Given for whom?

for Laman, Lemuel, and us; not for Lehi and Nephi.

What were the two functions of the Liahona?

1. Point the way they should go, day by day; look & heed; (wisdom); guide ship by looking at compass often.
2. Words that changed from *time to time* and gave understanding of the ways of the Lord (truth, knowledge); e.g., murmured during broken bow; how to build ship

What did they have to do?

“Give heed to this compass” or look often and follow. It was not an AAA map of trip show each part of the journey.

What caused the Liahona to stop working?

“Forgot to exercise their faith and diligence ..., because of their transgressions”; On the ship, wickedness

How does the Liahona story apply to us?

Receive Holy Ghost (Al 37:38–46); confirmation

Physical representation of the Holy Ghost so we can learn what it means to “receive the Holy Ghost” and what happens when we do not look for or follow our promptings or inner guide.

We receive about 200 revelations (promptings) a day. Some call this our conscience. We often feel (not) right

“He hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words” (17:45)

“I had heard the voice of the Lord speaking unto me in very word, *from time to time*” (Jac 7:5); receive knowledge or revelations “from time to time.” (D&C 1:28; 58:56; 90:14)

How the Liahona relate to rod of iron?

Not cling to rod = not look. Liahona was their rod of iron that did “point unto them a straight course to the promised land.” (Al

37:44). Anyone who says the shortest distance between 2 points is a straight line, has not driven in New York City.

“It is as easy to give heed to the word of Christ, which will point to you a straight course to eternal bliss, as it was for our fathers to give heed to this compass, which would point unto them a straight course to the promised land.” (Al 37:44)

How were Moses and Israelites guided in wilderness?

“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 we should go into the wilderness.” (1 Ne 16:10)

“The directions of the ball... led us in the more fertile parts of the wilderness.” (16:16)

“The pointers which were in the ball... did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them. ²⁹ And there was also written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it.” (16:28–29)

“If they had faith to believe that God could cause that those spindles should point the way they should go, behold, it was done; therefore they had this miracle, and also many other miracles wrought by the power of God, day by day. ⁴¹ Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by small means.... They were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey; ⁴² Therefore, they tarried in the wilderness, or did not travel a direct course, and were afflicted with hunger and thirst, because of their transgressions. ...

⁴³ These things are not without a shadow; for as our fathers were slothful to give heed to this compass (now these things were temporal) they did not prosper; even so it is with things which are spiritual. ⁴⁴ For behold, it is as easy to give heed to the word of Christ, which will point to you a straight course to eternal bliss, as it was for our fathers to give heed to this compass, which would point unto them a straight course to the promised land. ⁴⁵ ... Is there not a type in this thing? For just as surely as this director did bring our fathers, by following its course, to the promised land, shall the words of Christ, if we follow their course, carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise. ⁴⁶ O my son, do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way; for so was it with our fathers; for so was it prepared for them, that if they would look they might live; even so it is with us. The way is prepared, and if we will look we may live forever. (Alma 37:38–46)

4. How did Lehi fulfill the commandments given him?

“And thus my father had fulfilled all the commandments of the Lord which had been given unto him.” (1 Ne 16:8; 5:20)

This was after Lehi’s sons marry Ismael’s daughters.

⁵ ²⁰ (after brass plates) “thus far I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us.”

What commandments?

Preach repentance, leave Jerusalem, get brass plates, get Ishmael, make plates, [later leave tomorrow, build ship,]

Kept Law of Moses (offered sacrifice, clean animals, love God, love neighbor, 10 commandments)

While Nephi was hesitating to kill Laban, he realized that “they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law.” (1 Ne 4:15)

Included general commandments (Law of Moses) and personal commandments (leave, brass plates,...) that came to them directly through the spirit.

How were they given?

After the resurrection, Jesus “through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles” (Acts 1:2)

How does this verse relate to the sacrament prayer?

“...that they may... witness unto thee,... that they are willing to ... keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.” (Moro 4:3)

Understand, make, and keep covenants as contained in the scriptures

After learning about seeking truth or wisdom, I began studying words used in covenants and commandments as contained in the scriptures. I used the computer (LDS View) to look up all references to ‘keep commandments’ and ‘commandments given.’

When my wife and children take the sacrament, they covenant to keep God’s commandments, not mine. Priesthood holders (e.g., missionaries, fathers) are responsible to help people understand, make, and keep covenants. They help by inviting and enticing with words and example. However, they do not use compulsory means.

