

THE FIVE WISE VIRGINS
Lesson #3 TOOK THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THEIR GUIDE
by Barbara Wilkinson

As was stated in lesson #1, the parable of the 10 virgins is given in Matthew 25:1-12. It gives minute details, but it does not tell you what the oil is. The Book of Mormon says that many plain and precious things have been removed from the Bible, causing the people to stumble [1 Ne 3:168-245]. I believe the meaning of the oil is one of those plain and precious things that has been removed. God gives that understanding back in modern day revelation. He tells us that the oil has 4 qualifications:

10b] And at that day when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins;

- 1. for they that are wise**
- 2. and have received the truth,**
- 3. and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide,**
- 4. and have not been deceived,**

verily I say unto you, 10c] They shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day, and the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance;

DC 45:10b,c

Today, I'm only talking about **3) "have taken the Holy Spirit as their guide."**

There are many voices trying to give us guidance:

- 1. Our own voice, which God describes as being "...lifted up in the imaginations of the thoughts of ... [their own] heart, being only evil continually." [Gen 8:10] "...for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;" [Gen 9:6] The reason we are evil from our youth is because "**Satan came among them,... and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual and devilish.** [Gen 4:13 I.V.] Other Christians don't have this understanding, therefore believe people are basically good.**
- 2. Your family and friends- may be good or bad advice, but probably will be from their 'evil' hearts.**
- 3. Worldly philosophies, which, in general, are Satan's ideas, not God's ideas.**
- 4. Satan**
- 5. and the Holy Spirit**

We listen to all of these voices throughout our life and which one we listen to the most determines what we will do in this life and where we will spend eternity.

Have you ever taken a **GUIDED TOUR**? If you have, you know that you learn lots more and have a much easier trip than if you do the trip on your own or even go with family and friends. Taking the Holy Spirit as your guide will make the trip through life an eternal life, **SPIRIT FILLED**, therefore much more interesting, smooth, protected and easier. **UNDERSTAND:**

- **LARGE "S"** spirit, is the Spirit of God, Christ, Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit etc.
- **SMALL "s"** spirit means your own ideas, your family's, the world's and/or Satan's ideas.

The Scriptures don't always capitalize correctly, so you must read the context carefully to determine which spirit is referred to.

The best example of this is that **Paul decided in his own spirit [small "s"] to go to Jerusalem for the Passover to witness to the Jews.** All along the way the Lord prophesied through church people/priesthood that he should NOT go because if he did, he would be imprisoned. Read this history, it is fascinating. [Acts 18:20-21; 19:21; 20:16, 22-24; 21:4, 10-15; 21:26—22:30; 23:11] See how this righteous man, Paul, refused to listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, even when it continuously came through other righteous ministers. Instead, he listened to **the imaginations of his own evil heart.** [Gen 8:10; 9:6] That is, Satan was able to deceive him through the thoughts of his own heart. As was prophesied, he was imprisoned for the rest of his life. **BUT NOTICE** the very day he was imprisoned, God came to him and comforted him:

And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.
Acts 23:11

UNDERSTAND: God never gives up on us, or stops using us because we make a big stupid mistake. Even though Paul refused to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit during this time in his life, God didn't stop using him. Be assured, the night Paul landed in prison, he would have been repenting and asking for God's guidance.

BUT he was never released from prison. Why? I don't know. Maybe **GOD ALLOWED IT TO HAPPEN** so that he would write lots of letters giving guidance and directions to Christians for centuries to come, and not just to the people of his day.

Throughout Paul's ministry he comments on how sorry he is about his past--- persecuting the Christians before his experience on the way to Damascus and going to Jerusalem against God's will, etc. and how sorry he was, but one of his most meaningful comments was:

13] ... but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14] I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Phil 3: 13,14

We need to do the same thing. I know a gal that got pregnant out of wedlock. She had been taught better and married the guy. But for the rest of her life she said God couldn't use her because of what she had done. Paul is a prime example that **her understanding was wrong**. She didn't forgive herself and SHE was the one that limited God's ability to work through her. So **UNDERSTAND:** that even when we stubbornly refuse to do what we have been taught and/or seek His guidance and direction, doing stupid things that Satan wants us to do, when we come to our senses, repent and return to God, the Holy Spirit can and will guide us if we but **ASK**.

