1 Nephi Chapter 5

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Chapter 5
{Original 1830 Chapter I – continued}

Nephi and Lehi Have Kept Their Covenant with the Lord
Nephi’s Father & Mother Confirm the Covenant Way

1 And it came to pass that we had come down into the wilderness
unto our father

behold he [our father] was filled with joy
and also my mother Sariah was exceedingly glad

Sariah Had Reminded Her Prophet Husband That She Had Sacrificed All for Her Covenants
Yet She Had Still Remained Faithful

for she [Sariah] truly had mourned because of us
for she [Sariah] had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness

and she [Sariah] also had complained against my father

telling him that he [my father] was a visionary man

saying

Behold thou hast led us forth from the land of our inheritance

and my sons are NO more

and we perish in the wilderness

3 And after this manner of language had my mother [Sariah] complained against my father

[Note: The “arguments” listed above are reasonable. They are not termed “murmuring” probably because Sariah remained faithful to the Lord despite the outcome. The “complaints are:
[1] Lehi is a “visionary man.” Yet Sariah might be stating a fact -- the term “visionary man” means “Seer.”
[2] Sariah’s old land of inheritance will be destroyed – she will be without one.
[3] Because Sariah’s sons basically belonged to her – they were her glory, her protection, her posterity, and her support in old age, Sariah had “given” all (all she possessed) to Lehi in order to fulfill a covenant commandment – a commandment that would send her sons into “impossible” odds: (A) If Laban’s soldiers didn’t kill them, then (B) wild animals and robbers along the trail would. And now her sons were seemingly “no more.”
[4] Lehi’s whole family faced a full and lengthy wilderness journey. By all odds, one or more (even all) would perish in the service of the Lord.


[Par. aa – Circular repetition “Sariah”] [Par. bb – Working out the reasons for her complaint]
Lehi Had Borne a Confirming Prophetic Covenant Witness to Comfort Sariah

4 And **it had come to pass** that my father Lehi spake unto her saying

I KNOW that I am a **visionary** man [A Seer - by definition]

for **if** I had NOT seen the **things** of **God** in a vision [AG]

then I should NOT have known the **goodness** of **God**

[“Gospel” = “good news”]

but had tarried at Jerusalem and had **perished** with my brethren [destroyed for covenant disobedience]

5 But behold I have obtained a land of promise in the which things I do rejoice

[Note: To help comfort Sariah, Lehi initially uses the “prophetic perfect tense” or in other words he speaks of future things in the past tense as if they had already happened, or in essence, Lehi declares that they definitely will “obtain a new land of promise.”]

Yea and I KNOW that the **Lord** will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban and [I KNOW that the **Lord** will] bring them down again unto us in the wilderness

[Note: The term “know” (3 times) is according to covenant knowledge – the Lord ALWAYS lives up to the covenants He makes with us in return for our covenant obedience.]

6 And after this **covenant** manner of language did my father Lehi comfort my mother Sariah concerning us [their **sons**] while we [their **sons**] journeyed up to the land of Jerusalem to obtain the record of the **Jews**

7 And when we [their **sons**] had **returned** to the tent of my father [Lehi] [after our journey]

behold their joy was full and my mother was comforted

[Note: According to Grant Hardy (Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide, p. 283), “The phrase ‘after this manner of language’ is not a regular way for the Book of Mormon to end quotations.; it is UNIQUE to Nephi . . . .”it never occurs in the Bible.” (See the following: [1 Ne. 1:15; 3:21; 5:3; 5:6; 5:8; 10:15; 16:38; 17:22])

[Heb. 01 – Use of the prophetic perfect tense]
8 And she [my mother Sariah] spake saying

**Now I KNOW of a surety**
that the Lord hath commanded my husband to flee into the wilderness

yea and I also KNOW of a surety
that the Lord hath protected my sons
and the Lord hath delivered them my sons
out of the hands of Laban

and [I also KNOW of a surety]
that the Lord hath given them my sons power whereby they my sons could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them

And after this covenant manner of language did
she [my mother Sariah] speak

**[1 Nephi 5]**

9 And it came to pass
that they did rejoice exceedingly [joy & rejoicing has been repeated 3 times]
and [they] did offer sacrifice [covenant ordinances – 3 times]
and they did offer burnt offerings unto the Lord
and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel [did give?]

