

OBJECTIVE	Each young woman will understand that with agency comes responsibility.
PREPARATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be prepared to create the chalkboard illustration shown in the lesson. 2. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.
SUGGESTED LESSON DEVELOPMENT	<p>Agency Is the Power and Freedom to Choose</p> <p>Read the following quotation to the young women:</p> <p>“Next to the bestowal of life itself, the right to direct that life is God’s greatest gift to man” (David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1950, p. 32).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the right or power to direct one’s life called? (Agency.) <p>Finish reading the quotation:</p> <p>“Agency is the impelling source of the soul’s progress. It is the purpose of the Lord that man become like him. In order for man to achieve this it was necessary for the Creator first to make him free” (David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1950, p. 32).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is agency essential to each person’s progress?
Teacher presentation	Explain that with the Lord’s help and by properly exercising our agency, we can return to our Heavenly Father.
Teacher presentation	<p>Right Choices Bring Increased Freedom</p> <p>Explain to the young women that when we use our agency, we make a choice. Each choice brings about certain consequences.</p>
Chalkboard discussion	<p>Draw a vertical line in the middle of the chalkboard. Write <i>Agency</i> in the center of the chalkboard at the top. Through the vertical line draw a horizontal line. Add arrows on each end of the horizontal line. (See completed chalkboard illustration.)</p> <p>Tell the young women that the story of Nephi and his brothers illustrates the use of agency and its consequences. Lehi told his sons that he was commanded in a dream to send them to get the brass plates from Laban.</p> <p>Ask the young women to read 1 Nephi 3:5 to see what Laman and Lemuel thought of this request.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did Laman and Lemuel react to this request? <p>Read 1 Nephi 3:7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What decision did Nephi make? • What great gift were Nephi, Laman, and Lemuel using? (The gift of agency.) <p>Above the arrow on the right of the chart, write <i>Nephi’s choice</i>. Above the arrow on the left, write <i>Laman and Lemuel’s choice</i>.</p> <p>Under the arrow on the right, write <i>Faith in the Savior</i> and <i>Obedied his father</i>. Explain that Nephi exercised his faith in the Lord and believed and obeyed his father.</p> <p>Under the arrow on the left, write <i>Lack of faith</i> and <i>Disobeyed their father</i>. Explain that Laman and Lemuel were unwilling to exercise faith in the Lord or their father.</p>

Continue the story by explaining that Laman and Lemuel were finally persuaded to go with Nephi. After two unsuccessful attempts to get the plates, however, they wanted to give up.

To illustrate the lack of faith of Laman and Lemuel, read 1 Nephi 3:31.

Explain that from this scripture we learn that Laman and Lemuel relied on the logic of men to make their decisions.

Under the arrow on the left, write *Relied on the thinking of men*.

Read 1 Nephi 4:1–3.

- What do you think Nephi had done before this time to strengthen his faith in the Lord? (Studied the scriptures, including the accounts of Moses, and prayed often to the Lord.) Later on, Nephi explained another source of his faith.

Have a young woman read 1 Nephi 4:6.

Under the arrow on the right, write *Relied on the scriptures and promptings of the Holy Ghost*.

Explain that Nephi was careful to use his agency to keep the commandments. On Nephi's side of the chart, write *Kept the commandments*.

Laman and Lemuel used their agency to follow the paths of sin. On Laman and Lemuel's side of the chart, write *Broke the commandments*.

Explain that because Nephi used his agency to become closer to his Heavenly Father, he was freer from the limitations of men and more able to receive inspiration from the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit guided Nephi in getting the plates from Laban. (You may want to review this story, found in 1 Nephi 4:7–38.)

