2 Nephi 3

**Verses 1–25:** Notice the use of types and shadows: Lehi blesses his son Joseph by telling him of Joseph of old, who prophesied of Moses and the latter-day Joseph. Presumably this blessing to Joseph was more than just information and gave him something he could use in his own life. In addition, it compares Moses and Joseph Smith in a way that helps us understand each of them better. There is a general concept or form of things, a type, to which each conform as an instance or shadow, a copy in history. For what types do we see shadows in today’s world? Is this use of types and shadows the way that we are to apply the scriptures to ourselves?

**Verse 5:** To what degree has this prophecy been fulfilled? If you think it is still being fulfilled, what would it take for it to be completed?

**Verses 7–8:** Who are these verses about? What does it mean to say “he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him”?
**Verse 12:** Lehi says that the writings of Judah and those of his descendants “shall grow together.” What does that metaphor mean? What does it tell us about the relation of the Bible and the Book of Mormon?

**Verse 15:** How is the Prophet Joseph like Joseph of Egypt? How did the ancient Joseph bring the Lord’s people salvation, and how is that like what the modern Joseph did?

**Verse 16:** What is “the promise of Moses”?

**Verse 17:** How were the ancient Joseph and Moses the same? What is the significance of a rod? What rod did Joseph Smith have?

**Verse 18:** How many spokesmen did Joseph Smith have? How does the fact that he had more than one cohere with this verse? What does this tell us about prophecy?

**Verse 23:** What does it mean to say that Lehi’s son Joseph is blessed because of the covenant? How is he blessed? Why is it an important blessing to know that your descendants many generations hence will not be destroyed?

**Verse 24:** To whom is this verse referring?

2 Nephi 4

**Verses 5–6:** If Lehi is speaking to his sons and his daughters (verse 5; see also verse 3), on whom does he say the curse will be placed (verse 6)?

What do you make of Lehi’s explanation of his children’s rebellion? What do you make of the self-sacrifice implicit in Lehi’s promise?
Verses 15–35: Is this a reasonable outline of these verses?

15–16: Nephi’s thesis: he delights in the things of the Lord
17–19a: Nevertheless, sorrow and woe
19b: Nevertheless, trust
20–25: Why he trusts
26–29: The response to sorrow and woe
30: The praise of God
31–33: A prayer for deliverance
34: A promise to trust God
35: A testimony of God’s faithfulness

If so, explain the movement from one section to another. How do these verses cohere as a unit?

Verses 15–16: What makes Nephi begin to think about the scriptures? What has just happened that motivates verse 15? What are “the things of the Lord” (verse 16)? Surely a good part of what Nephi means has already been mentioned in verse 15, namely, the scriptures. But what else might he have in mind?

Verse 17–18: Why does Nephi, of all people, grieve about his iniquities? What is the connection between seeing the goodness of the Lord and grieving about one’s iniquities? What does Nephi’s grief teach us? What iniquities might Nephi have had? Given the context, what sins might he have found particularly tempting? Do verses 13 and 27–29 suggest an answer to this question?
**Verse 19:** Here we see Nephi turn from grief in the beginning of the verse to hope in the end. What does the change we see happening in this verse tell us about our own sorrows? Is sorrow or guilt bad?

What is the difference between Nephi’s sorrow and harmful sorrow? Compare 2 Corinthians 7:10. What is the sorrow to death? When do we find ourselves in the kind of sorrow Nephi is experiencing? If someone is experiencing the sorrow to death rather than the sorrow to life, how can that change?

**Verses 20–25:** What things is Nephi grateful for? Can you draw specific parallels to the things we should be thankful for? Are these some of the “things of the Lord” mentioned in verse 16?

How does memory serve Nephi in this verse? How ought it to serve us?

**Verses 26–30:** What is Nephi’s answer to the troubles he has—to his weakness in the face of temptation, for example?

Why is enemy singular in verse 27 and plural in verse 29?

When did Nephi’s soul “droop in sin”? What was that sin?

**Verses 31–35:** Why does this psalm of Nephi end in a prayer? In our more ordinary terms, what are the things Nephi prays for?

**Verse 32:** Since obedience seems to be what I do rather than what the Lord does for me, what does it mean to pray to be obedient?

**Verse 33:** What does it mean to be encircled in the robes of the Lord’s righteousness? (Compare Isaiah 61:10 and 56
Baruch 5:2. Baruch is in the Apocrypha.) What surrounded Nephi in verse 18?

**Verse 34:** Is there a significant difference between faith in God and trust in God? What does it mean to trust in the arm of flesh? When might we find ourselves doing that?

**Verse 35:** Compare this verse to James 1:5. What might Joseph Smith have thought as he translated this verse?

2 Nephi 5

**Verses 1–7:** Contrast verse 1 with 2 Nephi 4:27–29. Following the pattern of Moses and Israel that Nephi has referred to on several occasions, Nephi leaves Laman and Lemuel, taking his family and those who would follow him into the wilderness. The Doctrine and Covenants uses related imagery when it commands us to leave Babylon (See, for example, D&C 133:5, 7, 14). What kinds of meanings can this type have for us today? How can we leave “Babylon” and go into the wilderness? Where is the wilderness today?

**Verse 19:** When Nephi says he became his people’s ruler and teacher, is he using these two words to say the same thing (as Genesis 1:1 does when it says that the world was “without form and void” in the beginning), or is he saying he was two things, a ruler and a teacher? If we think of “ruler” and “teacher” as two ways of saying the same thing, what might that tell us about being a ruler? A father or mother? Does it say anything about contemporary politics? If we think of “ruler” and “teacher” as different things here, what does that tell us about Nephi’s relation to his people?
**Verses 20–25:** What is the curse that came upon those who followed Laman and Lemuel? Was it the darkened color of their skin or something else? If it was the darkness of their skin, how does that explain their idleness and mischief? If it was something else, what was it?

**Verse 27:** Nephi says that he and his people “lived after the manner of happiness.” What does that phrase say that the phrase “we lived happily” doesn’t say? What is “the manner [or ‘way’] of happiness”? 