

“Press Forward:” A Book of Mormon Family Musical (v. 10.1, 7-9-15)

Act I: In the Wilderness

Overture – From the Dust	Lehi, Nephi, Young Nephi, Cast	(11/13/14)	(:24)
Therefore I Make a Record	Older Nephi	(06/20/03)	(1:50)
This Is Not Show About...	Narrators, Cast	(3/2/14)	(2:10)
People of Jerusalem	Prophets, People of Jerusalem	(3/28/14)	(2:48)
Great and Marvelous	Lehi, Angels	(06/22/03)	(1:43)
Repent! / Who in the World?	Lehi, People of Jerusalem	(06/25/13)	(1:35)
Blessed Art Thou, Lehi	Voice of God	(11/21/14)	(1:07)
Leave It All Behind	Sariah, Angels, Prophets, Y. Nephi	(11/12/14)	(2:37)
Like This River, Like This Valley	Lehi	(6/23/03)	(1:53)
Our Father Is a Fool	Laman ; Lemuel	(6/22/03)	(1:34)
In a Tent	Older Nephi; Lehi’s Family	(3/8/14)	(1:22)
For Myself	Young Nephi	(6/21/03)	(2:13)
Blessed Art Thou, Nephi	Voice of God	(11/14/14)	(1:04)
I Have Dreamed a Dream	Lehi	(11/27/14)	(0:54)
I Will Go	Young Nephi / Lehi	(6/21/03)	(1:55)
Getting the Plates (w/3 songs)	Lehi’s Sons, Laban, Older Nephi	(11/27/14)	(8:30)
What Is All This For?	Sariah, Lehi	(3/7/14)	(3:12)
Now I Know	Sariah, Family , Angels	(11/14/14)	(1:15)
Come With Us	Lehi’s Sons, Ishmael’s Family	(3/28/14)	(1:51)
Joined In Their Journey	Narrators, Family, Young Nephi	(11/17/14)	(2:54)
Beautiful Tonight	Lehi, Sariah	(11/17/14)	(2:25)
Lehi’s Dream	Lehi	(11/20/14)	(3:25)
For Yourself	Young Nephi	(11/24/14)	(1:35)
In the Valley of Lemuel	Narrators	(11/15/14)	(1:20)
Tender Mercies	Nephi’s Wife; Sariah	(3/4/14)	(3:40)
Out Here	Daughters of Ishmael; Family	(3/9/14)	(2:42)
Precious Things	Daughters of Ishmael; Family	(3/28/14)	(2:22)
In the Wilderness	Laman, Men, Older Nephi, Angels	(11/16/14)	(1:13)
Eventually	Sariah, Lehi, Family, Angels	(3/2/14)	(3:50)

Act II: In The Promised Land

Entr’acte: Dance of the Children	Children	(11/17/14)	(:48)
Strength for the Journey	Family	(11/15/14)	(2:41)
Journeyings Without Murmurings	Older Nephi, Family	(11/15/14)	(0:39)
Home At Last	Laman, Lemuel, Nephi2; Family	(11/16/14)	(2:00)
In the Background	Narrators, Women	(8/9/14)	(2:00)

Driven to the Mountain	Nephi2, Angels	(3/2/14)	(1:40)
Our Brother Is a Fool	Laman, Lemuel, Nephi2, Sam	(6/22/14)	(1:55)
I Have Not Forgotten	Sariah, Mrs. Laman, Angels	(4/18/14)	(3:05)
Home At Last, Reprise	Lehi, Family, Sariah	(11/16/15)	(2:07)
Beautiful Tonight, Reprise	Lehi	(11/17/14)	(2:21)
Awake, My Sons	Lehi	(11/19/14)	(4:13)
Hey, Little Brother	Laman	(5/20/06)	(2:07)
Eventually, Reprise	Nephi2, Sariah, Lehi	(3/10/14)	(1:03)
Awake, My Soul	Nephi2, Older Nephi, Angels	(6/23/03)	(3:37)
Wronged! Robbed!	Laman, Lemuel, Lamanites	(3/10/14)	(1:18)
The Manner of Happiness	Nephites, Lamanites	(3/11/14)	(2:17)
The Time Passed Away	Jacob, Nephites	(11/22/14)	(:32)
Eventually, Reprise 2	Older Nephi, Sam, Warriors	(3/10/14)	(1:30)
We Talk of Christ	Older Nephi/Wife, Nephites, Angels	(9/23/00)	(3:20)
Imperfect World	Narrators, Cast	(11/16/14)	(1:10)
From the Dust, Reprise	Older Nephi, Lehi, Nephi2, Cast	(11/18/14)	(:30)
Ye Must Press Forward	Older Nephi, Cast	(2/5/03)	(2:30)

CHARACTER LIST:

LEHI:	A conscientious husband and father in Jerusalem, who becomes a sober, visionary man. (INFJ)
SARIAH:	His wife, dynamic and vibrant. She loves beautiful things, and adores their children. (ENFP)
NEPHI:	Their fourth son, humble and deep-thinking; becomes bold, determined, and passionate (INFJ)
LAMAM:	Their oldest son, intense and angry – and an absolutely devoted husband and father. (ENTJ)
LEMUEL:	Their second son, jovial and sarcastic; a middle child seeking notice and validation (ESTP)
SAM:	Their third son, quiet, compliant, caring, and supportive – a gentle middle child. (ISFJ)
JACOB:	Their fifth son, born in the wilderness – a sober, thoughtful child and future leader. (INFP)
JOSEPH:	Their sixth son, born towards the end of the wilderness journey. (ISTP)
ZORAM:	Formerly a servant in Jerusalem, he is a quiet, loyal adopted son in their household. (ISTJ)

OLDER NEPHI: Primary narrator, an older version of Lehi's fourth son, seasoned by experience. (ENTJ)

NARRATORS: Nephi's two youngest sisters, serving as vibrant angelic narrators throughout the story. (ENFP)

ISHMAEL & WIFE: Aging parents of young adult children, and friends of Lehi and Sariah. (He ISTJ, She ISFJ)

ISHMAEL'S DAUGHTERS: Married to Lehi's sons: **Laman's:** Sensitive and needy, ISFP; **Lemuel's:**

Flippant and jovial, ESFP; **Sam's:** Gentle and supportive, ISFJ; **Nephi's:** Tender and faithful, INFP;

Zoram's: Devoted and steadfast, ISFJ. **THEIR CHILDREN:** Including Laman's 5 y.o. son (ESTP)

ISHMAEL'S SONS, AND THEIR WIVES (2+): Friends of Laman and Lemuel (#1: ISTP/ESFP; #2: ISTJ/ESTJ)

LABAN: A mighty and wicked man, feared in his community, with many armed guards and servants. (ESTJ)

VOICE OF GOD: Heard early in the show, gentle but strong. Later, sings with Angel Chorus. (ENFJ)

PROPHETS: Jeremiah and others, sent to Jerusalem, slain by its people. Later, part of Angel Chorus. (ENFJ)

PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM: Friendly but idolatrous and violent - variety of ages and personalities. (Chorus)

ANGELS: Pre-mortal and post-mortal members of Lehi's family, and others watching over them. (Chorus)

WARRIORS: Young men who fight under command of Laban in Act 1, military commanders in Act 2 (Chorus)

Act I: In the Wilderness

--Note: All lines are sung, except where speaking is indicated.--

Overture – From the Dust (2 Ne. 3:19-20; Morm. 8:23; 2 Ne. 33:13; Is. 29:4; Moro. 10:27, 32; 1 Ne. 6:4)

(The music is bold and strong, with an ancient American feel. Lights come up dimly, a foggy atmosphere is seen, with the singers in silhouette. They sing:)

Lehi: (center) I speak as one crying from the dust...
+ Young Nephi (SL) I speak as one crying from the dust...
+ Nephi: (SR) I speak as one crying from the dust...
Company: Come unto Christ! *(they end on a 3-part chord, with choir and orchestra backup)*

(8 strong chords segue into the next song, as lights come up softly on an older Nephi on the right front corner of the stage. We hear the chink of his hammer as he labors alone to carve out characters onto golden plates. He sings:)

Therefore I Make A Record (1 Ne 1:1; 2 Ne. 4:15-16)

Older Nephi: Having been born of goodly parents, Having been taught in the ways of God,
And having seen many afflictions In the course of my days - nevertheless,
Having been highly favored of the Lord, Having great knowledge of his goodness and his myst'ries,
Therefore I make a record Of my proceedings in my days.

And upon these plates, I write the things of my soul; For my soul delighteth in the things of God.
And my heart pondereth them, and writeth them, For the learning and the profit of my children;
My children...

Having been born of goodly parents, Having been taught in the ways of God,
Therefore I make a record... Of my proceedings... in... my days.

(He returns to his work on the plates, then freezes in tableau, as lights dim on him, and come up on two young female Narrators, dressed in white, on the left front corner of the stage. They sing directly to the audience:)

This is Not a Show About...

Nar. 1: This is not a show about... A perfect family.

Nar. 2: This is not a show about... A perfect world.

Nar. 1: This not a show where roses bloom beneath our feet,

N. 1&2: Or where all is nice and sweet – No, not at all.

(Lights up on Angel Chorus, who join the singing)

Nar. 2: This is gonna show that we will all sometimes face sorrow,

(Angel Chorus: Ah..)

Nar. 1: Even if we know that we are doing the best we can;

N. 1&2: But this is gonna show that there's a power we can borrow,

(reflecting 1 Ne. 1:20)

That can guide us through tomorrow, And help us to stand!

(Lights up slowly on Lehi's house, center stage)

Nar. 1: This is a story Of a woman and a man;

(Lehi and Sariah become visible, center stage)

Nar. 2: Trying to lead their family Towards a promised land.

(Their sons also become visible, in order of age)

Nar. 1: Leaving their familiar world, And all that they have known

(They hold baskets, frozen in the light)

Nar. 2: To try to build a new world on their own,

Nar1&2: With the help of God,

(The scene comes to life. Lehi's family begins to interact with vendors

With the help of God.

who enter, selling various goods. Lehi, a merchant, also sells his wares.)

As lights come up on Jerusalem, 3 main houses are visible: Lehi's (center stage, in light colors, elegant and beautiful); Laban's (grand and ornate, in dark rich colors, SL); and Ishmael's (neat but simple, in earth tones, SR. Ishmael's family and others enter, greeting Lehi's family. Sariah is especially pleased to see her friend, Ishmael's wife.)

Nar. 1&2: This is a story (**Angels:** Ah...)
Of a woman and a man;
Trying to lead their family
Towards a promised land.

Jewish Women: Good morning, Sariah!
Chief Priest/Wife: How is your fam'ly, Lehi?
Lehi: They're getting taller than me...
Sons (in turn): Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi,

(Chief priest and wife brush off local beggars. The buying and selling of goods continues. Women: Lalalala....)

Leaving their familiar world,
And all that they have known
To try to build a new world on their own,

Sariah: How are you doing, my friend?
Lehi: We should be getting home,
+Family: Getting home, getting home.

With the help of God...
With the help of God.

Angels: Ah...
Angels: This is not a show about a perfect family...

Nar. 1: Our story begins in Jerusalem, a long, long time ago,
+Nar. 2: As prophets share a message that the people need to know:

(Lights out on Angel Chorus, as Prophets enter, preaching among the people. Chief among them is Jeremiah.)

People of Jerusalem (1 Ne. 1:4)

Jeremiah/: People of Jerusalem (*People of Jerusalem*)
Prophets Gather and hear my words (*Gather and hear my words*)
For God has spoken to me (*For God has spoken to me*)
And I must tell you what I've heard (*And I must tell you what I've heard*)

(In harmony:) Jerusalem, our mighty city, is about to be destroyed,
And there is only one way to escape it: *(Laban, his armed men, and the chief elders enter from Laban's house, listening:)*

You must repent of your abominations;
Repent of your wickedness, your pride;
Turn to God with your whole heart and mind,
Then perhaps, you may find deliverance
From what is sure to come!

People: Who in the world do you think you are, trying to tell us what to do?
You're no better than any of us, why should we listen to you?
We're good people, just doing our best, and it's not for you to say
What we should do, or how we should live our lives, so please just go away!

Prophets: People of Jerusalem...
Gather and hear my words...
For God has spoken to me ...
And I must tell you what I've heard...

People: (*Who do you think you are?*)
(Trying to tell us what to do!)
(You're no better than any of us!)
(Why should we listen to you?)

(Boldly, in harmony) Jerusalem, our mighty city,
Is about to be destroyed,
And there is only one way to escape it: *(You both are crazy!)*

You must repent
Of your abominations;
Repent of your wickedness, your pride;
Turn to God with your whole heart and mind,
Then perhaps, you may find deliverance
From what is sure to come!

*(How dare you?)
(We're all good people!)
(It's not for you to say...)*

(You'll get what's coming to you!)

Turn to God / *People of Jerusalem!*
Turn to God / *People of Jerusalem!*
Turn to God / *People of Jerusalem!*
People of Jerusalem!

*(Just go away!)
(Just go away!)
(Just go away, We're all good...
(People of Jerusalem!)*

(The prophets are rejected, bound and carried away violently by Laban's men, as the people scatter in fear. Lehi quietly separates himself, and moves to a quiet corner SR, remembering and reflecting.)

Older Nephi: And my father Lehi went and prayed unto the Lord, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.
(Speaking) (Music begins, as a strong spotlight falls on Lehi) And the Lord showed unto him many things regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, and of its many abominations.

But my father was also shown the wonders of heaven, and the great mercies of the Almighty, which filled his heart, and caused him to exclaim:

Great And Marvelous (1 Ne. 1:14-15)

Lehi: Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!
Thy throne is high in the heavens!
And thy power and thy goodness and thy mercy
Are over all who dwell upon the earth.

Angels: *(begin to accompany him, on "Ah," in a joyous and glorious song of praise, as he continues:*

Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!
Thy throne is high in the heavens;
And because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer
Those who come unto thee, that they should perish.

And my heart is filled, and my soul doth rejoice,
Because of the things which I have seen.
Because of the things thou hast shown unto me,

*(Heart filled – Rejoice!)
(Because of all I've seen)
(Ah...)*

+ Angels: I will lift my voice forever in praise to thee! *(Keychange, as Angels joyously continue singing "Ah!")*

Angels: Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!
Thy throne is high in the heavens!

Lehi: Ah...