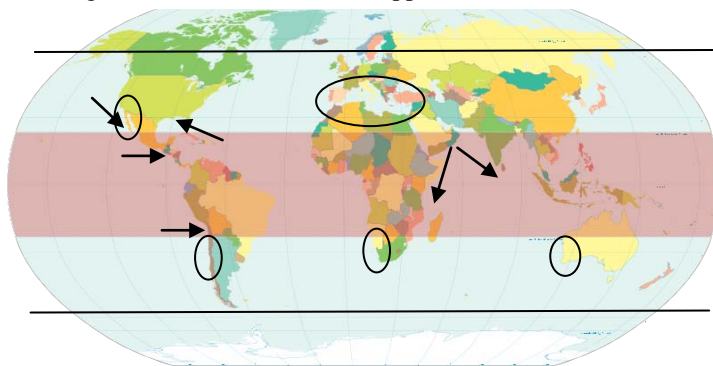
If family members disagree with me or church leaders, I want them to pray like Nephi to know how to respond. Nephi obeyed God not Lehi. One bishop called Relief Society president who prayed and said no.

Laman mocked Lehi and Nephi (build ship) for doing what the Lord commanded.

“There are those who have sought occasion against [Joseph] without cause; ... [Ezra Booth and Isaac Morley] condemned for evil that thing in which there was no evil” (D&C 64:6, 16)

5. Journey to the Promised Land

²³ After we had sailed for ... many days we did arrive at the promised land; and we went forth upon the land, and did pitch our tents. ... ²⁴ We did put all our seeds into the earth, which we had brought from the land of Jerusalem. And ... they did grow exceedingly. ... ²⁵ We did find ... in the wilderness, that there were beasts in the forests of every kind ... the cow ... ox, ... ass ... horse, ... goat ... 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. (1 Ne 18:23–25)

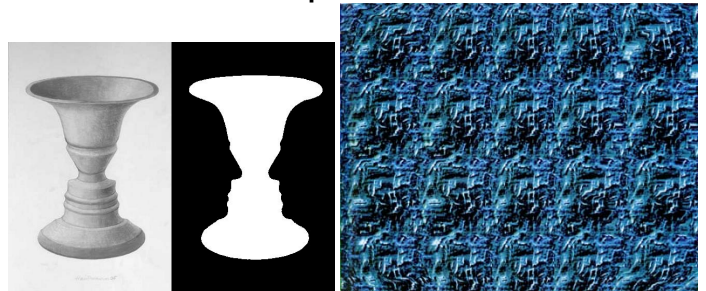


Mid-latitude areas are above or below the tropics (shaded) and below or above the polar ice cap (lines). Ovals show the five areas with a Mediterranean climate like Jerusalem. The arrows show proposed travel directions from Bountiful and landing places in the promised land.

Seeds from “the land of Jerusalem” will grow exceedingly only in an area with a similar climate. Lesson 1 discussed several other indicators of a mid-latitude location for Lehi’s family.

Seeds from one area cannot be planted anywhere in the world and be expected to “grow exceedingly.” They might germinate in many locations, but they will “grow exceedingly” only in an area with a similar climate. Plants and seeds today are classified according to climate zones and then sold accordingly. The first European settlers in New England and Australia suffered famine and privation for years until they could determine by trial and error what would best grow in their new climate, and where to get suitable seeds and plants. The land of Jerusalem is in one of only five Mediterranean climate zones. ()

6. What can one see in pictures like these?



Years ago, I saw a picture (left) that can be seen as either a vase or two faces looking at each other. Later, I saw a 3D image (right) of the same thing. If one looks at a larger version of this 3D-image and focuses the eyes in front of the image, 3D faces will appear. If one focuses behind the image, 3D vases appear.