Before Alma, Jr. handed the leadership of the church over to Helaman, he gave each of his sons an admonition or blessing. [Alma chapters 17,18,19] Alma told Helaman, his oldest, most righteous son:

68] O remember my son, and

- **learn wisdom in thy youth; yea,**
- **learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God; yea,**
- **and CRY UNTO GOD FOR ALL THY SUPPORT;**
- **69] ... COUNSEL THE LORD IN ALL THY DOINGS, and he will direct thee for good:**

Alma 17:68, 69

Alma was admonishing Helaman to learn wisdom in his youth, when Helaman was probably a grown man, because Alma was about to turn the leadership of the church over to him. **I assume** Alma gave this understanding to Helaman so he could teach it to his children and the 2000 sons of Helaman.

He also admonished him to **LEARN** to keep God's commandments. Are you learning to keep the commandments? There are over 100 commandments. How many can you list? Most people can't even list the 10 Commandments properly. They usually include love God and your fellow man, and the golden rule. Is this an indication that we are not **LEARNING** or **KEEPING** God's commandments?

KEEPING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS IS A UNIVERSAL REQUIREMENT FOR RECEIVING MOST BLESSINGS. This admonition to Helaman is not an exception. Alma makes it clear that a **WISE** person will **LEARN** to keep God's commandments. Is this an indication that we don't want the Lord to be our guide?

Today we are continually being told to bring about the **CAUSE** of Zion. I looked up the word **CAUSE** in the Webster's 1829 Dictionary, which defined it as: **That which produces an effect; impels into existence, or by its agency or operation produces what did not before exist; ... that from which anything proceeds, and without which it will not exist.** This basically says: **DO THAT WHICH IS REQUIRED TO BRING ABOUT A RESULT.** The **RESULT** we want to see is Zion, therefore we must do what God says is required to bring about Zion. Genesis 9:21 tells us exactly what that is: **"... remember THE everlasting covenant, ... that when men should keep ALL My commandments, Zion should come again on the earth, the city of Enoch which I have caught up unto myself. [Gen 9:21]** So if we really want Zion to come and to have a part in it we have to keep **ALL** God's commandments.

Alma continued by telling Helaman to;

- **"cry unto God for all thy support," [Alma 17:68] and to**
- **"counsel the Lord in ALL thy doings," [Alma 17:69]**

These are 2 ways of saying the same thing: **"...take the Holy Spirit as their guide."** [DC 45:10b] In Hebraic writing they repeat things to emphasize the importance of that statement.

The sad thing is that people don't want God/the Holy Spirit to guide them. Helaman was heart sick when he realized this truth and said:

53] O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men; [Do you ever feel like you fit all those descriptions? Boy I do!]

54] Yea, how quick to

- HEARKEN [hear and DO] unto the words of THE EVIL ONE,
- and to SET THEIR HEARTS UPON THE VAIN THINGS OF THE WORLD; [materialism]
- yea, how quick to be LIFTED UP IN PRIDE; [one of the 7 deadly sins.]
- yea, how quick to BOAST, AND DO all manner of that which is INIQUITY;

55] And HOW SLOW are they to

- REMEMBER THE LORD their God,
- and TO GIVE EAR UNTO HIS COUNSELS;
- yea, how SLOW TO WALK IN WISDOM'S PATHS!

56] Behold, they DO NOT DESIRE THAT THE LORD THEIR GOD,...

- SHOULD RULE AND REIGN OVER THEM; ...
- THEY DO SET AT NOUGHT HIS COUNSELS,
- AND THEY WILL NOT THAT HE SHOULD BE THEIR GUIDE.

Hel 4:53-56

Here is a list of things we need to work to do, or to weed out of our life IF we want to take the Holy Spirit as our guide. Write a list of the ones you need to work on, put it in a prominent place and WORK ON IT.

Nephi saw the same problem and gave a good reason for it happening:

58] O the vainness, and the frailties, and the FOOLISHNESS of men! [not wise]

59] When they are learned, THEY THINK THEY ARE WISE, AND THEY HEARKEN NOT UNTO THE COUNSEL OF GOD, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves;

60] Wherefore, THEIR WISDOM IS FOOLISHNESS, and it profiteth them NOT. And they shall perish.

61] BUT to be LEARNED IS GOOD, IF THEY HEARKEN UNTO THE COUNSELS OF GOD.