Lehi: I will lift my voice to testify of thee,
To share the hopeful tidings thou hast given unto me,
For I have seen and felt of thy mercy, O Lord! Lord God Almighty! *(Coda phrase: Great and marvelous...)*

+ Angels: Thy throne is high in the heavens! *(He continues looking up, hearing the voice of God.
(Lights off onstage except on Lehi. Angels exit. Lights up on Older Nephi)*

Older Nephi: And after the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father, he went forth among the people,
(Speaking) and began to prophesy unto them concerning the things which he had seen and heard. **(1 Ne. 1:18)**

Repent! / Who In The World? / Depart! (1 Ne. 1:18-20)

Lehi: My friends and my neighbors, My kindred and my people, *(He gently makes contact with his God sends you a message this day: associates in Jerusalem.)*

People of Jer. What did he say? *(They gather around him, curious.)
(Ishmael's family joins Lehi's in observing.)*

Lehi: Jerusalem's in danger, and soon to face destruction; *(Laban, his men, and the chief elders enter.)*
And you may save her only in one way: *(Lehi's family reacts in concern when they see Laban.)*

You must repent of your abominations, **Chief Elder/Wife:** *(Not another one!)
Repent of your idolatries, your sins! (He's as crazy as the others!)*
Turn to God with your whole heart and mind;
Then perhaps, you may find deliverance
From what is sure to come!

People: Who in the world do you think you are, trying to tell us what to do?
You're no better than any of us, why should we listen to you?
We're good people, just doing our best, and it's not for you to say
What we should do, or how we should live our lives, so please just go away!

Lehi: Repent!
Please... Repent!
My friends and my neighbors,
My kindred and my people...

People: Just go away!
People: Who asked you anyway?
People: *(deep and menacing)* Just go away!

(He extends a final pleading hand toward them, but they all storm off, leaving him alone with his family. These too depart in turn, leaving him alone. He collapses onto his bed, and falls asleep. Meanwhile, we see Laban and the chief elders gather stage right, conferring angrily, gesturing toward him.)

Older Nephi: And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him, and were angry with him, for he truly testified of their wickedness and their abominations. And they sought his life, that they might take it away.
(Speaking)

(The strong spotlight begins to shine again on Lehi as he sleeps on his bed.)

But it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, even in a dream, and said unto him:

Blessed Art Thou, Lehi (1 Ne. 2:1-2)

Voice of God: *(Gently)* Blessed art thou, Lehi, Because of the things which thou hast done;
(Singing) And because thou hast been faithful, Because thou hast been faithful,
And declared unto this people The things which I commanded thee
Behold, they seek to take away thy life. *(dim light reveals the conspirators stage right)*

(Urgently) Wherefore I now command thee,
To take your family, And depart Into the wilderness. *(lights out on the conspirators)*
(In a loving tone) Blessed art thou, Lehi – Take your family,
And depart Into the wilderness.

Older Nephi: And my father was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him.
(*Speaking*) And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, his gold, his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness.

And when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley by the side of a river of water. **(1 Ne. 2:3-6.)**

(*Lights up on Lehi in the wilderness, sitting near their tent. Sariah approaches him, full of concerns.*)

Sariah: (*Speaks*) How long are we going to have to stay out here?

Lehi: I'm not sure. The Lord didn't say.

Sariah: We've left everything behind. Everything we've gathered, over so many years. Everyone we've loved. Every precious thing we ever acquired.

Lehi: Every precious thing... except one. The most precious thing of all. We still have our faith. And we still have our lives. *And ... we still have each other. That which is most precious is still very much with us. Even here. (He looks into her eyes, then embraces her kindly. She is still not fully convinced, but is trying. He exits, leaving her alone with her many conflicted feelings.)*

Leave It All Behind (1 Ne. 2:4)

Sariah : Leave it all behind – Leave the world you've known –

(*Singing*) Leave your comforts, leave your treasures –

Leave your kinfolk, leave your home.

Leave it all behind – Wander far away –

(*Several female angels appear silently to support her*)

To dwell in this wild and unfriendly place –

Unsure how long you'll have to stay.

(*Angels: Unsure how long you'll have to stay.*)

Leave it all behind

(*Leave it all behind*) –

Turn your face toward the wind.

(*Toward the wind*)

Let it blow all your dreams away –

(*Ah*)

Hoping something better will begin.

(*Something better will begin*)

Leave it all behind (*Ah*) – Follow God, follow this man – (*Follow him*)

Though you have not shared his vision, though you do not know his plan. (*Follow his plan*)

Leave it all behind (*Leave it behind*) – Leave the world you've known – (*This world you've known*)

Trying not to shed a thousand tears

(*Young Nephi enters, with his own thoughts and griefs*)

As you make this desert... Home...

(*Make this desert... Home*) (*Jeremiah appears in a soft light*)

Jeremiah: Jerusalem will be destroyed -

Angels, Young Nephi, Sariah: *Leave it all behind* (*Prophet 2 in a soft prophetic light*)

Prophet 2: (*Appearing in a soft light*) There is only one way to escape it -

Pr's, YN, S: (+ *Lehi in a soft light*) Turn to God with your own heart and mind,

Leave it all behind! (*Prophet lights out*) (*Angels: Leave it all behind!*)

Sariah/Y. Nephi: Leave it all behind (*Angels: Leave it all behind*)

A world that's doomed to fall (*Angels: Ah...*)

When you see things as they really are,

(*S/YN harmony, angels with them*) It isn't any sacrifice...

(*Unison*) At all - (*Lights out angels*)

To leave it all.... Behind.

(*Lights cross-fade to Lehi, entering with Laman and Lemuel. The younger boys join Sariah, quietly preparing dinner in the background.*)

Lehi: *(Speaks)* *(With sustained underscore music.)* Behold, my sons, this beautiful valley to which God has brought us for our safety. And this river, leading into the fountain of the Red Sea. *(Song intro begins.)* Behold, I have called this river Laman, after you, my eldest son; and Lemuel, I have called this valley after you. I know you have both left much behind. But we can be safe here, led by the hand of God. **(1 Ne. 2:4-8)**

Like This River, Like This Valley *(1 Ne. 2:9-10)*

Lehi: Like this river, like this valley, O my sons, I pray you'll be;
Ever peaceful, ever tranquil, ever happy, ever free.
Like this river, ever running, into the fountain of righteousness;
Ever fruitful, ever flowing, ever eager to heal and bless.

Like this river, like this valley, O my sons, I pray you'll be;
That you might rise to your full stature, And fulfill your destiny.
Like this valley, firm and steadfast, immovable and sure,
So I pray you will be in keeping the commandments of the Lord. *(Instr: "Like this river, like this valley,")*
So, my sons, I pray you'll be... *(The Narrators have appeared in a light SR, watching the family.)*

Narrators: *(This is not a show about a perfect family...)* *(Angry music erupts, as Laman pulls Lemuel aside SL.)*

(Lehi moves DSR, in focused pondering and prayer, unaware of the increasing turbulence behind him.)

Our Father is a Fool *(1 Ne. 2:11-14)*

Laman: Our father is a fool, Stuffed with silly dreams; *(Not harsh here – seeming to go along with their father's plan, but laughing at him behind his back.)*
Lemuel: And I know, as a rule, That nothing's as it seems.

Laman: He pretends that God has spoken, and has told us to flee away,
From Jerusalem, which will be destroyed now any day:

Lemuel: Like that could happen! + **Laman:** Like that could happen!

Lemuel: Our father is a fool, Blindly leading us out here,
Into this god-forsaken desert, leaving all we hold most dear.

Laman: We left our home,

Lemuel: Our lives,

Laman: Our treasures, our inheritance behind:

+Lemuel: What! Is the man out of his mind?

L&L: Why did we ever listen for one second to the crazy ramblings Of this old delusionary man?
Maybe it's not too late to turn around and just go home again:
Maybe we can - Maybe we can! *(Sariah becomes increasingly concerned, as the intensity rises. The younger boys stay focused on their assigned tasks,*

Laman: Our father is deceived, full of foolish imaginations, *but are uncomfortably aware of their brothers' disrespect against their father.)*
Lemuel: It cannot be believed - Why would God destroy a nation

That keeps his statutes and his judgments, living by his law?

L&L: Something's put a strain on the brain of dear old Pa!

Laman: Our father is a fool... **Lemuel:** Our father is a fool...

L&L: The biggest fool of all!

Narrators: *(Watching sadly) This is not a show about a perfect family...*

Older Nephis: *(Speaking)* And thus Laman and Lemuel, being the eldest, did murmur against their father. And they did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God that created them. And they were like unto the Jews which were at Jerusalem, who sought to take away the life of my father.

Sariah: *(Quietly, to Lehi)* The boys are having hard time. Maybe you should go and talk to them.

Older Nephi: And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them *(Lehi approaches them; actions follow the words.*
in the valley of Lemuel, with power, being filled with the Spirit; *Sariah finds Lehi's style*
until their frames did shake before him. And he did confound them, *a little harsh.)*
that they durst not utter against him. Wherefore, they did as he commanded them.

(Music intro begins. The tension is thick as a knife, as Lehi, Laman, and Lemuel join Sariah, Sam, and Nephi, who are still preparing dinner silently outside the family tent.) (1 Ne. 2:12-14)

In a Tent *(1 Ne. 2:15)*

Older Nephi: And my father Dwelt in a tent.
(Singing) All throughout our time in the wilderness, that's how our lives were spent.

+ **L&L:** When we weren't wandering,

+ **Sariah** Or foraging,

+ **Sam** Or hunting for something to eat, We all dwelt in a tent –

L&L: *(Sarcastically)* Now, isn't that neat!

Lehi, Sam, L&L: We dwelt in a tent – Lots of people under one dome: Yes, we dwelt in a tent.

Lehi & Sariah: It wasn't much, but we called it home.

Sariah, Laman: It wasn't very warm, and it wasn't very stable,
And there wasn't much there –

+ **Lemuel:** Not so much as a table,

+ **Sam:** But we dwelt in a tent – In the wilderness.

+ **Lehi, Nephi:** And the days were hot, and the nights were cold,
And we suffered more than could ever be told;
With fatigue and hunger, with conflict and pain,
And with freezing wind, and slicing rain: *(Keychange)*

Family: We dwelt in a tent – Leaving all we loved behind –
Yes, we dwelt in a tent – Unadorned and unrefined.

Laman, Sariah: It wasn't very roomy, or very inviting,

+ **Lemuel:** And there wasn't much there that was very exciting

+ **Sam:** But we dwelt in a tent,

+ **Nephi:** In the woods,

+ **Lehi:** in the valley, by the riverside,

Lam/Lem: Where our hopes all died -

Family: We dwelt in a tent

In the wilderness!

(They enter the tent, then peer out together)

We dwelt in a tent!

(The tent door closes sharply, as the night sky looms overhead.)

(Night breezes blow, the sound of wild animals and insects are heard. Nephi slips quietly out of the tent, and finds a rock to sit on, lit by moonlight. The older Nephi speaks, commenting on his younger self.)

Older Nephi: And I, Nephi, being exceedingly young, nevertheless being large in stature, and also having great
(Speaking) desires to know of the mysteries of God, wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord.

For Myself (1 Ne. 2:16)

Nephi: All my life, I've been taught in the learning of my father;
(Singing:) All my days, I've believed that what he said is so;
But now I find that just believing
No longer is enough:
Now I find, I need to know,

For myself: I need my own experience.
For myself, I need a light inside;
For this wilderness is simply just too hard to take,
Without the strength of my own witness, my own guide:
I need to know - I need to know - For myself. (*Young Nephi bows his head in fervent prayer.*)

Older Nephi: Wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord, and behold he did visit me, and did soften my heart,
(Speaking) that I did believe all the words of my father; wherefore I did not rebel against him like my brothers.

Nephi: All my life I've been taught in the learning of my father; (Lifting his head slowly as he sings)
(Singing:) All my days I've believed that what he said is so;
But now I find, the truth is shining deep in my own heart: (Light shines directly on him, stronger
and stronger as he sings)
Now I find that to the core I know,

For myself: I've gained my own experience. (He stands jubilantly)
For myself, I've found a light inside;
And this wilderness will never be too hard to take,
Now that I'm led by my own witness, my own guide.
Now I know - Now I know - For myself! (He sits on a rock, pondering his experience)

(Sam slips out of the tent and finds Nephi. Night breezes and sound effects continue as they speak.) (1 Ne. 2:17)

Sam: (Speaks) Nephi – it's late. Will you be coming back in soon? Mother's worried about you.

Nephi: (Still in the afterglow of his experience) I'll be in in a minute. (Sam observes Nephi, then turns to leave)

Nephi: it's true. (Sam turns back to look at him)
Father's not imagining it. It's all true.

Sam: I hope you're right. Because it's hard out here.

Nephi: But it's worth it, Sam. It's all worth it.

Sam: That's good to know.

Nephi: It is good to know. Now – let's get inside.

(He leads Sam back into the tent, and they enter through the door as lights go out.)

Older Nephi: Sam believed in my words. (Morning light comes up softly)
But behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken to my words.

*Laman and Lemuel come storming out of the tent, crossing to offstage right,
Nephi, gesturing toward them, Sam and Sariah standing helplessly behind him.)*

Older Nephi: And being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, I cried unto the Lord for them.
(Nephi sits back on his rock to pray, looking up) And the Lord spake unto me, saying:

Blessed Art Thou, Nephi (1 Ne. 2:18-22)

Voice of God: (*Gently*) Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy faith,
(*Singing*) For thou hast sought me diligently, With lowliness of heart.

(*More strongly*) And inasmuch as ye keep my commandments, Ye shall prosper in the land;
And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee They shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord
And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments,
Thou shalt be made a ruler and teacher over them. (*Nephi will have to grow into this startling new idea.*)

O. Nephi: (*Speaks*) And it came to pass that I, Nephi, returned from speaking with the Lord to the tent of my father.
Nephi: (*Dream music begins, Lehi looks troubled*) What is it, father? Is there something wrong? **(1 Ne 3:1)**

Behold, I Have Dreamed a Dream (1 Ne. 3:2-5)

Lehi: Behold, I have dreamed a dream, In the which the Lord hath commanded me
(*Singing*) That thou and thy brethren shall return unto Jerusalem,
(*to Nephi:*) To the house of Laban, to seek plates of brass which contain sacred records
And bring them hither to carry with us into the wilderness.

And now, behold, thy brethren murmur, saying it's a hard thing which I have required of them.
But behold, I have not required it of them, but it is a commandment of the Lord. **(1 Ne. 3:1-5)**

I Will Go (1 Ne. 3:6-8)

Nephi: I will go, I will do The things which the Lord hath commanded,
(*Singing:*) For I know that He will prepare a way
Whereby we may accomplish all that He hath commanded.
I will go, I will His work today.

Lehi: Go, my son; and because thou hast not murmured,
Thou shalt be favored of the Lord.
And oh, my son, by your faithful strength I see
That already you've been blessed of the Lord! (*Keychange*)

Nephi/Lehi: I will go (*Go, my son*), I will do (*Faithful son*)
The things which the Lord hath commanded
For I know (*Oh, my son*) that He will prepare a way (*In you He has prepared a way*)

Both: Whereby we may accomplish all that He hath commanded

Nephi: I will go, I will do His work today... I will

Both: Go, (*I will*) do His work today.

(*Nephi's brothers enter, carrying tents and provisions for the trip. Laman and Lemuel are clearly irritated.*)

Laman: (*Speaks*) Come on, little brother. Let's go, and see how quickly we can carry out this ridiculous idea.