Although a 3-D picture doesn’t change, where you *focus* your eyes determines what you *see*. Some people only see a strange pattern while others see a 3-D image. What you *see* determines how you *feel* and how you respond. Some people *love* these pictures because they can see a 3-D image. Others *hate* them because they have tried many times but have not been able to see a 3-D image. (RCC 1)

7. Two Ways of Viewing and Doing

| What is | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Find fault | 1. Accept (not condone or desire) |
| 2. Blame | 2. Goal focus (end) |
| 3. Punish (if possible) | 3. Method (means) |
| 4. Justify (grievance story) | 4. Do it! (learn, repeat, grateful) |

wisdom: (1) capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; *soundness of judgment in the choice of means and ends...* (SOED=Shorter Oxford English Dictionary)

How were these ways of viewing and doing illustrated?

a. Get the plates of brass

b. Broken bow

c. After Ishmael died

“Laman said unto Lemuel and ... the sons of Ishmael: ... *let us slay...* our brother *Nephi*, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren.” (16:37) To “stir up their hearts to anger.” (16:38)

Birthright; Joseph in Egypt; Angel “the Lord hath chosen him to be a ruler over you” (1 Ne 3:29)

d. Commandment to build a ship

e. Laman tied up Nephi on ship

Nephi tied up on ship, looked to and praised God;

On ship, Laman threatened those who spoke for Nephi

f. Summaries of journey to Bountiful (1 Ne 17)

Nephi:¹ We did travel and wade through much *affliction* in the wilderness; and our women did bear children in the wilderness.² 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...*; and they began to bear their journeyings *without murmurings*.³ ... And if ... men keep the commandments of God *he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them; wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness...*⁶ We were exceedingly rejoiced when we came to the seashore; and we called the place Bountiful....

Laman:²⁰ Our father, led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart; yea, he hath led us out of the land of *Jerusalem*, and we have *wandered* in the wilderness for these many years; and our women have toiled, being big with child; and they have borne children in the wilderness and *suffered* all things, save it were death; and it would have been better that they had died before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions.²¹ Behold, these many years 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*.

If I am following the “manner” or “plan of happiness” that leads to joy, why am I so unhappy?

Both Nephi and Laman were on the same path to the land of promise. Nephi was happy and grateful; Laman was unhappy and ungrateful. Why? (faith story vs. grievance story)

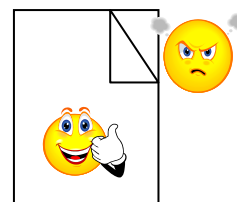
How long did Laman’s story last? (+ evidence inadmissible)

Why didn’t Laman and Lemuel return to Jerusalem?

Two choices when I don’t like something: I can change my viewing or doing!

8. Likening it unto me

I make our bed with one corner turned down as a reminder that we can look at what was done (bed made) and be grateful or at what was not done (corner) and be unhappy.



- If I look for what I like or do not like, and I will find it.

- I can murmur about problems like Laman or seek solutions like Nephi.

- I can be grateful like Nephi or ungrateful like Laman.

- When I catch myself responding like Laman, I can practice changing my viewing and doing to be like Nephi.

- Looking back on an unpleasant time, I can review and relive a grateful survival story like Nephi, or I can review and relive an ungrateful grievance story like Laman.

Choose the right (CTR): I always do the right thing... after exhausting all possible alternatives.

Spilled milk: One day my young son disobeyed me and spilled the milk on the floor. I said in a loud, angry voice: ‘If you every do that again, you will be grounded for the rest of your life! Now get a rag and clean up your mess!’ His mother said he was just a little boy, but mercy was not going to rob justice. As I drove to work, I was still upset. If he continued on the path he was on, he would end up like Laman! Half way to work, the spirit said, ‘You have never taught him how to pour.’ ... Like the 3D picture, the events of the morning did not change, but I now saw things differently. My feelings changed immediately from anger to happy because I knew I could teach him and I began making plans to do it that night.

Losing games: If a sports team loses on weekend, many at church discuss who was to blame (ref, coach, players) and what should be done to those responsible

Self-Blame: Although most prefer to blame others when bad things happen, some blame themselves: ‘It is all my fault. If I had been a better parent or leader this would not have happened.’ They then proceed to punish themselves with endless guilt trips and pity parties instead of making the best of the situation like Nephi.

Repentance or Penance: In the scriptures, repentance means returning to God by keeping covenants and changing self to be more Christlike. During the great apostasy, repentance came to mean *penance* or self-punishment. Even today, many beat up on themselves for things done many years after changing.

Flat tire: If I have a flat tire, I can fix it (repent) and be on my way, OR I can sit at the side of the road having a pity party or blaming myself instead of fixing it. Once it is fixed, it is useful to learn from the experience to avoid similar future experiences. But it is of NO value to waste time in self-pity or self-blame.