2 Ne 6:58-61

This is true of every generation. From the beginning of time the current generation is sure they are better educated than their parents and all those who went before them. They are proud of their learning and believe they are so wise they don't need to take the Holy Spirit as their guide. How wrong they are. How wrong we are, because Satan whispers to us that we are so smart we don't need the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But God tells us His thoughts and ways are higher and better than ours:

8] For MY thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways MY ways, saith the Lord.

9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are MY ways higher than your ways, and MY thoughts than your thoughts.

Isa 55:8,9

So the wise person needs to continually, throughout his or her entire life, ASK God for guidance and direction. Alma 16:219-222 tells us that we should **PRAY OVER EVERYTHING IN OUR LIFE**: our fields and flocks, our house and household, against our enemies and the devil and for our welfare and the welfare of those around us. We are to pray about all those things, **ASKING GOD FOR GUIDANCE AND DIRECTION IN ALL THESE AREAS!**

Alma told Helaman the same sort of thing when he told him to pray for support plus a lot more:

68]... CRY UNTO GOD FOR ALL THY SUPPORT; [Then he told Helaman what this meant.]

- 69] Yea, let ALL thy doings be unto the Lord,
- and whithersoever thou goest, let it be in the Lord;
- yea, let thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord
- yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord for ever;
- COUNSEL THE LORD IN ALL THY DOINGS, AND HE WILL DIRECT THEE FOR GOOD:
- 70] Yea, when thou liest down at night, lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep;

- **and when thou riseth in the morning, let thy heart be full of thanks unto God;**
- **AND IF YE DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL BE LIFTED UP AT THE LAST DAY.**

Alma 17:68-70

That's a **PRINCIPLE WITH A PROMISE**- do these things and you will receive this promise. There are thousands of these in the Scriptures. Alma was telling Helaman to let the Lord counsel and protect him day and night, asleep or awake, and if he would do that, God would direct him to do good and lift him up at the last day. But unfortunately we consciously or unconsciously don't ask God to guide us. For example: **I BELIEVE WHOLE HEARTEDLY IN ASKING FOR GOD'S DIRECTION IN ALL AREAS OF MY LIFE**, but there are times that I

- simply forget to do that,
- or don't bother to do it,
- or just want to do it MY WAY.

For example, My husband Max died of Alzheimer's. When he got to the point that he could no longer handle his job, I suggested he go to the doctor to find out what was wrong. He refused saying, **"If the company knew he was going to the doctor they would fire him."** That is illogical thinking, how would they know he was going to the doctor or what for what reason? But nothing I said changed Max's mind. Illogical thinking is one of the first signs of Alzheimer's and can begin 20 to 30 years before they get so bad they must quit work.

So for months, I prayed for Max and helped him with his work since he worked out of the home. One day I was talking to a friend on the phone and mentioned that I couldn't get Max to go to the doctor. She said **"Have you asked the Lord how to get him to go to the doctor?"** I was embarrassed, I hadn't.

After I hung up, I simply prayed, **"Lord, how can I get Max to go to the doctors?"** Instantly the still small voice said: **"Ask him if it isn't better to go to the doctors while you are working and have insurance, than wait until you are fired and have to do it without insurance?"** How simple, but profound. Wonders of wonders, Max agreed and he went to the doctor.

Why didn't God tell me sooner? **Because I didn't ASK.** I've come to understand that we must ask for guidance and direction, or God CAN'T/won't give us guidance. He can't override our agency. In all the months of praying for Max, for some reason, I never thought of asking how to get him to the doctors. Maybe that is why God so often in the Scriptures told us to **ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE.**

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET AN ANSWER? It varies from time to time. Sometimes it is instant -- the minute I open the Scriptures something stands out in bold print that is **EXACTLY** what I needed to understand. But at other times it takes a while to find the guidance He has for you, and that can be frustrating.

My best example is when we were in California and Max instantly went into the advanced stages of Alzheimer's and had to be hospitalized in the locked ward. I stayed with him, 24/7 because he was so upset.

The doctor insisted I needed to get out of there immediately or Max could get so bad I would never get him back to Iowa. But a wise head nurse told me to be patient. With time, Max would calm down and then it would be time to go.