Lemuel: A three day's journey there and back. If God really wants us to have those brass plates so much,
why doesn't he just give them to us?

(*Nephi and Sam observe, silently exchanging glances.*)
(*Sariah enters to see them off. She is deeply concerned about their safety. Underscore music.*)

Sariah: Goodbye, my sons. Be careful. And be back soon. *(She embraces each, with emotion and concern.)*
Lehi: I'll be praying for your success.

(Laman and Lemuel walk right past him, rolling their eyes and storming out. Nephi and Sam quietly embrace their father, then silently follow behind their elder brothers. Lights out on the tent.)

O. Nephi: *(Speaks)* And I, Nephi, and my brethren took our journey into the wilderness, to the land of Jerusalem. And we did consult one with another. **(1 Ne. 3:9-10)**

Scene: Getting the Plates (1 Nephi 3-4) *(Spoken, as the brothers quietly enter the city at daybreak)*

Laman: *(Speaks)* Well, we're finally here.

Lemuel: What do we do now?

Laman: *(Frustrated)* Why are you asking me?

Lemuel: Well... you *are* the oldest....

Laman: *(Grumbling)* That's true... So, if father's right, and God really wants this to happen, this should be easy, right?

Nephi: *(under his breath, to Sam)* It wasn't always easy for Moses.

Laman: *(Fiercely)* Did you say something, little brother?

Nephi: *(Meekly – he's been the target of Laman's anger before.)* No...

Sam: *(Gently, protecting Nephi)* Go ahead and tell us your plan, Laman.

Laman: *(Flippantly, making it up as he goes along)* Well... we... cast lots.

Sam: *(Shaking his head in dismay and disbelief)* That's ... the plan?....

Laman: Whoever loses, goes to Laban, and asks for the plates.

Lemuel: ALONE?

Laman: Of course not alone! *(Thick with sarcasm)* We walk with God, remember? We're on his errand!

Sam: *(Quietly, to Nephi)* I don't know about this... *(Nephi agrees. Lemuel is nervous as well.)*

Laman: *(Pulls out 4 straws, with a grand flourish.)* Here we are! Everybody take one. Short one loses. *(They close their eyes, and draw straws. They open their eyes, extending their straws. Laman has the short one. The others explode into laughter and relief. Laman is aghast, staring at his short straw.)*

Laman: WHAT?!!!

Lemuel: *(Chortling merrily)* Well... you *are* the oldest! Ha ha!.... *(Sam and Nephi also laugh, more quietly.)*

Laman: *(Choking with anger)* Fine! I'll do it! I'll be back soon. *(He exits through Laban's door, lights out.)*

Older Nephi: And Laman went in unto the house of Laban, and he talked with him as he sat in his house.

(Spotlight comes up on Laman speaking with Laban, a large, rough-mannered man, finely dressed and seated in an exquisite, expensive chair.)

And he desired of Laban the records, which were engraven upon the plates of brass.

Laban: So let me make sure I understand this correctly. You wish to have me give you the plates of brass which are in my treasury?

Laman: Yes – that **is** what we desire.

Laban: *(Rising to his feet menacingly.)* That is my most precious and personal treasure, out of all that I possess. And you want me just to GIVE it to you? You're as crazy as your father! *(Thundering with anger)* How do you even *know* about those plates?

Laman: *(Ashamed and frightened)* I'm sorry – I'll be on my way...

Laban: *(Grabs him viciously)* If I ever see you on my property again, I swear I will kill you, you little thief! Get out! *(Throws him to the ground, and walks away in disgust, as a terrified Laman runs for his life.)*

Older Nephi: And Laman fled out of his presence, and told us the things which Laban had done. And we began to be exceedingly sorrowful. *(Lights up on the brothers.)*

Lemuel: I *told* you this was a waste of time! (*Music starts*)
Sam: Well, at least we tried.
Laman: We're going back. At this point, we're a lot safer in Father's tent than we are here.
(*He starts heading out; Lemuel and Sam follow him dejectedly. Nephi watches, them, remembering the commitment he made to his father, and to God. He gathers his courage, and then suddenly cries out:*)

Nephi's Vow (1 Nephi 3:15)

Nephi: As the Lord liveth and as we live, we will *not* go down unto our father in the wilderness,
(*Sings*) until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us!
(*They turn and look at him, shocked at the sudden conviction of his outburst.*)

Sam: (*Speaks*) (*Gently, as musical underscore continues*) What are you thinking, little brother?

Nephi: (*Thinking out loud*) When our father left Jerusalem, he left gold, and silver, and all manner of precious things. We don't have to take what's not ours. We can simply... trade. (*They pause, pondering the idea.*)

Sam: (*To Laman and Lemuel*) It might be worth thinking about.

Laman: You want to just *give* away our entire inheritance? For a *BOOK*?

Sam: (*Gently, to Laman*) Think about it. We won't ever be coming back here.

Lemuel: (*Grimly, but facing the hard truth*) And we can't take any of it with us.

Sam: True. All those expensive things are...

Lemuel: ...Useless... Where we're going.

Laman: (*Sighs deeply; then quietly, in resignation*) All right. I suppose... it's worth trying. Let's go.
(*They follow him out, as lights go out on the boys, up on older Nephi.*)

Older Nephi: And we went down into the land of our inheritance, and gathered together our gold, and our silver, and our precious things. And we went up again unto the house of Laban, and desired him that he would give us the records contained on the brass plates, in exchange for our riches.

(*Lights up on the boys with Laban, who is raking his fingers through their gold, pondering their offer.*)

Laban: It is an offer worth considering. For this is a fine collection, indeed. Well worth the price of a single treasure – however precious it might be.

Laman: You... you agree, then? (*The boys look at each other hopefully.*)

Laban: I agree.. (*Laban grabs Laman's hand and shoulder to seal the deal.*) These are precious things.

I agree... that they will make a wonderful addition... (*with a sly smile*) to my treasury.

(*Sharpens his talon grip on Laman.*) Which is why I'm now fulfilling my promise to you.

(*Viciously, hissing into his face*) Get... off ...my property. Or... I will kill you! I will kill all of you!

Sam: What about the plates? (*Laban laughs contemptuously.*)

Nephi: You can't do this!

Laban: I can, and I will. (*Calls fiercely*) Guards! After these men!

Laman: (*Frantically breaking free of Laban's grip as Laban's guards approach*) We must be gone, NOW!

Laban: (*Barking orders to his guards!*) Slay them! Slay them all! (*The brothers follow Laman, running for their lives as guards chase them offstage. Laban and his men laugh contemptuously, as Laban rakes his fingers with satisfaction through their abandoned treasures, as the lights go out on Laban's house.*)

Older Nephi: And we did flee before the servants of Laban, forced to leave behind our property.
And we fled into the wilderness, and hid ourselves in the cavity of a rock.

(*Lights up on the boys. Laman and Lemuel are pushing Nephi roughly, striking him with a rod.*)

Laman: *(Enraged, striking him over and over)* Why did we ever listen to you?
Lemuel: *(Hitting him fiercely with a rod)* Now we have nothing! Absolutely nothing! All thanks to you!
Sam: Stop it! Stop it now! *(He tries to shield Nephi from their blows, becoming thereby a target himself, as they begin striking him as well. A strong light before them:)*

Into Your Hands (1 Nephi 3:29)

Angel: *(In a loud, powerful voice, stopping them.)* Why do you smite your younger brother with a rod?
(Sings) Know ye not he was chosen and ordained of God - To be a ruler over you, because of your iniquities?
(They release Nephi with a start, looking at him, aghast. The angel sings more gently:)
Behold, ye shall return unto Jerusalem, and the Lord will deliver Laban into your hands -
Into your hands. *(The angel departs, the light goes out.)*

Laman: *(Trembling with the impact of this new information).* How is it possible that the Lord will deliver Laban into our hands? Behold, he is a mighty man, and he can command fifty, yea, even he can slay fifty – then why not us?

Nephi: *(Gently, to Laman)* Let us go up again unto Jerusalem, and let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; for behold, he is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even his tens of thousands?

Lemuel: You just saw what he can do.

Nephi: Yes. But I have not forgotten what *God* can do. He guided the children of Israel out of Egypt. He made the mighty waters stand and divide, hither and thither; and our fathers came through, out of captivity, on dry land. And the armies of Pharaoh, following behind them, were destroyed by His mighty hand. You *know* that this is true, and you know an *angel* has spoken to you – wherefore can you doubt?

Laman: *(In a tired, defeated voice, his will beaten down)* I will go as far as the city wall. No farther.
(This is all the faith Laman can muster.)

Sam: *(Gently, seeing the transformation in his younger brother.)* Go ahead, Nephi. You lead the way.
(Nephi moves forward, and the others follow him silently, as the lights go down.)

Older Nephi: And they did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem. And it was by night. *(Lights up)*

Nephi: Let's stop here. You all hide yourselves - I'm going in.

Sam: What are you going to do?

Nephi: I don't know. I'm going to follow the Lord's hand, wherever it might lead me. You all wait here.
(Lights out as he leaves. Action follows the narration. Underscore music begins.)

Older Nephi: And I went forth into the city, towards the house of Laban. And as I came near, I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, and behold, he was drunken with wine. And when I came to him, I found it was Laban.

And I beheld his sword, and drew it forth from the sheath.

And the Spirit of the Lord spake unto me, saying:

A Way (1 Nephi 4:12-13)

Spirit of God: *(Sings quietly)* Slay him.

Nephi: *(Trembling)* Never have I shed the blood of man.
(He looks at the sword in horror, pulling it away from him.)

Spirit of God: Slay him - Behold, the Lord has delivered him into your hands.

The Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes.
It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief.

Nephi: *(still trembling, singing softly)*
(Sings) I will go, I will do the things which the Lord hath commanded,
For I know that He will prepare... A way... *(The music intensifies)*

(Nephi lifts drunken stuporous Laban by the hair of his head, lifts his sword, and then brings it down suddenly with a loud crash of sound, as the lights go out on Jerusalem. Lights up on Older Nephi.)

Older Nephi: And after I had slain Laban with his own sword, I put his clothes upon my body, and in his voice ordered
(Speaking) his servant Zoram to open the treasury. And thus we obtained the plates of brass. And believing me to be his master Laban, Zoram followed me beyond the city walls.

Lemuel: *(Lights up dimly)* Someone is coming. *(He peers over the wall, then reports in terror):* It is Laban!
He has slain our brother Nephi, and now seeks to slay us as well! *(They turn to run, then Nephi calls:)*
Nephi: Stop! Fear not! It is I, your brother Nephi! And I have gotten the plates! *(Suddenly, Zoram realizes he is not with his master. He turns to flee, but Nephi catches hold of him. They struggle, as Nephi speaks:)*

Do not fear. We are peaceful men, and we will not harm you. We are journeying into the wilderness, to the tent of our father. And if you will go with us, you shall have place with us, and we will spare your life. And you will be a free man, like unto us.

Zoram: *(stops struggling, and looks at Nephi intently)* I will be... free?

Nephi: Even like unto us. I swear it.

Zoram: Then... I will go with you.

Nephi: Onward, then. *(Jubilantly)* To the tent of our father!

Sam & Lemuel: *(With a fist of triumph raised)* To the tent of our father!

(Nephi, with Zoram at his side, leads the group, Sam and Lemuel following. Laman watches them with a heavy heart, letting them get several paces ahead. Lemuel finally stops, turns, and calls back to him:)

Lemuel: Laman! Are you coming with us, brother?

Laman: *(In a quiet, defeated voice.)* Yes. I am coming.

(He follows them, remaining several paces behind, his head hung low. Nephi triumphantly leads the group into the wilderness – Zoram on one side, Laban's sword in its scabbard on his waist, and the brass plates tucked carefully under his downstage arm. Nephi is a boy no longer. He has earned a rightful place as the leader of this triumphant journey home.)

Older Nephi: And thus we were obedient in keeping the word of the Lord, and fulfilling his commandments. But our journey was long, and our mother Sariah greatly feared, believing us to have perished in the wilderness.

(Lights out on Jerusalem and the brothers; lights up on Lehi and Sariah outside their tent in the wilderness. Sariah is seated dejectedly on the ground, Lehi stands some distance away.)

What Is All This For? (1 Ne. 5:2-6)

Sariah: *(In a mourning cry to God) Ooo.... Ooo...*
(Singing)

My sons are no more, and we're lost out here in this barren wasteland.
It's constantly uncertain what's in store – Or if we will even survive!

Can you tell me – What is all this for? *(Crying to God)*

Is there a point to all this struggle, all this fear?

'Cause I tell you – I can't take much more.

And I can't understand why we had to come out here. *(Lehi approaches her, listening and concerned.)*

To this harsh and barren place – Where there is not one loved, familiar face,

Where there's nobody to turn to – And no home left to return to –

Everything and everyone I've loved is gone! *(Lehi rushes over to comfort her) Lehi: Sariah...*

Sariah/Lehi: *(Singing to him intensely, through tears) Can you tell me – What is all this for? (L:Oh, please don't cry.)*

Is there a point to all this struggle, all this fear? *(Let me wipe the tears from your eyes)*

'Cause I tell you – I can't take much more. *(You're so good and strong;)*

And I can't understand why we had to come out here. *(I'm sure it won't be long.)*

Sariah: *(Breaks away, turning on him) Our son was right! You're just a dreamer! Just a visionary man,*

A blind old fool who can't see what you've done! Our son was right!

You're just a dreamer... *(She immediately regrets her harsh words, crumpling with pain.)*

Lehi: I... am a visionary man!

And I know that the Lord will protect and deliver our sons.

(He tenderly comforts her; she crumples further under his care.)

And I have obtained a land of promise, In the which I do rejoice!

By the goodness of God, we have not perished with our brethren in Jerusalem –

(She starts to express worry – he stops her) Sariah... (she drops her head)

Lift up your head – Be comforted – And don't despair any more,

For it won't be long till you see for yourself

What all of this... Is for.

Sariah: *(In a cry of pain – and distant hope) Ooo....*

+Lehi: *(Joining and calming her) Ooo....*

(As the song ends, the boys approach the encampment.)

Lemuel: *(speaks, calling from a distance) Mother!*

Sam: Father!

Laman: *(The boys enter the stage, Laman is still at the end of the group.) We're back.*

Nephi: And we were able to obtain what we sought. *(He hands his father the brass plates.*

Lehi regards them with utmost reverence.)

Sariah: Oh, my sons! I had thought I would never see your faces again. *(She embraces them fervently.)*

Sam: We're safe, Mother. *(Music begins)*

Lemuel: We're all here.

Laman: We're all home. *(Sariah is joyously surrounded by her sons. Her heart is full.)*

Now I Know (1 Ne. 5:7-8)

Sariah: Now I know of a surety, *(She steps forward into a spotlight alone, as the others are frozen behind her.)*
(Singing) That my husband was commanded to flee
Into the wilderness.
And I know that the Lord has protected my sons, **(Angels stand protectively around the family: Ah)**
And given them power
To accomplish the thing which Lord hath commanded them.