Blame Game (Laman)

1. Find fault with what is

(rules, desires, raise bar; murmur; ingratitude)
Last second basket or touchdown; ref misses foul
Etiquette: hand under dinner table? (bad in some countries)
Young girl in our house said no shoes should be on in house.
Holy cow, crap: a missionary in a different country said these words and was thrown out of a house.

2. Blame rule-breaker(s)

(who is responsible?) When we did not know who was responsible, we told our children that they all sit in the living room until someone confessed.

3. Punish or ZAP!

(verbally or physically; guilt trips; we 'should on' people; demand obedience; command and compel)
Punish what I do not want! Silence dissent.

4. Justify (review and keep score of faults; get others to agree; stir others up to anger; find fault with those who do not agree)

More important to be right than happy!
Lawmaker, judge, policeman → tyrant
Grievance story: repeat, relive, share

Change Game (Nephi): Follow promptings (Liahona) in choosing goals and means.

1. Accept what is and can't be changed

(every football play starts where the ball is),
does not condemn or condone "what is",
gratitude for Lord's help (Nephi)

2. Select or focus on righteous goal

(What do I want instead? what can change? who is responsible?)
select → consider menu till an option feels right; others (spouse, counselor) can help with menu;
I want my wife to stop nagging me → kill, closet;
what would you do IF did not drink?
[business: mine, yours, God's]; **serenity prayer**; circle of control, influence, concern

3. Select righteous means or strategy

(what is the next play? invite and entice)
If I do as always done, I'll get what I always got.
Appreciate what I do like.

4. Do it! (run play, evaluate, to step #1?;)

Finding fault is easy!

- If a general rule is mentioned, focus on exceptions. If an exception is mentioned, focus on the general rule.
- If one does 80%, focus on the other 20%. (making bed)
- If one did what you want, focus on how (attitude) or what was not done.
- If one says what you like (e.g., complement), say or think he is a liar, insincere, or just flattering you to get something.
- If one does what you don't like, assume he is mad or bad without any positive intent (charitable interpretation, spin)

Laman could play the change game.

- Accept= Nephi has been bossy in past
- Goal= Nephi to stop ruling over us
- Means= kill him or leave him tied up in the desert
- Do it!

In unpleasant situations, it is easy to respond to like Laman (a natural man). It takes much practice, to respond like Nephi and to catch myself if I do not.

9. How Love Begins ... and Ends

1. How Love Begins

| | |
|---|---|
| Focus: What I like | Attraction |
| View: "Rose-colored" | Appreciate little things |
| Do: Please and honor other Golden Rule | Affection (time, touch, talk) Ask and Accept |

They count positives and discount negatives (faults) of each other. This usually continues through the honeymoon and first stage of marriage. Make regular deposits in the "Emotional Bank Account" (Covey, 7 Habits). Celebrate little things or progress!

2. Habituation

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Focus: What is different | Less Attraction |
| View: Take each other for granted | Less Appreciation |
| Do: Normal | Less Affection and Asking |

3. Expectations (Rules)

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Focus: What I dislike (find fault) | Disappointment |
| View: <i>Blame Game</i> | Depreciation |
| Do: Displease and dishonor other My will be done! "Gold" rules. | Disaffection Demand perfection |

The road to divorce is paved with great *expectations*. When John or Mary fails to meet expectations, the other plays the *Blame Game* (find fault, blame, punish). The focus turns to "what I dislike" and finding fault with spouse and marriage. It is easy to find fault when looking for it. With a magnifying glass, you can see blemishes or faults in beautiful diamonds. It is also common to "raise the bar" making it even harder for the spouse to meet expectations. They demand perfection instead of celebrating progress. They count negatives (faults) and discount positives. Disappointment, depreciation, disaffection, and demands are ways of "punishing" a spouse who fails to meet expectations.

Frequent withdrawals from the Emotional Bank Account.

Love is blind ... but marriage is a real eye opener!

I am unhappy because my spouse does not do what I expect. If my spouse would change, I would be happy. The *Blame Game* seems like the right way to change my spouse.

There is a way that *seemeth right* unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of *death*. (Prov 16:25; 14:12)

What seems right will kill you! Throwing water on a chemical fire may seem right but the explosion it causes can kill you. Trying hard to get out of quicksand seems right, but your efforts cause you to sink faster. When lost in the wilderness, it may seem right to save your water until you die of dehydration.

The *Blame Game* seems like the right way to change other people. Therefore, we continue using these methods even though they make things worse and lead to the death of the relationship.

