

The Dream of Dreams! — Interpretations of Lehi's and Nephi's Dream (1 Nephi 8, 11, 15)

Symbol	Interpretation	Examples Given
The dark and dreary wilderness (8:4) or waste (8:7)	Temptations of the world (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, pg. 312)	Lehi's great desire to be delivered (8:8)
The large and spacious field (8:9,20)	The world (8:20)	
The tree (8:10) also called "tree of life" (11:25; 15:21-22)	The love of God (11:21-22) as shown through the life and mission of the Son 1 Nephi 11:2-7; John 3:16)	The coming of the son of God (11:26-33)
The fruit of the tree (8:11-12)	The atonement of Christ (By their fruits shall ye know them-Matthew 7:20)	The love of Christ that sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men (11:21 -23)
The river of water (8:13) also called "fountain of filthy water" (12:16)	Hell and the depths thereof (12:16; 15:26-36)	Wickedness and war
Brightness of flaming fire that ascends to God (15:30)	Justice of God (15:30)	Divides the wicked from the righteous just as Adam and Eve were separated from the tree of life (Genesis 3:24; Moses 4:31; Alma 12:21; 42:2)
The fountain of "living water" (11:25)	The "love of God" or the same meaning as the tree (11:25; John 4:13-14)	The fountain of living waters not filthy waters (11:25)
The rod of iron (8:19)	The word of God (11:25; 15:23-25)	The ministry of the Son of God (11:24-25)
The "strait and narrow path" (8: 20)	The path that leads to eternal life (2 Nephi 31:18)	First principles and ordinances of the gospel (2 Nephi 31:18) Jesus said: "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:14; 3 Nephi 27:33)
The mist of darkness (8:23)	The temptations of the devil (12:17)	Apostasy, wickedness, war, the great abominable church, plain and precious things removed from the scriptures (12:19-23; 13:1-9, 20-29)
The great and spacious building (8:26)	The pride, wisdom, and vain imaginations of the world (11:35-36,12:18)	The persecution of the Son of God and those who followed him (11:26-36)
The forbidden paths (8:28) and strange roads	Drugs, Pornography, and Immorality (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p.393) "And after"(vs. 25,28) [meaning members of the Church] they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away (Boyd K. Packer, Ensign, May 1985, pg. 35)	The use of the word "forbidden" as it applies to immorality is enlightening. Webster's 1828 dictionary defines "strange" in the following ways: 1 .Foreign; belonging to another country, 2. Not domestic; belonging to others, 3. New, not before known, heard or seen. 4. Odd; unusual; irregular, not according to the common way.

The Tree of Life

(C. Wilfred Griggs, The Tree of Life in Ancient Cultures, *Ensign*, June 1988, pg. 27-31)

"...Christ himself is as the tree of life, the very embodiment of God's love toward his children" (Bruce D. Porter, *King of Kings*, pg. 37)

"...as the Spirit revealed to Nephi the explanation of the vision his father had seen, the Spirit made explicit that the Tree of Life and its precious fruit are symbols of Christ's redemption... the images of Christ and the tree being inextricably linked.... The life, mission, and atonement of Christ are the ultimate manifestations of the Tree of Life, the fruit of the gospel, the love of God..." (Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant*, pg. 160-161)

"The prophet Alma states that the seed planted in our hearts matures into the tree of life (Alma 32:41-42). The angel taught Nephi that the tree of life is a symbol for Christ (1 Nephi 11:7, 20-22). If we follow Alma's counsel of planting and nourishing the seed until it becomes the tree of life within our hearts and souls, the image of Christ will be in our countenance and we will have built a Christ-centered life." (Merrill J. Bateman, *Ensign*, January 1999, pg. 13)

The Fruit of the Tree of Life

"When Lehi in his dream tasted the fruit of the tree of life, he began to feel 'the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men.' (1 Nephi 11:22) This fruit, a symbol of the blessings of the Atonement, filled his soul 'with exceedingly great joy, wherefore, he began to be desirous that his family should partake of it also.' (1 Nephi 8:120-.. Alma likened God's love and His Atonement to the tree of life, on whose fruit the Savior's followers may feast until they are filled, 'that [they] hunger not, neither shall [they] thirst.' (Alma 32:42) The Savior makes this nourishment freely available to all who 'come unto the Holy One of Israel,' feasting 'upon that which perisheth not' (2 Nephi 9:51) — 'the word of Christ.' (2 Nephi 31:20)" (Bruce C. Hafen, *The Belonging: The Atonement and Relationships with God and Family Heart*, pg. 17,313)