Lehi: *(joining her in the spotlight)* Now you know, you know!

Sariah: And now I know **(Angels: Know)** that we are not alone - *(You are not alone)*
We're not forgotten, even in this desert place. **(Nephi joins them: Even in this place)**
And now I know **(Know)** that **(Sam joins them)** we will make our home *(Your home is ...)*
(w/Angels): Here together, whatever we might face.

Family: Now I know of a surety *(To Laman)* *(Know He*
That God was never far from me, *(was never far from thee, though)*
Though sometimes, He had felt so far away! And I know *(Sometimes he felt so far away)*
Sariah: I can be strong enough to bear whatever comes *(You can be strong enough whatever comes)*
Sariah: As we continue in our journey day by day. *(Ah...)*
Family: That I know of a surety. *(Lights fade out slowly, in an embrace of warmth and mutual support.)*

Older Nephi: And they did rejoice exceedingly, and gave thanks to the God of Israel. Then my father took those plates
(Speaking) of brass, and examined them, and found them to be of great worth, for they contained the record of the
Jews, and the genealogy of our fathers, and the writings of all the holy prophets. Wherefore it was
wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us, as we journeyed in the wilderness toward the
land of promise. *(Lights up on the family, seated, as Lehi, standing, makes an announcement.)*

Lehi: My sons, the voice of the Lord has come again to me, saying that it is not meet that we should travel
alone into the wilderness. He desires that we should raise up seed unto him in the land of promise.
(The brothers look at each other with delighted anticipation.)

Therefore, He has commanded that you shall return again unto Jerusalem, and take unto yourselves
wives, of the daughters of Ishmael. *(The brothers burst into jubilant excitement.)*
Lemuel: Now that is one revelation I am not inclined to question in the least! *(Lights out on the family)*

Older Nephi: So once again, we departed into the wilderness, making our way toward Jerusalem – this time, into the
house of Ishmael, where we found favor with him, and with all his household. **(1 Ne. 7:1-4)**
(Lights up on Ishmael's family, seated within their house, listening intently to Lehi's sons.)

Come With Us (1 Ne. 7:4)

Nephi: You've heard all the prophecies – You know what's going to be –
(Singing) You've seen here in Jerusalem Corruption, depravity.
You know that when God speaks, he carries out his every word;

Brothers: Now we have shared a message, and we hope that you have heard:

Laman: *(Gently, to the daughter of Ishmael he favors)* Come with us, and we will be a family out there;

Lemuel: *(Brightly, to the daughter of Ishmael he favors)* Come with us, for we have got a new world to share.

Lam, Lem, Sam: *(To the family:)* Come with us to a land of promise, choice above all other lands;

Lam, Lem Oh, hear and understand:

+Nephi, Sam And come with us.

Laman: Come with us, and we will build a new world there;
Lemuel: For there's plenty of room to grow and room to share.
Lam, Lem, Sam: Come with us to a promised land that's full and rich and broad.
Nephi: Come with us, and be guided with us By the hand of God.

Laman: Come with us, and we will be a family out there; *(Ishmael's Family: A family out there,)*
Lemuel: Come with us, for we have got a new world to share. *(Ishmael's Family: New world to share)*
LLNS: Come with us to a land of promise, choice above all other lands;
L&L: Oh, hear and understand:
Brothers: And come with us.
L&L: Oh, hear and understand: *(Ishmael's Family: Ah...)*
Brothers: And come with us.

Ishmael: Yes, we will come with you. The Lord has extended his arm of mercy to us through you. And we will
(Speaking) take it. Pack your things, my children. It is time for us to leave this city, before there is no part of it left.

(They gather their things, prepared to travel. The mood is bright and excited. Already some mutual attractions are evident between the Lehi's sons and Ishmael's daughters. Lights out on Ishmael's house. Lights up on the Narrators, stage right.)

Joined in Their Journey (1 Ne. 7:5-21)

Nar. 1&2: So the families were joined in their journey; But, sad to say, they weren't united long.
(Singing) For when the rigors and realities Hit among the wild, brambled trees,
 They soon were singing quite a different kind of song:

(Lights up on the clan in the wilderness. The girls' dresses are getting caught on the brambles of the wilderness. They are all following Nephi cutting through the thick foliage, with Zoram at his side, and their two future wives behind them, helping each other and their aging parents along. Sam and his future bride are next, followed by Laman and Lemuel, trailing behind the rest with their complaining consorts. At the end are the sons of Ishmael and their wives and children.)

L&L Wives: It's so cold out here. *(Laman puts his arm protectively around his wife, with a grim expression.)*
SOI-1&2 Wives: Do we have any idea at all where we're going?
All 4 Wives: Or how long it will take for us to get there?
Laman: It's... a ways still.
Lemuel: But I promise it will be worth it.
SOI-2 Wife: *(with Lemuel)* I'll believe it when I see it!
All 4 Wives: When we get there!

SOI-1/L&L Wives: *(in harmony)* A new world, they said.
SOI-2 Wife: This is a new world, all right!
Laman's Wife: I don't know when I've ever felt more hungry,
+Lemuel's Wife: Or more afraid.
Lemuel's Wife: Trudging blindly through muddy puddles
+SOI-2 Wife: Every day and every night;

Lam/SOI-1 Wives: I'm hungry –
Lem/SOI1 Wives: I'm tired
L&L Wives: I wish
+SOI-1 Wife: That we had...
+SOI-2 Wife: ..simply stayed
+SOI 1-2: At home!

(Lehi's sons remain silent, but battle their own frustrations and questions, which are amplified by awareness of the distress of the women they care for. Speaking:)

Wife of Ishmael: *(Frustrated with their complaints, erupts loudly:)* Stop! Stop it, all of you!

Ishmael: *(Quietly, in a conciliatory tone.)* We decided this together....

Son of I. 1 WE didn't decide anything.

+ Son of I. 2: YOU decided!

Laman: *(Stops suddenly in his tracks, halting the company behind him:)*
(Singing) Maybe we should just go back.

Lemuel: To what?

Laman: Back... To Jerusalem!

Sam: What?

Laman: It can't be any worse than this!

Lemuel: You have a point.

Sam: But father said... *(Nephi stops him)*

Nephi: You're free to do whatever you choose.

Sam: But, Nephi...

Nephi: If you want to go back, so be it.

Laman: Fine! *(He starts heading the other direction, with Lemuel, the sons of Ishmael, and their women and children, as Ishmael, Sam, Zoram, and their women stay with Nephi. It is the first family split.)*

Nephi: But do know this. If you choose to go back, you will perish with the rest of them!

Laman: *(Approaching him menacingly)* Little brother, I have grown SO weary of your constant interference!
(Speaking) *(Venomously commands the others:)* Get him!

(Tumult and uproar erupts in the family. Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael lunge toward Nephi, overpowering him, as the others watch in horror, powerless to stop this.)

Laman: Just tie him up,
(Singing) And leave him for dead!

Lemuel/SOI-1: So that we can do what we want instead!

Lemuel: I'm sure there's some wild animal here
That would appreciate a tasty snack! *(They tie him up, and leave him struggling alone, DSL)*

SOI-2 Wife: *(To Lemuel, snickering)* At least someone will get to eat today!

Laman: Come on, everybody, let's get on our way. *(His followers join him SR)*

Lem/SOI-1/Wives It's time to return; *(The quieter family members, fearing more violence, silently follow)*

+SOI2/W: It's time to go home;

+Laman/W: It's time now to go back! *(They all start heading offstage R, leaving Nephi alone DSL)*

Nephi: Oh, Lord, according to my faith in thee, wilt thou now deliver me?
Give me strength that I may break these bands with which I now am bound!
(He exerts himself and the bands fall to the ground, freeing him. He calls after the departing group:)

Laman, you don't know what you're doing!
Stop and turn around!
The Lord has a better course for us!

Lemuel: However did he get free?

Laman: I don't know – *(viciously)* But this time we won't wait for the animals to get him!

(They and the sons of Ishmael lunge toward Nephi, overpowering him SL)

Laman's Wife: *(Speaking, crying out suddenly:)* Wait! Stop! Please – stop! No good is ever going to come from this!
Ishmael's Wife: She's right. Stop it! Stop it now! *(They keep their fierce hold on Nephi, but stop trying to hurt him.)*
Boys, we've seen what's happened in Jerusalem. Do we *really* want to go back to that?
This boy is our best chance. And God is our only hope. If we separate ourselves from Him, we will surely perish, whether it be here, or in Jerusalem, or anywhere else. Let the boy go. Please – let him go!

Son of Ish. 2: They're right. Let him go. *(Laman resists)* "Thou shalt not kill." *(Shamed and shaken, they release him. Speaking to Nephi, helping him stand up :)* I'm sorry. We shouldn't have done that.

Laman: *(With deep sincerity and regret.)* I'm truly sorry. You're my younger brother – I should never have let that happen. And it will never happen again. I promise. Please forgive me. *(He drops to his knees before Nephi.)* Please forgive all of us. *(The other attackers drop beside him to their knees, their heads bowed.)*

Nephi: *(to Laman, gently)* Of course I forgive you. *(He drops to his knees, looking into Laman's eyes.)*
We're brothers, aren't we? We remain together - *always.* *(He extends a strong embrace to Laman, which Lemuel and Sam join.)*

Now – pray to God. We're all going to need His help for the journey ahead. Ask for His forgiveness. And for His strength. *(They all drop to their knees, as Laman utters a simple but heartfelt prayer.)*

Laman: Dear God, please forgive us this terrible thing that we have done. The journey has been hard, and it may continue to be hard. Please help us do better. *(emotion overcomes him.)* Amen.

Company: *(this simple prayer having touched their hearts, due to their complaints and weaknesses. They all resolve to do better.)* Amen.

(Nephi rises to his feet, then assists his brothers in doing the same. The company follows.)

Nephi: *(Gently)* So we go forward, right? We move on. *(Extends his hand)*

Laman: *(Clasping Nephi's hand)* Yes, brother – we move on. *(Calling to the others)* To the tent of our father!

All: To the tent of our father!

(He exits SL walking side by side with Nephi, followed by all the others. Lights out on the company, as light comes up on Lehi and Sariah, DSR, sitting together under the stars. Soft music begins.)

Beautiful Tonight

Sariah *(Sings):* The stars are so beautiful tonight.

Lehi: But not nearly as beautiful as you.

Sariah: Oh, come now. I haven't bathed in weeks.

Lehi: That doesn't matter.

Sariah: I'm wearing the same tattered dress that I've worn every day since we left Jerusalem.

Lehi: But you're far more beautiful now even than you were back then.

Lehi: You've gotten stronger, Sariah, and it shows

In your eyes, in everything about you.

You wear the confidence of somebody who knows

That there's need to doubt, no need to fear.

Sariah: Do you know when the children will be here?

Lehi: They'll be here... whenever they arrive.

Sariah: I look forward to no longer being

The only woman here in camp!

Lehi: I look forward to the pitter-patter of many future little feet.

Sariah: Filling our promised land with many precious little lives.

Lehi: You've gotten stronger, Sariah, and it shows
In your eyes, in everything about you.
+ Sariah: You / I wear the confidence of somebody who knows
Sariah: That there never was a need for me to doubt you.

Lehi: The world is so beautiful tonight,
But not nearly as beautiful as you.
Sariah: This wilderness can be a long hard fight,
+Lehi: But there's no one I'd rather share it with than you.

(Ishmael enters the scene, followed by their two families, thrilled to arrive after their long journey.)

Ishmael: Lehi! My dear old friend! *(They greet each other warmly, as Sariah ecstatically embraces and welcomes her sons and the new arrivals.)* **(1 Ne. 7:22)**
(Speaking)

Lehi: Ishmael! A warm welcome to you and your household! So now our two families become one!
Ishmael: True! I predict that we shall see many lovely grandchildren!
Lehi: Yes! As it should be! *(They chuckle warmly)*

Ishmael: So - where is this promised land of yours?
Lehi: This promised land of *ours*, old friend! We shall find it soon - Now that *you* are here!

(It is a happy and festive time of heartfelt unity and hope. The new women in camp quickly bring a spirit of home that cheers the spirits of all. Soon, other tents arise beside Lehi's tent. His family is longer alone in the wilderness. Night falls, and each family goes into their tent. Dream music begins.)

Lehi's Dream (1 Ne. 8)

Nar 1&2: *(Chant)* Early one morning, in the valley of Lemuel, Lehi awoke with a start!
(He emerges from the tent door, looking like he's seen a ghost.)

Sam: *(Speaks)* What is it, father?

Lehi: *(Sings)* Behold, I have dreamed a dream; Or in other words, I have seen a vision.
And because of the things I have seen, I exceedingly fear.
For you, my two oldest sons – Laman and Lemuel –
But Nephi and Sam, I rejoice for you – Oh, hearken all and hear:

Sariah: *(Speaks)* What did you see?

Lehi: *(Sings)* I saw a man dressed in white who bade me follow him;
And as I followed him, I found myself alone
In a dark and dreary wilderness
By myself for many hours on my own.

Then I prayed to the Lord and I saw a tree
And partook of its fruit white and fair;
And it filled my soul with exceeding joy,
And I knew that what I'd found, I had to share.

So I cast my eyes around – Hoping my family might be found;
And I saw you all, and you heard my call, and some of you joined me and partook
Of the fruit of the tree; but some of you would not come to me.
Though I beckoned and I called, you would not partake at all,
And it broke my heart.

And I also beheld a straight and narrow path
Which came along by an iron rod.
I saw many people pressing forward
To come to the tree, which was the love of God. *(Keychange)*

Angel Choir: Oo....

Angel Choir: Ah....

Then a mist of darkness rose and concealed the path,
And many who commenced did lose their way;
But others caught hold of that rod of iron,
Pressing forward on it boldly all the way,

Till they came to the tree, *(Ah..)* and fell down there and partook, just like me. *(Ah...)*
But others wandered and were drowned – and no longer could be found
And it broke my heart. *(Ah)*

Press forward, my children, hold fast to the iron rod
That can lead you on a straight course to taste of the love of God *(Ah)*
Press forward, my children, *(Press forward, always)*
And choose the path that's right. *(Choose the path that's right)*
Press forward, press on into the light. *(He and Sariah gather their boys in a family embrace as the lights fade.)*

Older Nephi: And after I, Nephi, did hear the words of my father, I was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and
(Speaking) know of these things for myself. *(Underscore Music: "Vision," with angels.)* And the Lord answered me,
and showed me many great - and terrible - things about the future of my people.
(Young Nephi carries out these actions, as Older Nephi narrates them.)

And when I returned from speaking with the Lord, I found my brothers disputing one with another about
the things my father had spoken unto them. *(Lights up on Laman, Lemuel, and Sam arguing.)*

Nephi: Stop! Why are you fighting?

Sam: Because we can't understand the things our father has said unto us.

Nephi: Have ye inquired of the Lord?