A young man asked his girlfriend to call every night when she got off work late. When she forgot to call him one night, the *Blame Game* began. The next morning he "chewed her out" for not calling. Within a few weeks they were no longer dating. What seemed right led to the death of the relationship.

"A man dragged his wife into a stake president's office, thrust her in a chair, and said, 'President, tell my wife to obey my priesthood. Then all our problems at home will be solved.' The president opened... [to D&C 121:36-37], looked into the man's eyes, and said quietly, 'According to what I read here, you have no priesthood.'" (Covey) What seemed right to this man was leading to the death of the marriage.

Ways That Seem Right But Usually Don't Work

- Do my will! (You should...)
- Do my will or else! (You must...)
- Do my will because I am smarter, wiser, better, or more righteous than you!
- Do my will cheerfully, willingly, and without being asked!
- Your will be done, not mine. (Lose-Win)

It is natural to do unto others as they do unto you. When attacked, we tend to defend ourselves and fight back. It is not long before both John and Mary are finding fault with each other and feeling justified in



“punishing” each other with “verbal grenades.” Neither John nor Mary likes being treated as they are treating the other. Neither feels happy but it is the other’s fault. Each would rather be right than happy. Each knows the top 10 ways to make the other mad, and feels justified in doing these things to punish the other. When one tries to push one way, the other pushes back. Even if one “submits” and acts as a “slave,” the “master” feels resented and feared instead of loved. They expect that what they are doing will lead to peace, love, and happiness. They seem surprised when their war escalates.



These ways that seem right may get compliance at first but they lead to resentment, resistance, rebellion, retaliation, and revenge.

4. How Love Ends

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Worthless | Last Straw |
| Hopeless (Impossible to change) | Rewrite history (grievance story) |
| Helpless (I can't change it.) | “Divorce” |

- Love is grand ... but divorce is 100 grand.

What happens when grass is not watered?

How does “yellow grass” relate to marriage?

The grass is always greener on the side of the fence you water the most.

Parents have many opportunities to play the blame game or the change game when their teenagers say I'm pregnant, gay, returning from mission disfellowshipped, or using drugs.

Some blame game counselors: Gay son → father's fault

Over the years I have collected stories that show how the two ways of viewing and doing relate to marriage and family. I have put some of these stories in a paper. For copies of the stories, my notes, or this handout, go to www.sviewp.com.

Story: Fast from faultfinding. (see supplement)

Some people find fault with, blame, and punish themselves for finding fault in the past and present.

If You Had Come Unto Me ... (Warner)

[Concerned about her marriage, a woman read a self-help book and later wrote:]

As the author described the intense need we each have for love, I began to feel more and more deprived. ... I decided to write all of this down for my husband to read, and [to list] the many times I had felt emotionally deprived. ... The longer I wrote, the more I began to feel that what I was writing was false. “How could it be false?” ... “I saw and felt it. ...” But the feeling became so powerful... [I] began to pray, saying, “If it is false, show me how...” And then a voice spoke to my mind and said, “*If you had come unto Me, it all would have been different.*”

I was astounded. I went to Church. I read the scriptures ..., I prayed ..., I tried to obey the commandments. “What do you mean, ‘Come unto You?’” And then into my mind flashed pictures of me wanting to *do things my own way*, of *holding grudges*, of *not forgiving*, of *not loving* as God had loved us. I had wanted my husband to “pay” for my ... suffering. I had not let go of the past and had not loved God with all my heart. ...

I ... did not mention to my husband anything. ... But I gave up blaming... I prayed more earnestly, and listened to His Spirit. I read my scriptures, and tried to come to know Him better. Two months passed, and one morning my husband ... said, “...we find fault too much with each other. I am never going to find fault with [you] again.” He did stop finding fault, and he began to compliment me. ... Three years have passed. ... We care deeply about one another, and share... thoughts and feelings, something we had not done for the first 16 years of marriage.

Conclusion

End with testimony.

I have learned by sad experience that playing the Laman blame game seems like the right thing to do but leads to the death of relationships and unhappiness.

Likewise, I have found much happiness when I play the change game while seeking and following the promptings of the Spirit. Watering does help grass become green again! If we come unto Christ, it all will be different.

NOTE: The yellow shading shows what is NOT on the handout that I use in class. The handout makes it possible to share information while only briefly referring to it in class. The handout and any other supplements for the lesson are at www.sviewp.com.

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