This time, I had sense enough to **IMMEDIATELY ASK** the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction. I prayed **CONTINUALLY** that the Lord would let me know exactly when the timing was right and exactly how I should do it so that we wouldn't have trouble getting him home. I made out a list of 10 things that could go wrong on the trip home, and prayed about those problems. I talked to the social worker about every little detail to consider. But I had no idea how the Lord would tell me when the time was right. I was concerned because I was reading in the back of the Doctrine and Covenants at the time, which is all about church procedures etc. -- not a good place to find deep spiritual counsel. I murmured at the Lord that I was sure He wouldn't be able to answer me in **'that part of the Scriptures,'** but that I was trusting Him to somehow let me know.

One morning while reading the Doctrine and Covenants the answer stood out in bold print:

But verily thus saith the Lord, Let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you; and he that goeth, let him not look back, lest sudden destruction shall come upon him.

DC 108:4c

I knew that day was the day we should leave. WOW, even in the most unlikely places in the Scriptures, God can give guidance and direction that was exactly what I needed.

My sister-in-law walked Max that day while I worked out every minute detail for getting us and all our belongs to the airport to catch the red eye to Minneapolis where Max's brother would meet us and drive us to

Des Moines so we didn't have to change planes in Denver airport, because Max panicked when he came near strangers. I requested 3 seats on the plane together near the back. They said they could do that. I figured the plane would be 1/2 empty. It was not, they had over booked and asked people to give up their seats.

Everything worked out beautifully and the 10 problems I feared did not happen. I gave Max a sleeping pill and he slept throughout the plane trip and was content to be with his brother on the way to Iowa. But the minute he arrived home, he went back into advanced Alzheimer's. I had gone upstairs to call my mother and tell her we arrived home safely when Max unlocked the front door and took off, and his sister couldn't stop him. I didn't realize they were even gone until I got a call from a company about 5 blocks from my home saying where they were. Max was heading for Interstate 80; he was heading for the church to be with the pastor. He had a dream that Christ had returned and he needed to be with the pastor. His tranquility throughout a 2000 mile trip assured me again that the Holy Spirit had been our guide and protector all the way home.

So when you don't know what to do, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and read your Scriptures looking for what the Lord wants you to do.

Another example: I cut my index finger and must have hit a blood vessel because it wouldn't stop bleeding. I worked at the time so I was worried that I wouldn't be able to get it to stop bleeding before I had to go to work. So I told Max, who by this time, was barely able to talk, that we needed to go to the doctor to stop the bleeding, who was 50 miles away. He said, "**Pray about it.**" Again I hadn't thought to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Since he wasn't able to talk much, I bowed my head and gave the Lord a lengthy prayer about how I needed it to stop bleeding because of my work etc. When I said Amen the bandage was soaked with blood, so while I changed the bandage, Max said, "**No, not that kind.**" I instantly understood that he wanted to administer to me. Max had the gift of healing. He anointed my head and simply said, "**Lord, stop the bleeding. Amen.**" It stopped bleeding INSTANTLY AND NEVER BLED AGAIN. In both examples, when I/we '**counseled the Lord in our doings, he did direct us for good.**' So ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct you in specific areas of your EVERY DAY life. We are told to

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD for the COMFORTER, [another name for the Holy Ghost]
which shall teach them ALL things that are expedient for them,...

DC 75:2c

The word **Comforter** in Hebrew means **strengthen**. Isn't that what we need from the Holy Spirit in times of uncertainty and afflictions? So this Scripture is telling us to ASK God to send the COMFORTER, when we are in great need, who will strengthen us by telling us exactly what is expedient for us to know and/or do.

HOW WILL HE ANSWER? There are many ways but the most common ways are:

- By His still small voice He will tell you what to do.
- As you read the Scriptures He will show/tell you what to do, or He can bring to mind something you have read before.
- He also can cause everything you read or think etc. on a subject over a period of time to give you understanding and you will know exactly what you need to do. The book EXERCISES IN GROWING SPIRITUALLY was given to me in this way. Each month, the subject was given and information on that subject arrived or appeared in various ways. All I had to do was put it together in a lesson.

Another example, simultaneously I was offered the opportunity to work for the church for a year and I was asked to apply for a job as Home Economist for Tupperware. Which way did the Lord want me to go?