Laman: *(with genuine sadness.)* We have not, for the Lord maketh no such thing known... unto us. **(1 Ne. 15:2-9)**

For Yourself (1 Ne. 15:11)

Young Nephi: *(Gently, to Laman)* If you will ask Him, If you will seek Him,
(Singing) If you will turn to Him, then He will turn to you.

If you will knock at His door, if you will speak to Him,

Then He will open that door, and He will speak to you. **(Angels sing, adding their witness:)**

(With assurance) For yourself – you can have your own experience; *(Your own experience)*

For yourself – you can find a light inside. *(Find a light inside)*

For this wilderness can simply be too hard to take *(Ah....)*

Without the strength of your own witness, your own guide. *(Ah...)*

Soon you can know – *(Soon you can know)* Soon you... can know – *(Know...)*

For yourself. *(For yourself.)* / *(Ask Him–Seek Him–Turn to Him, and He will turn to you...)*

*(Laman looks up into Nephi's eyes. Nephi grips his brother's hands in assurance.
Music segues gently into the next song.)*

In the Valley of Lemuel (1 Ne. 8:1 - 16:10) *(Lights up on Narrators and Angel Choir)*

Nar. 1: There in the valley of Lemuel, there at the riverside,
Two families slowly merged into one – Each daughter became a bride. *(In dance, the daughters emerge)*

Nar. 2: It was a happy and fruitful time, as each man found his wife, **(Angels: Ah...)**
(The brothers and Zoram take the hands of their wives, as do Lehi and Ishmael and his sons)
Side by side, they all worked together, preparing for their new life.

Nar. 1: They gathered what was needed for the journey up ahead - **(Angels: Ah...)**
Seeds of every kind, provisions and tents, for each couple wed;

Nar. 2: And when everything was gathered, and when all was at last prepared,
God spoke, saying it was time to leave their encampment there. *(Lights up slowly on the tents.)*

Nar. 1: And when they rose up in the morning, on the day when they were to go, **(Angels: Ah...)**

Nar. 1&2: They found a curiously fashioned little ball on the ground near the tent's front door.

Sariah: *(Speaks)* What is it?

Lehi: I'm not sure... It seems to be... a compass of some kind.

Sariah: *(Examining it)* Look at this workmanship. It's exquisite. Where could this have come from?

Lehi: It could have come from only one place. It is a gift from God, to lead us through the wilderness.
(He begins walking with the Liahona, getting more and more excited.)

Look – the spindle on the top is moving. It's pointing us where we need to go!

Sariah: This little ball is what will lead us to the promised land! *(The family begins to wake and enter the scene.)*

Nephi: What is it, father?

Lehi: *(Overjoyed)* Look – it's a compass! A compass from heaven!

Nephi: It's pointing towards the river.

Lehi: Yes. A river we will need to cross. Today.

Lemuel: Sounds... wet.

Lemuel's Wife: And cold.

Laman: Surely there's another way out of here.

Lehi: No. We will follow God's compass. That is our path to safety - our path to the promised land.
(Lights out on them, up on Older Nephi, writing. Underscore Music: "Like This River")

Older Nephi: And it came to pass that we did take our tents and depart into the wilderness, across the river Laman.
And we did follow the directions on the ball, which led us in the more fertile parts of the wilderness.

And after we had traveled for the space of many days we did pitch our tents, that we might rest
ourselves and obtain food for our families. *(Lights up on Nephi and his brothers bow hunting.)*

And as I, Nephi went forth to slay food, behold, I did break my bow, which was made of fine steel.
And my brethren were angry with me, because of the loss of my bow. *(Music ends)*

Laman: How will we now obtain food for our families?

Lemuel: *(Bitterly)* Our bows have lost their springs, and now you have broken the one thing that stood between
us and starvation. *(Sarcastically)* Good work, Nephi!

Sam: *(Examining the broken bow)* How could this have happened? This bow was of the finest steel.

Nephi: I know. I'm not sure how it happened.

(Lehi and Sariah approach, greeting them anxiously.)

Sariah: My sons, you're home!... *(seeing them empty-handed)* Everyone is so hungry...
Lehi: Why have you not brought back food?
Lemuel: You know... that's a *really* good question! *(The family begins to gather, concerned, watching silently.)*
Laman: *(Contemptuously)* Tell him, Nephi! Tell him what you did. *(Nephi silently raises his broken bow.)*
Sariah: Your fine steel bow! Our one security in this barren wasteland... How did this happen?
Nephi: I'm not sure... It just happened. I'm so sorry.

Lehi: *(Losing confidence)* I'm sorry too. I'm sorry that I ever listened. I'm sorry that I brought you all out here. We should have just... stayed home and hoped for the best.

Laman: *(Under his breath)* That's what I've been saying all along.

Sariah: Lehi, I know you don't mean that...

Lehi: *(Bitterly)* No, I do mean that! *(To God:)* Lord, I trusted you! I trusted you with my safety, and that of my wife, and of my children and my family. And now Ishmael's family too. They all trusted me, they all followed me out here. Because I trusted you, and followed you! Why have you now abandoned us? Why? *(He runs off in despair. They are all silenced and stunned. They've never seen him like this before.)*

Lemuel: *(Harshly, to Nephi)* You see what you did – prophet-boy?
(The family dissipates slowly, murmuring – all but Nephi's wife, who approaches him gently.)

N's Wife: Nephi...

Nephi: *(a little sharply)* What... are you going to attack me too?

N's Wife: No – of course not! I just.. don't want you to be alone.

Nephi: You can't do anything.

N's Wife: No. But I do know someone who can. *(For the first time, Nephi lifts his head, looking at her.)*

Tender Mercies (1 Ne. 1:20)

Nephi's Wife: *(Gently, to her downcast young husband)* Just when the night turns its darkest,
(Singing:) Just when the wind howls its worst;
Just when you almost have given up hope,
Just when you think you're at the end of your rope,

He sends his tender mercies, Undeserved and ever-flowing.
Tender mercies, That sustain your soul, and keep you knowing
That no matter what, he's always there, and you're always his constant care:
Tender mercies. *(Lights up on Sariah, who has found Lehi sitting alone.)*

Sariah: *(to a discouraged Lehi)* Just when the world you've known is ending,
When you once again crash into yet another wall,
Just when you think you've reached your limit at last,
When you honestly believe that all your good days are past,

+N.Wife: He sends his tender mercies, *(His tender mercies)*
That pick you up, and keep you going,
Tender mercies, *(Tender mercies)*
That sustain your soul, and keep you knowing
That no matter what, he's always there, and you're always in his constant care,
Tender mercies. *(Music shifts to underscore, as lights fade out on Lehi and Sariah.)*

Nephi's Wife: You'll know what to do.
(Speaking:) He'll let you know what you need to do.

Nephi: *(Softly)* Yes. He already has. *(He extends a gesture of affection, and departs, as lights go out on them.)*

Older Nephi: And I did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow;
wherefore I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow, with a sling and with stones.
And I went forth unto my father, (*lights up on Lehi, sitting alone*) and said:

Nephi: (*Gently, to Lehi*) Father, whither shall I go to obtain food? (*Lehi looks up, and sees the new bow*)
Lehi: (*Humbly, with deep gratitude*) Oh, my son. My dear and faithful son. (*He embraces his son, lights out.*)

Older Nephi: And my father inquired of the Lord. And he was sorely chastened for his murmurings; nevertheless, the voice of the Lord said unto him, "Look upon the ball." And following directions on the ball, I did go forth and slay wild beasts, that I did obtain food for our families. And their joy was great; and they did humble themselves before the Lord, and did give thanks unto him.
(*Lights up on the family with the ball.*)

Women: We grow stronger and stronger,
(*Singing:*) With every passing day.

Men: Though the journey seems longer and longer,

Families: We know he is there for us, all the way, with his (*Keychange*) (+**Angels:** Ah!)

Families: Tender mercies (*tender mercies*) That keep us safe, and keep us going,
Tender mercies, (*tender mercies*) that guide us on, And keep us knowing
That his love for us is always there, (*Always there,*)
And we're always in his constant care, (*Constant care.*)
And there's really nothing we can't bear, (*Ah...*)
Nourished by his daily, tender mercies, tender mercies, His tender mercies.

Older Nephi: And we took our journey again, traveling for the space of many days. And we did pitch our tents,
(*Speaking*) and did tarry for the space of a time.

And it came to pass that Ishmael died. And his daughters did mourn his loss exceedingly.

(*Lights up on the women of the company, huddled in grief. The wives of Nephi, Sam, and Zoram, along with Sariah, sit with Ishmael's widow, comforting her. In another corner, near Ishmael's graveside, the wives of the sons of Ishmael, and of Laman and Lemuel, sing:*)

Out Here (1 Ne. 16:34-36)

SOI/L&L Wives: Out here, there isn't even bread;
(*Singing:*) Out here, we're barely even fed.
And my father would be alive, not dead, If we hadn't come out here.

Out here, it's either hot or cold;
Out here, we simply do what we are told.
Going this way, going that way, on the whim of a silly ball,
If you ask me, it just makes no sense at all!

Coming out here – I didn't have a choice.
Out here – I haven't got a voice.
What I hope for doesn't matter –
What is dear to me is gone –
And the answer is we simply must go on - Out here!

Lehi: *(Sadly)* Out here, Lord, your voice has grown so dim; I wonder if the children may be right.
Am I just a blind old fool, Chasing down some silly dream,
And dragging along my family without reason?

Already it has taken my dear friend's life –
Who will be next, Lord? My son... my wife? Out here...

Nephi: Out here, it seems impossible to bear; *(Light up on Nephi, in a corner alone)*
But I know that nothing is too hard for thee!
Won't you please show me the way, Lord – For I know that you are there;
Oh, tell me what to do, Lord - Please speak to me! Out here! *(Sons of Ishmael join their sisters onstage)*

Ishmael's Children: Our father would not have died, if we were not...
+ Company: Out here!
Lehi & Sariah : We can't say we haven't tried our best... *(Families of Sons of Ishmael join them)*
+ Company: Out here! *(Laman, Lemuel, enter, listening angrily)*
Ishmael's Family: Oh, the endless tears we've cried. *(Sam and Zoram enter, listening in concern)*
+ Nephi, Lehi, Zoram, Sam: We have prayed, no one's replied.
+ Laman, Lemuel: To the questions burning here inside...
Out here!

Nephi: Father, please show me the way –
+Lehi: Make thy will clear.
Sariah: *(Make thy will clear...)*
All: Out here! *(The music segues to an angrier tone, reprising the earlier rebellion. Singing in whisper:)*

SOI-2's's Wife: Why did we come out here at all?
SOI-1's Wife: That's ...what I'd like to know!
L&L Wives: We had everything we ever wanted back at home.
All: Everything we ever needed.

Precious Things (1 Ne. 16:34-36)

SOI-1's Wife: We had... a house... **+ SOI-2 Wife** A lovely house...
+ Laman's Wife: A lovely and comfortable house, full of precious things.
Lemuel's Wife: We had friends –
+Laman's Wife: We had our father –
All 4: We had a beautiful life, in that house full of precious things.

And most of all – We had happiness – So much happiness, together there.
We had plenty to eat, and our lives were sweet,

L&L Wives: And our faces were smiling and fair –
All 4: You couldn't find a happier fam'ly anywhere.

Lemuel's Wife: Our father – oh,
+Laman's Wife: We miss him so.
+3 Daughters: It's hard to leave him here in this dark and barren place.
SOI-2's Wife: If we were still at home,
+SOI-1's Wife: And chosen not to roam,
+L&L Wives: Then perhaps these tears would not be streaming down our face!

All Daughters: For life is hard – And we have wandered much – (*Laman, Lemuel, Sam, Zoram, and sons of Ishmael*
Here in this wilderness Of sorrow and of pain. *join their wives.*)
We've suffered hunger and thirst and fatigue and toil,

SOI-1,2/L&L Wives: Just by hunger to now be slain -
Oh, that we could go home, And see our precious things again!

(They turn to their husbands for comfort and protection. The men are touched – and angered – by the heartbreak of their wives – other than Sam and Zoram, who are increasingly concerned. Lehi and Nephi overhear this exchange from distance. Laman, tender to the feelings of his suffering wife, is particularly incensed.)

In the Wilderness (1 Ne. 16:37-39)

Laman: (*Erupting ferociously, to Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael*) Behold, let us slay our father!
And our brother Nephi too!
For we know that he lies to us, we know what he is really trying to do:
To lead us to some strange wilderness, there to make himself a king
That he may do with us according to his will!

Lemuel: Come, let us slay them! (*Sariah and Nephi's wife approach, overhearing this, recoiling in horror.*)

+Son of I. 1, 2: Come, let us strike them!

+Laman: Come, let us kill... them!

Older Nephi: But the Lord was with us, (**Angels and Narrators:** Ah...)
And his voice came down, (*the men fall to the ground, hearing, as a strong spotlight shines on them*)
And did speak many words unto them, (**Angels and Narrators:** Ah...)

And they were chastened exceedingly,
Wherefore they did repent
And did turn away their anger.

(Sam approaches them gently, helps them up, invites Nephi and Lehi into the group. They are reconciled, having finally received long-sought divine guidance, validation, and peace.)

Older Nephi: Wherefore we were able to continue (*The full group gathers. Lehi quietly hands Nephi the Liahona,*
In our journey towards the promised land; *and nudges him forward in leading the group. They*
continues journeying, with Nephi in the lead, holding
and following the Liahona)

We traveled in the wilderness,
Guided by God's hand.

(Next follow Sam and Zoram with their wives, then the other women and children, then the sons of Ishmael, followed by Laman and Lemuel, still shamed and shaken by the recent rebuke.)

(Lehi watches them sadly, gathering strength for this next leg of the journey, still overwhelmed with the private devastation of his sons' murderous words against him.)

(Sariah stands at his side, concerned for him, and gathering her own strength for a challenging journey.)

Sariah: (*Speaks*) He never said the journey would be easy.

Lehi: No. But He also never said it would be like this.

Sariah: He did say... they never partook of the fruit.

Lehi: (*closing his eyes in painful recollection*) I know. (*Opens his eyes, bright with tears*)

I just never thought something like this could happen – in our family. (*He sits dejectedly on a large rock.*)

Eventually

Sariah: *(Sings)* They can break your heart - Tear it right in two;
They can devastate your dreams for them, And shred them through and through.
They can take everything you tried to teach them, And throw it all away.
They can break your heart a little every day. *(She approaches Lehi, standing gently behind him.)*

But you will never stop loving them; No, you will never stop loving them.
And you never will stop hoping, And you never will stop groping
For the tiniest strand of a reason to believe
That they will finally find their way back home...
Eventually. *(Ishmael's wife also enters with a saddened heart, stands near Ishmael's graveside)*

Ishmael's Wife: Once you've given birth to another soul,
They're forever a part of you – Without them you're not whole.

+Sariah: So whether they do right, or whether they do wrong,
Whether they are weak, or whether they are strong,
(Other women join the group, rendering their support to Ishmael's wife at her husband's grave.)

