

Interpretation of Lehi's Vision

Key Scripture 1 Nephi 11–15

Explanation Nephi, after hearing about his father's vision of the tree of life, desired to see the same things his father saw and was granted this request. Upon seeing the tree in vision, he desired to know its interpretation. Nephi then saw the coming of the Son of God and knew that the tree of life represented the love of God. He soon learned the meaning of several other symbols in his father's vision, as this chart illustrates. The angelic ministrant also showed Nephi episodes of world history, including periods of war, colonization, apostasy, and wickedness. Thus in light of 1 Nephi 11–15, the vision of the tree of life can be seen not only as a powerful illustration of God's love shown through the atonement of Jesus Christ, but also as an allegory of the history of the world, as the right-hand column of the chart illustrates.

Source Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 101.

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Symbol	Interpretation	Examples Given
DARK AND DREARY WASTE 1 Nephi 8:7		
LARGE AND SPACIOUS FIELD 1 Nephi 8:9, 20	The world 1 Nephi 8:20	
TREE OF LIFE 1 Nephi 8:10; 11:25; 15:21–22	Love of God 1 Nephi 11:21–22	The coming of the Son of God 1 Nephi 11:13–22
FRUIT OF THE TREE 1 Nephi 8:11–12		
FOUNTAIN/RIVER OF FILTHY WATER 1 Nephi 8:13; 12:16	Hell and the depths thereof 1 Nephi 12:16; 15:26–36	Wickedness and war 1 Nephi 12:13–15
ROD OF IRON 1 Nephi 8:19	The word of God 1 Nephi 11:25; 15:23–25	The ministry of the Son of God 1 Nephi 11:24–25
MIST OF DARKNESS 1 Nephi 8:23	Temptations of the devil 1 Nephi 12:17	Apostasy, wickedness, war, the great and abominable church, plain and precious things removed from the scriptures 1 Nephi 12:19–23; 13:1–9, 20–29
GREAT AND SPACIOUS BUILDING 1 Nephi 8:26	Pride, wisdom, and vain imaginations of the world 1 Nephi 11:35–36; 12:18	Persecution of the Son of God and those who followed him 1 Nephi 11:26–36