While in Orlando interviewing with Tupperware, I contacted the church and attended prayer service. I was so confused that I spent the 10 minutes before the service started, pouring my heart out to the Lord about which way I should go. They sang several songs which all said God will guide you and direct you, and in anguish of soul I cried out to the Lord that I was deeply concerned that I do what He wanted me to do, and He immediately replied in the still small voice, "**I too am concerned.**" I KNEW it was Christ speaking, but He didn't tell me what I should do. FRUSTRATION!

During the next 2 weeks everything I read, heard, thought etc. etc. indicated that I would not be hired by Tupperware, that God was guiding me another way. It is of interest that I did not work for the church that year, but I did move to the Midwest, which I now know is where God wanted me to be. I only returned to live in California for about 1 year, and then moved permanently back to the Midwest. The California church I attended was very liberal and God was guiding me to be very conservative in my beliefs. There are to this day, no Restoration branches in that area of California.

UNDERSTAND: God desires, longs, and wants to guide and counsel us in every area of our life, if you will but **ASK for His help, listen and respond**. He will get you where He wants you, doing what He wants you to do, at the time He wants you to do it. Sometimes by many twists and turns in your life.

UNDERSTAND- GOD WILL ANSWER IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOU WILL KNOW FOR SURE WHAT HE WANTS YOU TO DO.

But He many not answer INSTANTLY. Sometime He is so slow to answer we think He isn't going to answer at all and are tempted to use the imaginations of our evil mind to make a decision. DON'T DO THAT, BE PATIENT AND WAIT. God will answer SOMETIME.

For example, friends who lived in Des Moines were being transferred. They called in desperate need of prayers. The problem was they owned:

- A house in Wisconsin that they couldn't sell so were making house payments on it.
- No one was making an offer on the house they owned in Des Moines
- and they were being transferred so would have another house payment or rent.

GASP: who can survive making 3 house payments each month, plus taxes and upkeep on all 3? Max told them, **“The Lord is slow but He is never late, be patient, the Lord will work all this out.”** When they moved, they still hadn't sold either house. So they called again and asked Max, **“Are you sure the Lord is never late?”** Max said YES, be patient. They moved into a new home trusting the Lord and shortly there after both houses sold the same week.

A couple years later they were transferred again. Again, no one was making offers on their house and they were again going to have 2 house payments. So they called again for prayers. They made an offer on a house at the new location, on the condition that they sell their other house. But they didn't **“feel right about that new house,”** because the location was not good for them doing church work. They prayed about this and asked the Lord if there was another house that would meet their **BASIC DESIRES IN A HOUSE**, that was in a better location.

A short time later they found the perfect house and made an offer. The realtor of the first house called and backed out of the deal, because the owners didn't want to wait for the sale of their house. Shortly after they moved in, their house at the old location sold. Amazing how the Lord can work out complicated messes.

EXAMPLE # 2 GOD WILL ALWAYS ANSWER IN A WAY YOU CAN UNDERSTAND:

Recently I gave a retreat on THE WISE VIRGINS. One of the ladies present was thrilled with the understandings she had learned about taking the Holy Spirit as her guide. Her husband had died recently and she needed help with the direction her life should now take.

A week later she called me. She had been asking the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction about a specific problem and hadn't received any guidance so far. But one day when she was thinking about it she was filled with the Spirit to the point of weeping. She wanted to know if that was her answer.

Being emotional when you feel the Spirit it is a common occurrence, BUT NOT AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION IN HER PRAYER since she still didn't know what to do.

GOD WILL ALWAYS ANSWER IN A WAY THAT YOU UNDERSTAND, AND YOU WILL KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO.

When she told me the problem, I immediately thought of what she could/should do and told her. Was I the instrument through which she received her answer? She of course needed to pray asking God if my idea was the answer. God will reassure you if it is.

UNDERSTAND: when you ask God for guidance and direction He can answer in many, many different ways and you must have an open mind and be willing to wait, listen and obey. For example, God told me when it was time to move to Independence through my agnostic brother. He was the last person I would have expected to tell me when it was time to move to gather. God does have a sense of humor.

Sometimes the answer is **NOT WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR**, so you refuse to do it and suffer the consequences. At other times you are so busy trying to figure it out yourself, or listening to what others say, that you aren't listening to what the Lord says and He may have to hit you between the eyes with a 2x4 to get you to listen.