+Nephi's Wife: Oh, you'll never stop loving them;

+Sam's Wife: No, you will never stop loving them.

+Zoram's Wife: And you never will stop hoping, And you never will stop groping
For the tiniest strand of a reason to believe
That they will finally find their way back home...
Eventually. *(Instrumental music continues, as Sariah speaks privately with Lehi)*

Sarah: *(spoken)* There's something else you probably need to know.

Lehi: *(still focused sadly on his rebellious sons)* Oh? What's that?

Sariah: *(hesitates)* It's hard...

Lehi: *(tunes in to her, concerned)* What is it, Sariah?

Sariah: *(takes a deep breath, then tells him:)* We're going to be doing this again.

Lehi: Doing what?

Sariah: *(quietly – a little afraid)* Being... parents.

Lehi: What do you mean? We're already parents.

Sariah: *(with increased emphasis, looking straight into his eyes)* We're going to be doing ALL of this... AGAIN.

Lehi: *(he turns from her, bewildered - So much to take in all at once.)* Again?... Here... NOW?...
How did this happen? *(Their youngest child is in his late teens. Becoming a father again, in his advanced age, will not be easy – especially out here, where providing for his current family is already so challenging)*

Sariah: The same way as always, I guess... *(seeing his struggle – feeling even more alone – turns from him in tears.)* I'm already so tired. And so much older than the last time. How will I ever do this?

Lehi: *(Standing, and approaching her gently)* The same way as always, I guess. With me at your side.
And with the God of heaven watching over us both.

Sariah: And over our children. **All** of them. *(They are both mindful of their troubled elder sons – and of this newest addition soon to join their family, in these harsh conditions. They are united in faith and resolve.)*

Lehi: They were His ... before they were ours.

Sariah: And we will continue to care for them well. Even here.

Lehi: Even now. *(Angels appear, now joined by Ishmael, singing with encouraging strength: Ah...)*

(Nephi enters, to collect his parents, followed by Sam and Zoram. He presses the Liahona gently Into his father's hands.)

+Nephi: *(Singing)* Oh, love is the longest road **Angels:** Ah...
+Sam: On which you can embark.
+I/N/S/Z Wives: 'Cause it goes on forever –
+Zoram: From the moment that you start, *(Keychange)*

+Lehi: Oh, you'll never stop loving them; **Angel Chorus:** Oh... Never stop...Loving them.
+Sariah: No, you'll never stop loving them. Never stop...Loving them.

(in rich harmony) And you never will stop hoping, Ah...
And you never will stop groping
For the tiniest strand of a reason to believe

Sariah: That they will finally find their way back home,
Lehi: And their hearts won't always be as stone;
Sam and Nephi : Somehow they'll find their answers on their own... *(They'll find their answers on their own)*
Sariah: Eventually...

Lemuel: *(Returning with his wife, speaks gently)* You coming with us, father?
Laman: *(Also with his wife)* We can't continue onward Without you. *(Lehi fervently embraces these 2 boys)*

Y. Nephi: *(remembering his prior visions of eminent conflicts and latter-day resolution)* Eventually.

(The family gathers together in one united group, with Lehi in front, holding the Liahona)

I&L Families: Press forward!
Nephi: Press forward! **Angels:** Ah!

----- ***(Lights out on Act I. Curtain closes for a ten-minute intermission.)*** -----

ACT 2 – THE PROMISED LAND *(8 years later. Many young children have now joined the family)*

Entr'acte *(Dance of the Children, with their mothers, laughing, playing peek a boo, then skipping out merrily.)
(Last of all, two little girls, about 5 and 3 years old, are left alone on stage, dawdling and enjoying each other's company. Lights up on Narrators, watching the children.)*

Nar. 1: *(Speaks)* Look, there we are! *(She points at the two little girls onstage – their mortal selves, years earlier.)*
Nar. 2: Look how little we were! *(A little boy, about 7 years old, enters and points to the girls.)*
Nar. 1: And our brother, Jacob! *(Sariah enters wearily, carrying a young child, looking for them.)*
Nar. 2: And little Joseph too! Look - they were so tiny!
Nephi: *(Now a strong young man, no longer a boy.)* Hey, little brother! *(swings Jacob around; the child laughs)*
Nephi's Wife: *(with her baby, laughing)* Nephi, be careful!

Nar. 1: *(Concerned)* Mother looks,,, tired. *(Indeed, Sariah seems aged before her time, due to constant stress.)*
Nar. 2: She WAS tired. That shouldn't be too surprising - after EIGHT years in the wilderness, raising teenagers, AND having babies!

Strength for the Journey *(1 Ne. 17:1-4)*

Lemuel's Wife: *(Singing)* The journey's been long,
Laman's Wife: And it's been hard;
Nephi's Wife: But we get through it,
+ Sam's Wife: By the strength of the Lord.
+Zoram's Wife: He helps and sustains us all along our way;
+Sariah: He strengthens and nourishes us on our pathway every day.

Wives: When storms befell, **Children:** *When storms befell,*
Wives: And our hearts were sad, **Children:** *And our hearts were sad,*
Wives: We learned that all was well: **Children:** *All was well,*
Wives: What we needed we had. **Children:** *What we needed we had.*

Wives: We walked in confidence **Children:** *In confidence*
Wives: As He kept us from harm **Children:** *He kept us from harm*
Wives: And He protected us **Children:** *He protected us*
Wives & Ch: By the strength of His arm. *(The men enter, joining their families: Ah...)*

+Men: And in Him we found – Strength for the journey,
Wives: Whatever test or affliction or sorrow our road led through;
+Men: He gave us – Strength for the journey,
Wives: And slowly over time, our strength and our power grew.

Wives: We bore children **Men:** *(Ah...)*
Wives: And we bore pain **Men:** *(Ah...)*
Wives: We faced heat, and cold, and wind, and pouring rain, **Men:** *(Ah....)*
All: And we were strengthened by all that we passed through;
And we were given pow'r to do what we had to do.

All: We were given – Strength for the journey,
Women: Though we started this road with a faith that was weak and small.
All: He gave us strength for the journey:
Nephi's Wife: He gave us the pow'r to get us through it all.

Women: Despite the tears that we have cried,
+Men: He has lit a light inside That we know will never, ever fade away!
All: He gives us strength for the journey,
 And faith that grows yet stronger every day
L&L: *(The journey's been long, and it's been hard)*
All: But we get through it, by the strength of the Lord.

Journeyings Without Murmurings (1 Ne. 17:1-6)

Older Nephi: And our women did bear children in the wilderness *(Young children join their mothers onstage)*
 And were strong, even like unto the men; *(The children hug their mothers, looking up)*
 And they began to bear their journeyings *(They engage in a community circle dance)*
 Without murmurings...

And while living on raw meat in the wilderness, *(Mothers with small babies join the group,*
 They nourished their small babes abundantly; *lifting and twirling their babes happily)*
+Women: And after eight long years of trials and of tears, *(The men join their families, arms around their wives)*
+Company: We arrived at a place beside a shining sea... *(They all sing together, facing the audience)*

(Sound effect – waves at the seashore, coming from the auditorium. The family walks forward slowly, discovering this new location with wonder and delight.)

Older Nephi: Behold, we did come to a land which we did call Bountiful, because of its much fruit and wild honey.
(Speaking:) And we beheld the sea, and did pitch our tents by the seashore, and notwithstanding we had suffered many afflictions and much difficulty, we were exceedingly rejoiced when we came to the seashore.

Laman: *(to his wife)* I told you it would be worth it. It's been hard for you, all this time. But now, we've finally arrived.

Home At Last (1 Ne. 17:5-6)

Laman: We're home at last – My little children! *(They run up and hug him)*
(Singing:) We're home at last – My tender wife! *(He twirls her, she laughs brightly)*
+His Wife: Here, we can finally stop and make a home,
+His Children: Here, we will eat this fruit and never have to roam again.

+Lemuel: We're home at last – Through with our wandering; *(To his wife)*
+Lm's Wife: We're home at last – Through with our pain and fear. *(Embracing him)*
+Men: Here, we can finally rest and make an end;
+Women: We've finally found our promised land, right here. *(Lights up on Nephi, at some distance, looking out toward the audience, as if it were the sea. He senses it is important somehow – but is unsure why.)*

Nephi: Why is that sea – Calling out to me –
 And what may lie beyond this restful shore?
 This is a place with a comforting embrace -
 And yet I can't help feeling there is more. *(Keychange)*

All/Nephi: We're home at last *(Why is that sea) – Through with our wandering; (calling out to me?)*
 We're home at last *(What may lie beyond) – Through with our pain and fear. (this restful shore?)*
 Here, we can finally rest and make an end; *(Is this the end?)*
 We've finally found our promised land right here. *(I can't help feeling there is more...)*
 Right here. *(I can't help feeling there is more...)* **(O. Nephi and Nar's join in words "there is more")**
 Right here. *(I can't help feeling – it's a strong and growing feeling – No, I just cannot help feeling*
 Right here. *(There is more – beyond this restful shore...)* *(Lights up on Narrators)*

Nar. 2: (*Speaks*) That time we spent in the land Bountiful, there at the ocean side, was the happiest time in my life.

Nar. 1: Mine too. But there isn't much about it here in Nephi's book.

Nar. 2: There's not much about us there in general!

Nar. 1: I know – only one verse. See, here it is.... "Jacob and Joseph, *and also my sisters...*"

Nar. 2: 4 words? We only get 4 *words* in the entire book?

Nar. 1: Yep. 4 words. We're ... background characters!

Nar. 2: I guess not everybody can be in the spotlight.

In the Background

Nar. 1: (*Sings*) Quietly – In the background - We cook and clean and feel and think and live.

Nar. 2: Silently - In the background - We love and pray and fear and hope and give.

Nar. 1: And yet our voices are rarely ever heard,

+Nar. 2: And what is written of us Is hardly a word

+Women: But quietly – In the background – We strive and learn and hear and ache and grow;
And silently – In the background – We serve in ways no one will ever know.

+Children: And yet our voices Are heard by God above;
And he sees silently Our endless gifts of love.

And quietly, in the background, He sends his help and blessings every day;

And silently, in the background, He helps us through each challenge on our way.

All: And it's nice to know We have so much in common (**Angels, joined by Ishmael's wife:** Ah!)
With God himself, in heaven up above
Who silently, in the background, Quietly pours out his gifts of love.

Nar's: Just as we do -

All: In the background.

(Abruptly, the music changes to a bold driving sound, as Nephi becomes visible reaching the top of a mountain, high up, center stage. Lights focus on him; lights fade out on the family below.)

Driven to the Mountain (1 Ne. 17:7-9)

Nephi: Driven to the mountain, like Moses was of old;
(*Singing*) Driven to the mountain, in the early morning cold;
Following a quiet voice that beckoned me this way,
I am... Driven to the mountain today.

Up here where the air is clear, on cliffs that you've clenched and clawed,
There's not another voice to hear, except for the voice of God.
And when you come here to seek Him, He doesn't turn away.
That's why I've come to His holy mountain... Today.

And I cry... To Him.

And I cry... To Him.

And I try...

To listen and to hear!

Angels: (*Enter, and join the singing*): Ah...

Nephi: Here on this mountaintop,
My eyes are filled with things I cannot always see:
Here in this quiet place,
His quiet voice speaks clearly, just to only me.

Angels: (Ah...)
(*Look up and see...*)
(Ah)

Driven to the mountain, like Moses was of old.

Driven to the mountain....

(Driven to the mountain...)

(The mountain goes dark. Lights up on the camp below, with Laman and son. They speak:)

Laman: *(To his son, a curly-headed 5-year-old)* So - how's my little man today?

Laman's Son: I'm good, father! I like this place better than anywhere ever!

Laman: It is beautiful, isn't it? But not as beautiful as your mother! *(To his wife)* Are you happy?

Laman's Wife: I could be happy here. I still miss Jerusalem sometimes. But it's nice here.

Laman: I'll build you a big beautiful house... right over there. Better than anything you ever had in Jerusalem.

Laman's Wife: *(Laughs)* Oh, Laman, you're such a tease. But I believe you. You've always worked so hard for us.

Laman: I'd do anything for you. And for our family.

Laman's Wife: I know. And I'm grateful. *(Based on **Jacob 3:7, 1 Ne. 17:20-21**)*

(By now, Nephi has re-entered the picture, gathering supplies, and hammering nails into a wooden frame)

Sam: What are you doing?

Nephi: Preparing *(turns and looks at Sam jubilantly)* ... to build a ship!

Laman: A ship... Why?

Lemuel: *(Mockingly)* Are you ... going somewhere, Nephi?

Nephi: We're all going somewhere... *(Points to the ocean)* There!

Sam: The many waters? Why? What's over there?

Nephi: The promised land. A large expanse of land. A beautiful land. Big enough for all of us, for generations!

Laman: We're not going anywhere. This.. THIS is the promised land.

Nephi: THIS is a temporary resting spot. Within a year or two, with more and more children coming, it won't be nearly big enough.

Laman: Our wives, our children... Have you seen them? They're finally happy! We're not going anywhere!

Nephi: God says otherwise. And He says you need to help me.

Lemuel: Help you... what?

Nephi: Build the ship, of course!

Lemuel: *(Sarcastically)* So now... you're a boat builder. And you want us to be your happy little assistants!

Nephi: It's going to be an amazing ship. God showed me how to build it. Not after the manner of men. It'll be unlike anything you've ever seen before. *(He resumes his hammering.)* **(1 Ne. 17:8-16)**

Our Brother Is A Fool / Touch Me Not! *(1 Ne. 17:17-21, 48-55)*

Lemuel: *(Sings)* *(in rhythm with the hammering)* Our brother is a fool - He thinks he can build a boat

Laman: With these pathetic little tools, And he thinks it could even float.

Lemuel: To carry us across these waters, to some "promised land."

+Laman: Hey, brother dear, shall we come and lend a hand?

L&L Why should we ever listen for one second to the crazy ramblings

Of this little chip off the old block?

(Lehi stands with Sariah, aghast)

When will there ever be an end to all this silly foolishness?

When will it stop? When will it ever stop?

Laman: *(cries out in rage)* I know how to make it stop – Permanently!

(They lunge at Nephi; he extends his hand mightily, singing:)

Nephi: Touch me not! Or God will smite you, And you'll wither like a reed!
For I am filled with his power and might, It consumes the flesh of me!
Murmur no more against your father, And withhold not your labor from me;
For God has commanded us to build this ship, To carry us across the sea. *(They cower)*

L&L: *(kneeling before him)* We know of a surety That the Lord our God is with thee.
For we know it is his power That has shaken us.

Nephi: I am only your younger brother: Worship the Lord thy God;
And honor thy father and thy mother,
That thy days may be long In the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee.

Sam:*(Speaks gently)* Let's get to work. What is it you wanted us to do?