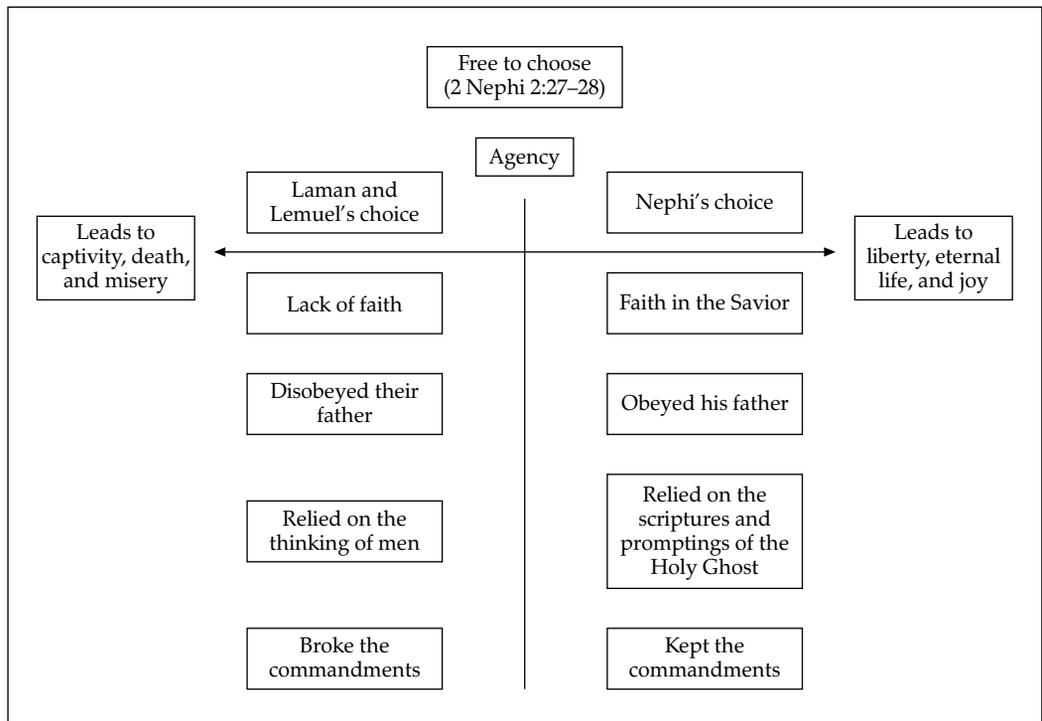
- Why didn't Laman and Lemuel receive this help? (They rejected it through the choices they made.)

At the top of the chalkboard, write *Free to Choose (2 Nephi 2:27–28)*.

Read this scripture with the young women. Explain that the consequences of following the path Laman and Lemuel chose are captivity, death, and misery. At the end of the arrow on Laman and Lemuel's side, write *Leads to captivity, death, and misery*.

The consequences of the path Nephi chose are liberty, eternal life, and joy. At the end of the arrow on Nephi's side, write *Leads to liberty, eternal life, and joy*.

Completed chalkboard illustration



Scripture discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What increased freedoms did Nephi have because of the decisions he had made? (Possible answers might include the following: He was free to have the guidance of the Holy Ghost, free to progress, free to enter the celestial kingdom, free to strengthen his fellowmen, free to do the Lord’s work, free to receive inspiration and revelation, and free to live without the pain of sin.) <p>Have the young women read Galatians 5:1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways were Laman and Lemuel in bondage?
Teacher presentation	Explain that Nephi and his brothers each had agency. Because they used their agency differently, the eternal consequences of their actions were also different. Tell the young women that they too have agency. They have the same power to determine their eternal destinies. If they make the right choices, they too will have increased freedom.
Discussion	Ask the young women to give examples to show how modern-day people have used their agency as Nephi did or as Laman and Lemuel did. You may want to have some examples to share.

Many Choices Are Best Made Before a Crisis Occurs

Story	<p>Relate the following story:</p> <p>Paula and Karen were friends, and both were active in the same ward. Paula had made a firm decision that she would use her agency to keep the commandments. She had also decided what she would do if anyone tried to get her to do something that was wrong. Paula often thought about her commitments as she partook of the sacrament. Karen had never taken time to decide what she would do or would not do.</p> <p>One night they were at a party celebrating the end of the school year. A young man entered with a case of beer and began passing it around the room.</p> <p>Paula’s choice was already made. “No, thank you,” she said firmly as a can was pushed toward her. Several people tried to get her to take it, but she resisted and left the party. Karen was also offered a can. She stared at it a moment, wondering what she should do. “Come on,” a voice beside her prodded. “Take it.” Karen knew it was wrong, but almost everybody was drinking. “Why, you don’t know what you’re missing. Come on; don’t be a spoilsport. Just once isn’t going to hurt you!” Even though she knew what was right, Karen finally gave in and took a drink.</p>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which young woman had the harder decision to make? • Why was Paula’s choice easy? • What made Karen’s decision difficult? • What choices between right and wrong might you be required to make this year? • What kinds of choices can be made before a crisis occurs? • How can deciding what to do ahead of time make choices easier?
Testimony	<p>Tell the young women that they can resolve right now to keep the commandments. This use of their agency will lead them back to their Father in Heaven.</p> <p>Bear your testimony about the gift of agency and the importance of using it properly. Remind the young women that they already successfully exercised their agency when they made the choice to come to earth and gain a body.</p>

Suggested Activities

1. Plan an evening of searching the scriptures to see how people in the scriptures used their agency.
2. Ask each young woman to pause this week when making a decision and analyze whether she is using faith in the Lord Jesus Christ or whether she is following the precepts of men.