For example, when we were looking to buy a house in Des Moines, I called the friends that we had prayed into houses and asked for prayers. On the way to look at the 3rd house, I was reading the Spec sheet. The still small voice told me we should buy this house and offer \$72,000. When we walked in the front door, Max said, **“This is the house I want.”** He had Alzheimer's and wasn't saying much those days.

When I made the offer of \$72,000 the realtor said, no I should offer \$80,000 because they could have had offers that weekend and we wouldn't get it if our offer was lower. I listened to the realtor instead of the Lord. After we moved in I realized the house needed lots of expensive repairs. I immediately repented for not listening to the Lord, but the damage was done. I spent the next 8 years worrying that we would lose a lot of money when we moved the next time. SO WHEN THE LORD GIVES YOU GUIDANCE AND DIRECTION,

- DO WHAT HE SAYS and not what other people, the world etc. says!!!!
- UNDERSTAND THAT THE GUIDANCE GIVEN BY GOD WILL BE UNDERSTANDABLE, not just a warm, fuzzy feeling.

WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO INSURE BEING GUIDED BY THE Holy Spirit?

Nephi desired to see his father, Lehi's, dream and to know the interpretation of it. He called on the name of the Lord for this understanding. He not only received what he asked for, but was shown a prophecy from his time down to the time of the book of Revelation. He returned to their tent and found his brothers:

2] ...disputing [arguing] one with another, concerning the things which my father had spoken unto them;

3] For he truly spake MANY GREAT THINGS unto them, which were hard to be understood, SAVE A MAN SHOULD INQUIRE OF THE LORD [ASK]

4] And they [his brothers] being hard in their hearts, THEREFORE THEY DID NOT LOOK UNTO THE LORD AS THEY OUGHT.

5] And now I, Nephi, was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, ...

7] ... I spake unto my brethren, desiring to know of them the cause of their disputations.

8] And they said, Behold, we can not understand the words which our father hath spoken ...

9] And I said unto them, HAVE YE INQUIRED OF THE LORD?

10] And they said unto me, We have not; FOR THE LORD MAKETH NO SUCH THING KNOWN UNTO US. 1 NE 4:2-10

Are you like Laman and Lemuel? Do you say, the Lord doesn't speak to me like that? If He doesn't it is because you haven't ASKED THE LORD to understand the Scriptures.

For years I was a Laman and Lemuel, even though I had been reading the Scriptures daily since I was about 30 years old. Recently Ray Treat told us to

ASK LOTS OF QUESTIONS AND YOU WILL GET LOTS OF ANSWERS.

I was amazed at how much the Lord wanted to teach me and I learned a lot of it in a very short time as I asked many questions. **REMEMBER:** God doesn't force His truth, understanding or guidance on us because it would take away our agency. So we MUST ASK for His help and guidance.

Nephi reminded his brothers:

13] Do ye not REMEMBER THE THINGS WHICH THE LORD HATH SAID, If ye will

- a. not harden your hearts, and
- b. ASK me in faith,
- c. BELIEVING THAT YE SHALL RECEIVE,
- d. with diligence in keeping my commandments,

surely, THESE THINGS SHALL BE MADE KNOWN UNTO YOU?

1 Ne 4:2-13

REMEMBER THESE 4 STEPS. THEY ARE BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEIVING UNDERSTANDING OR GUIDANCE.

NOTICE: Nephi, Laman and Lemuel were all talking about receiving understanding. Too often when we see the Scriptures that say, 'ask and you will receive,' we think only of materialistic things, like a new car or a bigger house. When we ask for these things and don't get them, we say, "That Scripture doesn't work. I asked God for a bigger car or a house, and I didn't get it!" The problem is that, in general, 'ask and you shall receive,' refers to receiving UNDERSTANDING, GUIDANCE AND DIRECTION, not THINGS.

We are told to:

19] Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, [search out the understanding] and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,

20] For every one that asketh, receiveth [Ask God for understanding and you will receive it. Ask for God's guidance, and you will receive it.]; and he that seeketh [understanding by studying], findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

3 Ne 6:19-20

So always look at the context of a Scripture so you understand what blessing is being offered. The majority of blessings from the Lord are about understandings, guidance and doing His work etc., not materialistic things.

So I challenge you to take the Holy Spirit as your guide and learn the wonderful things the Lord wants you to do. I testify that you will be in awe of what He can do in your life, if you but ask daily for His guidance and direction.