Nephi: We'll start here. *(They start working timbers, joined by the sons of Ishmael.)*

Laman's son: *(A young child, bounding in happily, tugging at his father's sleeve. Speaks:)* Father, can you play?

Laman: *(Still bruised and irritated from recent events.)* Maybe later. Go ask Jacob if he can play.
(He pulls away sullenly into a corner alone. His wife and mother watch him in concern.)

Laman's son: *(Running to Sariah)* Grandmama – Papa says to ask if Jacob can play.

Sariah: I suppose that's fine – as long as you both play nice. *(The boys go skipping off happily. She looks down at Joseph, the babe in her arms, then wistfully up at Laman. Music begins.)*

I Have Not Forgotten

Sariah: Sweet little baby boy, brimming with light and joy,
(Singing): Your eyes shining bright with ecstatic delight, Full of wonder at the world,
Now a man, not a baby, in form – Tall and handsome, and yet forlorn;
With eyes dark and angry, And blaming and cold – Battle weary and war-torn:

You've forgotten who you are – You've forgotten who you were,
And you've forgotten who you have it in you to be.
But I have not forgotten, And I never will forget;
For my son, I still believe in you, And I'm pulling for you yet.

Once a laughing, cherubic child, Hair curling softly around your face, *(Mrs. Laman enters, saddened by Laman's shadowed side)*
And your peals of laughter filling the air with delight and joy and grace.
+ Mrs. Laman: Now you've lost your radiant smile – I see you struggle day by day;
And I try to reach you – I try to touch you – But you just turn away. *(Angels enter, supporting them.)*

You've forgotten who you are *(Angels: Who you are)* –
You've forgotten who you were, *(Who you were)*
And you've lost sight of who you have it in you to be. *(Who it's in you to be)*
But I have not forgotten, *(Not forgotten)* And I never will forget; *(Never will forget)*

Sariah: For my son, I still believe in you,
+ Mrs. Laman: And I'm pulling for you yet. *(And I'm pulling for you yet.)*

(harmony:) I will never stop fighting for you – Never stop aching for you – *(Never stop – Never stop)*
Never stop believing that you'll find your way; *(Never stop – Ah)*
And I'll never stop praying for you – Never will stop hoping *(Never stop praying, Never stop hoping)*
That you'll grow into who you were born to be... someday. *(Ah...)*

Sariah: My sweet little baby boy, brimming with light and joy,
Your eyes shining bright with ecstatic delight, Full of wonder at the world,
Now a man, not a baby, in form – *(Ah...)*

+ Mrs. Laman: Tall and handsome, and yet forlorn;
You've forgotten who you are – But I've not forgotten.

Lemuel: *(Spoken, calling to him)* Hey Laman – you joining us over here?

Sariah, Mrs. L: I have not forgotten.

Sam: *(Spoken, approaching him kindly, extending a hand)* We need your help, brother.

Sariah, Mrs. L: I have not forgotten – I have not forgotten.
(Laman silently rejoins his brothers, as they continue crafting the ship. Lights fade out.)

Nar. 1: *(Speaks)* Over time, our brothers worked hard to complete the ship, to carry us all to the promised land.
Nephi went into the mountain often to learn more from God about how to build it just right.

Nar. 2: And when it was done, even Laman and Lemuel had to agree that the ship was well-built and strong,
and that the workmanship of it was exceedingly fine.

Older Nephi: And they did humble themselves again before the Lord. *(Light shines onto Lehi, as in his first vision)*
And the voice of the Lord came unto my father, that we should arise and go down into the ship.

So, after gathering much food and provisions, we did all go down into the ship. And we did put forth into
the sea, and were driven forth before the wind to the promised land.
(Sound effect – loud powerful wind.) (1 Ne. 18:1-8)

And notwithstanding many adversities upon the waters, after we had sailed for the space of many days,
we arrived at a new land, and we went forth upon the land, and pitched our tents.
And we did call it the promised land. **(1 Ne. 18:22-23)**

(Lights up on Lehi and the family, newly discovering the promised land. Their faces beam with wonder and great joy.)

Home At Last, Reprise *(1 Ne. 17:5-6)*

Lehi: *(Singing):* We're home at last – Behold, my children,
We've home at last – My beloved wife! *(He tucks her under his arm.)*

+Sariah: *(with her small children.)* Here, we can finally stop and make a home,

+Nephi & wife: Here, we will plant our seeds and never have to roam again. *(Keychange)*

+Bros/wives: We're home at last *(Home at last)* – Through with our wandering *(Through with our wandering)*

+Sofl/wives: We're home at last *(Home at last)* – Through with our pain and fear. *(Through with our pain and fear.)*

+Children: Here, we can finally rest and make an end;
We've finally found our promised land right here:
We're home... Home at last! Home at last! *(Lights out on the family, up on Older Nephi)*

Older Nephi: And it came to pass that we did begin to till the earth... and we did put all our seeds into the earth,
(Speaking) which we had brought from the land of Jerusalem. And they did grow exceedingly; wherefore, we were
blessed in abundance.

And we did find upon the land of promise, as we journeyed in the wilderness, that there were beasts of
every kind... which were for the use of men. And we did find all manner of ore, both of gold, and of
silver, and of copper.

And it came to pass that the Lord commanded me, wherefore I did make plates of ore, that I might
engraven upon them the record of my people. *(He hammers out characters as lights fade out on him.)*

(Lights up on Sariah, sitting alone in the moonlight, leaning on a large rock, very tired. It has been a long journey, full of adversities and heartbreaks. Her mortal strength is quickly ebbing away.)

Sariah: We're home at last – Our family is peaceful,
(Singing) In this healing place, after so much time has passed.
Maybe I can finally rest for just a while.
Maybe this... is truly home... at last.

(4 chords. She closes her eyes, and goes peacefully to sleep. After a few moments, the music segues, and Lehi comes looking for her. He sees her from a distance at first.)

Beautiful Tonight, Reprise

Lehi: The stars are so beautiful tonight!
But not nearly as beautiful as you.

(No response, as the music continues)

Sariah? *(As the second verse plays, he approaches her. She is motionless. He finally realizes - her life's journey is now over. Agonized, he cries out:)*

Please don't leave me, Sariah, - please don't go!
For I know, I'll miss everything about you.
We have finally arrived in our promised land -
But it holds so much less joy for me, without you.

(Stroking her hair gently) You're looking so beautiful tonight,
With the moonlight in your hair – sweet love, adieu.
It's been a long hard journey, a long hard fight -
But there's no one I would have rather shared it with - than you.

I feel my life, like yours, slowly slipping away;
But there are things I know, that I still need to say,
Before my time is past, and I go home at last
To you, and to... My Savior. *(He looks up with joy, as a strong light falls on him from above.)*
(Angels appear, including Mrs. Ishmael)

The Lord hath redeemed my soul – And I have beheld his glory! *(Angels: Ah)*
I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love! *(Gently the angels rouse Sariah)*
In the arms of love. *(She recognizes their faces with joy, begins exiting with them)*

Sariah (exiting:) *(Till then, adieu.) (Lights out slowly on Lehi)*

Nar. 1: *(Speaks)* Sometimes, people just seem to know when their time on earth is passed. *(Gentle music intro begins)*

Nar. 2: And as our father's time grew near, he gathered his family around him, to impart some final counsel.

(Lights up on Lehi, sitting center stage, surrounded by his family. Laman is on his right hand, Sam is at his left. Lemuel and sons of Ishmael stand beside Laman. Nephi, Sam, Zoram, Jacob, and Joseph stand at the side of Sam. Their wives and children stand or sit somewhat farther away, on the side corresponding to their head of household. Lehi sings weakly, near the end of his mortal strength:)

Awake, My Sons (2 Ne. 1:4-5; 13-14; 21-24)

Lehi: Behold, I have seen in vision – Jerusalem is now destroyed;
(Singing) And if we still had been there, we also would have perished with them, my boys.
But here we are, in this new land of promise, Choice above all other lands.
And as we settle here, there are things that you all need to understand:

(Slowly and thoughtfully) Here at the end of a lifetime, I reflect on all that my eyes have seen;
I share with you one final message, and offer one final plea.
You have it within your power To be mighty, bold, and strong,
So hear the words of a trembling parent – a father’s dying song:

(To Laman’s group): Awake, my sons: Shake off those awful chains that bind you;
Be determined in one heart and mind, united in all things.
Arise from the dust, and put old darker times behind you.
Embrace the joy that this new land of promise brings.

Rebel no more against your brother *(He brings Nephi forward to kneel near him)*
Whose views have been glorious for years;
For without him we all would have perished long ago
In that wilderness of tears.

Awake, my sons: Shake off those awful chains that bind you; *(Angels become visible: Ah...)*
Be determined in one heart and mind, united in all things. *(The stage becomes luminous,*
Arise from the dust, and put old darker times behind you. *as in his first vision of heaven)*
Embrace the joy that this new land of promise brings. *(Sariah steps forward slowly in light)*

Sariah: *(As an angel)* And you have obtained a land of promise – And it’s time now to come home, *(she beckons him)*
To inherit all that you worked for – Never more to be alone.

(He hears her, delicately balanced between this world and the next, as he gives his family final instruction)

Lehi: *(Speaking)* *(with instrumental verse)* And now my son Laman, and also Lemuel and Sam, and also my sons
who are the sons of Ishmael, behold if ye will hearken unto the voice of Nephi ye shall not
perish. And if ye will hearken unto him, I leave unto you a blessing, yea, even my first blessing.
But if ye will not hearken unto him I take away my first blessing, and it shall rest upon him.

*(This is shattering, unexpected news for Laman, who for a lifetime anticipated being Lehi’s
full heir, and the undisputed leader of their family tribe, after Lehi’s passing. Lehi continues, in an
ever-weakening voice:)*

Be faithful, my sons. Be faithful always... in keeping... the words... of the Lord.
(He looks up at Laman, who averts his gaze bitterly. This pains Lehi to the core.)

Sariah: *(As an angel)* *(Gently)* Lift up your head – Be comforted – And don’t despair any more,
For it won’t be long till you see for yourself – What all of this is for. *(She extends a hand to him)*

+Lehi, Angels: *(as he joins her and the angels, exiting together into the light. His mortal journey ends.)* Ooo.

Nar. 1: *(Speaks)* Our father Lehi gave many instructions and blessings to our family that day, before passing on.

Nar. 2: And our brother Nephi tried to be faithful to the charge given him, to lead our family in righteousness.

Nar. 1: But his well-intentioned efforts - were not always well-received. *(Lights out on the Narrators)*

(The stage looks darker now. Nephi stands slowly, gathering his strength to stand in his father's place.)

Nephi: *(Gently, with authority)* We must remember always the things our father has spoken to us this day.
Laman: *(Menacingly)* Oh, I remember, little brother. Believe me – this is one day I will never, ever forget.
Nephi: Laman...

(Concerned, Nephi extends a hand to Laman, who slaps it away ferociously, as fierce music erupts. Lights out on the family, as a spotlight follows Laman, bolting to a dark, distant corner of the stage. He is seething with rage, and lit by a torch or other half-light, creating dark shadows on his face.)

Hey, Little Brother (2 Ne. 4:13)

Laman: *(Devastated and resentful)* Hey, little brother, You think that you're so tough!
(Singing) Hey, little brother, I've had about enough
Of your lectures and your endless words - There's none left that I haven't heard -
No outrage that you've left unstirred today!

(More gently, fighting within himself) Hey, little brother, This isn't how it used to be;
There was a time, little brother, When you once looked to me.
Funny, now, how things have changed; How ev'rything's been rearranged;
Funny and a little bit strange to see.

(Wistfully) Oh, I remember other days When we used to act in other ways.

(With longing, almost regret) Hey, little brother, I used to dry your tears;
When others hurt you, I used to calm your fears.
I used to be the one to watch your back - Now it's me on the attack!
How I wish we could go back in time!

Oh, I never wanted to be your enemy; *(His anger begins growing to a boiling point)*
But you're the one who couldn't just let things be!

(Ferociously) Hey, little brother, Don't push me against a wall,
'Cause if it comes to a battle, brother, It ain't me who's gonna fall!
I won't let you take from me What is mine and what will always be!
Even if I have to free myself from you, Little brother!
Hey, little brother... Little brother! Little brother! Little brother - Hey!

(His shadow becomes longer, deeper, and darker. This once-handsome, princely young man is now entirely transformed into a murderous, resentful man of violence - a shadow of what he once was, and of what he could have been. The resentment ignited now within his soul will shadow the lives of many future generations.)

(Lights fade out on Laman, and come up slowly on Nephi, crumpled in pain on the opposite corner of the stage, grieving the loss of both of his beloved parents - and also the devastating, unexpected loss of relationship with his older brothers.)

Eventually, Reprise

Nephi: *(Slowly, and with great feeling)*

They can break your heart - Tear it right in two;
They can devastate your dreams for them, And shred them through and through.
They can take everything you tried to teach them, And throw it all away.
They can break your heart a little every day...

(Lights up on Lehi and Sariah, as angels)

Sariah/Lehi: *(Softly:)* But you will never stop loving them;

+ Nephi: No, you will never stop loving them.

(harmony) And you never will stop hoping, And you never will stop groping
For the tiniest strand of a reason to believe

Sariah/Lehi: That they will finally find their way back home...

Nephi: Eventually.

Sariah/Lehi: Eventually.

(Lights out slowly on Lehi & Sariah)

(Nephi's grief grows to overwhelming proportions. As light on his angel parents fades out, he is left in the dark to weep alone, in the intensity of his soul. Older Nephi, reliving these sad events, cries out:)

Awake, My Soul! (2 Ne. 4:17-35)

Older Nephi: O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth, and my soul grieveth. *(Nephi crumples in fierce pain and self-recrimination,*
I am encompassed about with temptations that so easily beset me; *pain and self-recrimination,*
And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; *(He pulls both fists to his head.)*
Nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted: I know in whom I have trusted. *(He slowly looks up,*
remembering past visions
My God hath been my support; He hath led me through mine afflictions: *and miracles)*
In the wilderness; he hath carried me across the great deep.
He hath heard my cry by day, Given me knowledge by vision in the night time, *(He smiles softly through*
And on the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away *his tears, remembering)*
Upon exceedingly high mountains, And mine eyes have beheld great things,
Even too great for man, That I was bidden that I should not write them.

Oh, then, if I have seen so great things, *(He sits back, more relaxed, pondering)*

Why should my heart weep, and my strength slacken?

Why should I give way to temptation,

That the evil one have place to destroy my peace, and afflict my soul?

Why am I angry because of mine enemy? *(Thinking of Laman and his bitter rage)*

+ Nephi: *(unison)* Why am I angry because of mine enemy? *(More gently, realizing who the real Enemy is.)*

(harmony) Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. *(Kneeling earnestly, with growing strength)*

Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul.