[Note: These burnt offerings to remove sin were not only done out of obedience, but out of necessity. For despite the valid reasons, Nephi had taken the life of Laban and needed to become “clean” according to the Law of Moses. Under the Deuteronomic Code a man could offer sacrifice for his own family, even though he was not of the tribe of Levi—see 1 Samuel 1:3-4; Judges 6:24-26. (ZRF Study Book of Mormon, p. 12)]

[Note: Sariah has just confirmed the Lord’s obedience to the covenant that He not only made with her husband and her (“them”) in regards to every one of her “complaints,” but also the Lord’s obedience to the covenant commandment originally given to Nephi through Lehi (1 Ne. 3) after Nephi desired to “KNOW” the mysteries of God like his father did (1 Ne. 2)]

[Note: According to Donald Parry (2007:11), 1 Ne. 5:7-9 is a chiastic parallelism. Parallel elements are as follows:

7 A their joy was full
8 B she spake
   C the Lord hath commanded
   D protected my sons
   D delivered them
   B did she speak
9 A they did rejoice exceedingly

[Heb. 02 – A verb and a noun with the same root “offer”]

43
Lehi and Nephi Search the Scriptures - the Plates of Brass
The Record Testifies of Their Fathers' Works by Covenant
These Records Are of Great Worth As One Journeys
through the Wilderness towards the Promised Land

10 And after * they had given thanks unto the God of Israel

my father Lehi took the records
which were engraven
upon the plates of brass

and he did search them from the beginning

11 And he beheld that they did contain
the five books of Moses
which gave an account
of the creation of the world
and also of Adam and Eve who were our first parents

12 And also a record of the Jews
from the beginning
even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah

13 and also a record of the prophecies of the holy prophets
from the beginning
even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah

and also of MANY prophecies
which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah

14 And it came to pass
that my father Lehi also found
upon the plates of brass
a genealogy of his fathers

[Par. cc — Extended alternating]
W
herefore he [my father] knew that
he was a descendant of Joseph
yea even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob [O= which]
    who was sold into Egypt [duality – bondage]
    and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord
that he [Joseph] might preserve his father Jacob
and [that he [Joseph] might preserve] ALL his [Jacob's] household
from perishing with famine
And they [Jacob's household] were also led out of captivity
and [were also led] out of the land of Egypt
by That Same God Who Had Preserved Them

And thus [he] my father Lehi did discover
the genealogy of his fathers
And [he my father Lehi did discover]
[that] Laban also was a descendant of Joseph
Wherefore he [Laban] and his fathers [descendants of Joseph]
had kept the records

And now
when [he] my father saw ALL these things
he [my father] was filled with the Spirit
and [he my father] began to prophesy concerning his seed

that these plates of brass should go forth unto
ALL nations [dd]
ALL kindreds [AG]
ALL tongues
and ALL people
who were of his seed

Wherefore he [my father] said
that these plates of brass should NEVER perish
NEITHER should they be dimmed
ANY MORE
by time

And he [my father] prophesied MANY things concerning his seed

[Par. dd – Distribution list]
[Par. ee – Bookends “his seed”]
20 And it came to pass that thus far I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us.

21 And we had obtained the records which the Lord had commanded us, and had searched them and had found that they were desirable, yea, even of GREAT worth unto us insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children.

22 Wherefore it was wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us as we journeyed in the wilderness towards the land of promise.

{Original 1830 Chapter Break—end of Chapter I}

[Heb. 03 – Reversal of order of persons in a compound subject]

[Note: According to Donald Parry (2007:12), 1 Nephi 5:17-20 can be viewed as a chiastic parallelism. A basic outline of the parallel phrases is as follows:]

17 A my father
   B prophesy concerning his seed
   C plates of brass
      D all nations, kindreds, tongues,
      C' and people
18 B prophesied concerning his seed
19 A my father

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