"Laman and Lemuel did not partake of the tree of life, which is the love of God (1 Nephi 11:25). The love of God for His children is most profoundly expressed in His gift of Jesus as our Redeemer: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). To partake of the love of God is to partake of Jesus' Atonement and the emancipations and joys which it can bring. Clearly, however, Laman and Lemuel did not have such faith—especially in a Christ yet to come!" (Neal A. Maxwell, "Lessons from Laman and Lemuel," *Ensign*, November 1999, pg. 8)

Words in the Scriptures describing the Tree and the Fruit:

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| 1. 1 Nephi 8:11- Sweet - Most sweet above all that I ever before tasted | 4. 1 Nephi 11:8 - Beauty - Beauty there of was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty |
| 2. 1 Nephi 8:11- White - White to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen | 5. 1 Nephi 11:9 - Precious - Precious above all |
| 3. 1 Nephi 8:12- Desirable -Desirable above all other fruit | 6. 1 Nephi 11:23 - Joyous - Most joyous to the soul |
| | 7. Alma 32:42 - Pure - Pure above all that is pure. |

1 Nephi 8:8 - "...a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy." (2 Nephi 2:25, Psalms 16:1; D&C 101:36)

"We try to be our own masters as if we had created ourselves. Then we hopelessly strive to invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy." (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, pg. 53-54)

"Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God." (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 255)

Rod of Iron

(1 Nephi 15:24, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Note - No verse that contains mention of the rod do you find people falling away.

The 3 Spiritual "C"s (David A Bednar, *A Reservoir of Living Water*. BYU Fireside, February 4, 2007, pg. 7)

1. **Caught Hold** -1 Nephi 8:24 [Simple acceptance of the word]
2. **Clinging** - 1 Nephi 8:24 [Periodically reading, studying, or searching the scriptures. Occasional 'bursts' of study or irregular dipping rather than consistent, ongoing immersion in the word of God.]
3. **Continually Holding Fast** -1 Nephi 8:30 [Consistent reading, searching, and studying of the constant flow of living waters that save] (Only these fell not away)

"Not only will the word of God lead us to the fruit which is desirable above all others, but in the word of God and through it we can find the power to resist temptation, the power to thwart the work of Satan and his emissaries." (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, May 1986, pg. 80)

"But the greatest and most important of all requirements of our Father in heaven and of his Son Jesus Christ, is, to his brethren or disciples, to believe in Jesus Christ, confess him, seek to him, cling to him, make friends with him." (Brigham Young, *JD*, 8: '139)

Strait and Narrow Path

Strait = close or constrictive [Straits of Magellan or Bearing Strait]

A 'strait path,' like a deer path, suggest that few travel the path of the gospel. The world travels along the broad roads. (1 Nephi 12:17)

However we could also add the word 'straight':

D&C 3:2 - "For God doth not walk in crooked paths, neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left, neither doth he vary from that which he hath said, therefore his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round. (It has been traveled before and it works!).

Mist of Darkness

(1 Nephi 12:17)

1. **Blind to the Rod** = The Rod is the Truth (Word of God).
2. **Blind to the River** = Consequences of what Sin will do to you (Depths of Hell).
3. **Blind to the Tree** = If you can't see the tree, you are unable to measure the distance or the Relationship between Christ and you. (Love of God)

However it does not hide the pride and the vanity of the world, found in the great and spacious building.

Great and Spacious Building

(Alma 30:60)

Without a foundation, certainly it shall eventually fall and crumble.

[Satan] - prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2) [Examples: Babel - Genesis 11:4-9; Rameumpton - Alma 31:21]

"However 'large and spacious' that building may be, it is a third-rate hotel whose occupants are all dressed up but have no place to go." (Neil A. Maxwell, Meek and Lowly, pg. 53)

Note - Due to the field (world) we live in, the thickness of the mist (temptations), and the all-encompassing building (pride/vanity) ["Largely due to television, instead of looking over into that spacious building, we are, in effect, living inside of it,..." (Boyd K. Packer, BYU address, January 16, 2007)] one is only able to 'press forward' (mentioned 5 times and denotes resistance; 2 Nephi 31:20) feeling your way through life (3 Nephi 18:25).

Note - How many things in the dream point or are types/shadows of CHRIST (1 Nephi 11:25):

Tree of Life - Numbers 21:5-9; Fountain of Living Waters - John 4:10-11; Rod of Iron/Word of God – John 1:1-3, 14; The Strait & Narrow Way - John 14:6

Finding Christ In One's Life!

WHO-	Lehi (1 Nephi 8:11)	Family (1 Nephi 8:14, 16)	Other Multitudes (1 Nephi 8:30)
HOW-	Prayed (1 Nephi 8: S-9)	Obeyed the Prophet (1 Nephi 8:15-16)	Continually Holding to the Rod(1 Nephi 8:30)

Note - After all that was seen and heard in the dream, in the end there only remained 2 options: 1- 'Fell away...and were lost'(vs. 28) or 2- 'Fell down'...and worshiped (vs. 30).