Do not anger again because of mine enemies, *(He slowly stands, gaining more and more power.)*

Do not slacken my strength because of mine afflictions. ***(Angels, now joined by Lehi & Sariah: Ah...)***

O Lord, wilt thou redeem my soul? Wilt thou encircle me In the robe of thy righteousness? *(His face*
O Lord, wilt thou make a way, For mine escape before mine enemies? *lifted, drinking in God's power)*

O Lord, I have trusted in thee, And I will trust in thee forever, *(Restored to his full strength.)*

I will lift up my voice, I will cry unto thee, my rock, and mine everlasting God!

Angels: *(My voice shall forever ascend unto thee, my God, my God!)*

Older Nephi: *(Nephi kneels in earnest prayer)* And I, Nephi, did cry much unto the Lord my God because of the anger of my brethren. *(Ominous music, as lights come up on Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael joining Laman, plotting angrily, like the chief priests in Jerusalem against Lehi.)*

But behold, their anger did increase against me, insomuch that they did seek to take away my life. *(They seal their murderous agreement against Nephi with a firm united handshake.)*

And it came to pass that the Lord did warn me that I should depart from them, *(Nephi sees them in vision)* and flee into the wilderness, with all those who would hearken unto my words.

(Lights out on Laman's group. Nephi sighs deeply.)

(Sam enters, seeing Nephi in deep reflection. Speaks to him gently:)

Sam: How goes it, brother?

Nephi: The Lord has commanded... that we take our families... and journey into the wilderness.

Sam: Again?

Nephi: Again, brother. For our safety, and the safety of our little ones.

Sam: So be it then. *(Clasps a gentle hand on Nephi's shoulder.)* Come, let's go tell the others.

Older Nephi: And we brought with us the brass plates, and the compass, and the sword of Laban.

(They gather these items as they exit. Lights out on Sam and Nephi.)

And we journeyed for many days into the wilderness. **2 Ne. 5:1-14)**

(Thick drumbeats; Lights up on furious Laman and others.)

Wronged! Robbed! (Mosiah 10:12-17)

Laman: *(Incensed, discovering so many people and items gone.)* Wronged! Robbed! Time after time after time!
My younger brother, taking from me, What rightfully is mine!

Lamanites: Wronged! Robbed! We'll see that they're gonna pay
Generation after generation, Day after day! *(Sariah's mourning riff, but now in intense warcry style.)*

Laman: Wronged in Jerusalem, Wronged in the wilderness, Wronged in every possible way!
Robbed of my inheritance, Robbed of my birthright, and Robbed of my right to lead today!

Lamanites: We all are - Wronged! Robbed! We'll see that they're gonna pay
Generation after generation, Day after day! *(A-ya-ya-ya-ya-ya-ya!)* *(Standing proudly, Laman is crowned king of his people.)*

Lemuel: Laman is our leader now - He will protect our rights! *(Laman spreads his arms wide, with a backlight*

Lamanites: From now on, we will be called Lamanites! *behind him, creating a large shadow across the stage)*

We all are - Wronged! Robbed! We'll see that they're gonna pay!
Generation after generation, Day after day!

Laman: *(In a shadowed light from his court, commanding loudly, as king)* Kill them! Kill them all!
Make them pay for what they have done, for what they have taken from us!

(This song is accompanied by rising, intense yells, drumbeats, hand-clapping. Also, by the same wordless riff Sariah sang in mourning – but now intensified with drumbeats and “Ha!”s. Lights out on the Lamanites.)

The Manner of Happiness (2 Ne. 5:27, 15, 34; Jacob 1:9-10)

- Older Nephi:** And it came to pass (**Nephites:** *It came to pass*) that we lived (*That we lived*)
After the manner of happiness,
- +Narrators:** After the manner of happiness.
- +Nephites:** We asked Nephi to be our king and our protector; (*Nephi kneels humbly, with the sword of Laban,*
We looked to him for safety, And under his direction, *to be crowned by Sam and Zoram.*)
(He rises, teaching his people to be industrious.)
We built buildings, we worked wood and iron and copper, (*hammer percussion*)
We worked brass and steel and gold and silver and ore,
We built a shining glorious temple in the wilderness,
And we made... War. (*Lights up on furious armed Lamanites, armed with rough-hewn*
Lamanites: (*In a rising warcry, low to high*) Ahhh... *clubs, bows, arrows, and spears, made of stone and of wood.*)
- Lamanites:** Wronged! Robbed! We'll see that you're gonna pay
Generation after generation
Day after day! (*Sariah's mourning riff, but now in intense warcry style*)
- Nephi:** (*Spoken, to Sam and Zoram, as the Lamanites approach.*) It's time. Let's go protect our families.
(Lamanites attack Nephites, men engage in war)
- Nephte Women and Children:** Wars and contentions, year after year. (*Singing off to the side, as the men fight*)
(Singing) We try to live happily, and yet we live in fear.
We never ever know when the next attack will be, And yet we try to live happily.
- (Keychange, as war intensifies:)* The God of our fathers protects us even still.
He strengthens and arms us, and guides us by His will.
But season after season, and day after day, The fighting still goes on!
- Lamanites:** 'Cause we are... Wronged! Robbed! We'll see that you're gonna pay
Generation after generation, Day after day! (*Hi-yi-yi..*) (*Lights up on Lamanite women and children*)
- Lamanite Women and Children:** For we were wronged in Jerusalem, (*Wronged!*)
(Men, still fighting:) The land of our inheritance; (*Ha!*)
Wronged while crossing over the sea, (*Wronged! – Ha! Ha! Ha!*)
Wronged in the wilderness; (*Wronged!*)
Wronged in the promised land, (*Wronged!*)
Wronged in every way that there could be! (*Wronged!*)
- Lamanites:** We all are.... Wronged! Robbed! We'll see that you're gonna pay
Generation after generation, Day after day! (*Sariah's riff: Ah...!*) Ha! (**Mosiah 10:11-17**)

And the Time Passed Away (Jacob 7:26)

- Jacob:** (*Solemnly, as an older child*) And the time passed away with us,
(Singing) And also our lives passed away, like as it were a dream, (*Lights up slowly on the Nephites*)
- Nephites & Narrators:** We being a lonesome and solemn people
Wanderers, born in a wilderness,
Born in tribulation, And hated of our brethren,
Which caused wars and contentions.
- A Capella:** Wherefore we did mourn out our days... (*Lights fade out slowly on the Nephites*)

(Solemn, mournful music plays. Lights up dimly on the battlefield, where fallen warriors, both Nephites and Lamanites, lay lifeless on the ground. This family war has now been raging for years.)

(Older Nephi enters the battlefield slowly from upstage center, battle-weary and heartbroken, in dim light, carrying the sword of Laban. He looks around sadly at the fallen dead at his feet – children of his beloved brethren, and also of his own tribe. Zoram, Sam, and others enter quietly behind him, surveying the sorrowful scene. Lights up on Narrators)

Narrator 1: And the people of Nephi loved him exceedingly, he having been a great protector for them, having wielded the sword of Laban in their defense, and having labored all his days for their welfare. **(Jac. 1:10)**

Eventually – Reprise 2 (Field of Battle)

O. Nephi: *(Slowly, and with great feeling, taking in the horror surrounding him)*
(Singing) They can break your heart - Tear it right in two;
They can devastate your dreams for them, And shred them through and through.
They can take everything you tried to teach them,
And throw it all away. *(He kneels at the side of one particularly young Lamanite warrior.)*
They can break your heart a little every day... *(He is overcome with grief)*

Sam: *(Approaching him gently, with Zoram at his side)* But you will never stop loving them;

+ O. Nephi: No, you will never stop loving them.

+ N. Warriors: *(in gentle masculine harmony)* And you never will stop hoping, And you never will stop groping
For the tiniest strand of a reason to believe
That they will finally find their way back home...

O. Nephi: Eventually.

N. Warriors: Eventually.

(Nephi gently closes the eyes of the fallen young warrior. Lights out on the battlefield.)

Narrator 1: Our brother, Nephi, never in his lifetime saw an end to wars and bloodshed.

Narrator 2: Yet, he pressed forward diligently, in the holy work divinely assigned to him - to prepare a record on solid gold plates of the sacred things of our people.

Narrator 1: That in the due time of the Lord, his words might go forth in testimony to the descendants of our people, and of our brethren; and to all the families of mankind - even to the ends of the earth.

(Lights up on Older Nephi, working on his record.)

Older Nephi: *(Speaking as he writes)* Behold, I Nephi, have written what I have written, and I esteem it to be of great worth, especially unto my people. For I pray continually for them by day, and mine eyes water my pillow by night, because of them: and I cry unto my God in faith, and I know that he will hear my cry. And the words which I have written in weakness will be made strong unto them. **(2 Ne. 5:30; 33:3-4)**

(Older Nephi's wife enters as he speaks, She picks up and peruses the brass plates.)

Older Nephi's Wife: *(Reading from the brass plates)* "He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were our faces from him, and we esteemed him not..." **(Isaiah 53:3)**
(Sits in front of him, looking into his downcast eyes. Gently:) Sounds like somebody I know.

Older Nephi: It's about the Messiah.

Older Nephi's Wife: I know. But it's not just about the Messiah. It's about anyone who follows in his path.

Older Nephi: He hasn't even come to earth yet. Not in the flesh. And yet – he's my dearest, most trusted friend. He's my one source of hope – for my people, for our children... for my brothers.

Older Nephi's Wife: So keep writing, Nephi, as you've been commanded. Write what you know of Him. Write for them. For our children. For our brothers. For their families, whether now or in the future.

It may not be today. It may not be this century. But someday, Nephi, your words will make a difference. Someday, your testimony will be heard. And it will help save and bless those whom you love so very much. *(He sits pondering her words.)* I'll leave you to your work. *(She exits.)*

Older Nephi: For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ... For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do... And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophecy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins. **(2 Ne. 25:23, 26)**

We Talk Of Christ (2 Ne. 25:26; 31:10)

Older Nephi: Jesus is my friend - No other has given me so much.
(Singing) His love for me is boundless, without an end,
And I've felt His tender, healing touch.

*(His mood begins to lift,
as he focuses on Christ.)
(His wife re-enters, listening softly)*

+Nephi's Wife: Jesus is my guide - His light shows me the way.
And my dearest hope is that I might become
A little more like Him each day.

*(Gaining more strength
and assurance; he stands.)*

Older Nephi: We talk of Christ - we rejoice in Christ -
And we write according to our prophecies
+Nephi's Wife: That our children may know to whom they may look
For their salvation, for healing, for hope.

(His wife joins him warmly)

(Lights up on Nephites)

+Nephites: Jesus is my light: Most joyous to my soul!
He has lifted my eyes, He has healed my heart:
He has made me whole!

Jesus is my Savior: He pays the awful cost
Of my sins and my sorrows - He rescues me -
And without Him, I would be forever lost!

We talk of Christ - we rejoice in Christ -
And we write according to our prophecies
That our children may know to whom they may look
For their salvation, for healing, for hope. *(Lights up on Angels, including Lehi/Sariah)*

+Angels: He is my King! *(He is my King!)* the great Creator; *(Great Creator)*
And someday He'll come, and He'll come again! *(He'll come again!)*
And when I see Him, *(When I see Him,)* sooner or later *(sooner or later)*
I hope He'll know me as His friend.

Nephites: We talk of Christ - we rejoice in Christ -
And we write according to our prophecies
+Angels: That our children may know to whom they may look
For their salvation, for healing, for hope!

*(The stage begins to be lit with vignettes
of modern individuals and families discovering
the Book of Mormon, and drawing upon its
power, including Lamanite families.)*

(We see missionaries sharing the Book of Mormon with a tender-eyed young man who looks like Laman. We see a mother reading the Book of Mormon to her young children, played by the same tiny actresses who played the narrators as children. We see a Lamanite man praying for guidance, Book of Mormon in hand. We see a radiant Lamanite family in a circle, studying the Book of Mormon. Lehi and Sariah, as angels, observe all of this with joy. They have now seen for themselves “what all of this is for.” (Underscore music begins – “What All of This Is For / A Land of Promise”)

Narrator 1: The words of Nephi, and those that followed him, have now gone forth in many languages, and in many nations - blessing many families, and changing many lives – including, the lives of millions of the descendants of the Lamanites.
(Speaking)

Narrator 2: We never know when our humble efforts might make a difference in the life of a loved one – whether in this mortal journey, or beyond. But God, who sees the end from the beginning, and who knows what we do not, can guide us securely to our most fruitful course of action.

Narrator 1: He can dry our tears, cheer our hearts, and see us through whatever challenges life might put before us.

Narrator 2: So it was, in the time in which we lived. *(The music continues with Sariah’s riff, reflecting ancient times.)*

Narrator 1: So it continues to be, in the time in which you live. *(The music concludes with warm resolution.)*

Imperfect World

Nar. 1: *(Sings)* Soon you will go home to your... Imperfect family.

Nar. 2: Soon you will go home to your... imperfect world.

Nar. 1&2: But you are not alone as you press forward through your sorrows,
Building happier tomorrows in your promised land.

(Lights up on whole Company, onstage)

Company: ‘Cause we all live the story of a woman or a man,
Trying to live a good life, just doing the best we can;
Seeking to build a better world, a little more each day;
Looking for heaven’s help along the way.

Nar. 1&2: With our imperfect world –

Company: With our beautiful, amazing, stunning... Imperfect world.

Nar. 1&2: *(This is not a show about a perfect family...)*

Company: Press forward!

From the Dust, Reprise

(In spotlights, as in the beginning)

Older Nephi: I speak as one crying from the dust -

+Lehi: I speak as one crying from the dust –

+Nephi: To my brethren, to the ends of the earth:

+Company: Come unto Christ!

(Spotlights out; whole company lit)

Ye Must Press Forward (2 Ne. 31:20)

Older Nephi: Ye must press forward, ye must press forward,
With a steadfastness in Christ;
Ye must press forward, ye must press forward,
With a steadfastness in Christ.

*(Follow spot follows him to center.)
(He sings directly to the audience)*

+Lehi: Having a perfect brightness of hope
And a love of God and of all men;
+Sariah: Having a perfect brightness of hope
And a love of God and of all men.

(As other cast members join him, they likewise sing directly to the audience, in a final combined testimony)

(Lehi and Sariah marvel over the wonders they have occurred with their posterity, the fruit of their many hardships, griefs, and disappointments in the wilderness. Now they can clearly and joyfully see, for themselves, "what all of this is for.")

Nephites: Ye must press forward, ye must press forward,
With a steadfastness in Christ;
Ye must press forward, ye must press forward,
With a steadfastness in Christ.

Angels: Ah...

Nephi (as an angel): Look unto Jesus and follow him
As you choose your path each day,
+Young Nephi: Even in the darkness, his light shines brightly
Showing you the way.

Angels: *(this time bringing the Lamanites with them, representing a later time of redemption and gathering)* Ah...

Nephites: Ye must press forward, ye must press forward,
With a steadfastness in Christ;
Ye must press forward, ye must press forward,
With a stead___fast___ness___ In Christ!

Angels and Lamanites: Ah...

Company: Ah!
Nephi's Family: Press Forward!
Company: Ah!