



Type: Book Chapter

1 Nephi Chapter 5

Author(s): Alan C. Miner

Source: *Step by Step Through the Book of Mormon, Volume 1: Through the Wilderness to the Promised Land*

Published: Springville, UT; Book of Mormon Central/Cedar Fort, Inc., 2017

Pages: 41-46

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 **after** we had **came/come** _____ **down** [O, P/1852] {AG}
into the wilderness

unto **our father**

behold

he **[our father]** _____ / _____ was **filled with joy**

and also **my mother Sariah** / _____ was **exceedingly glad** [see 1 Ne. 3:8] aa

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

2 **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 _____ [1] he **[my father]**
was a **visionary** man

saying

Behold [2] thou hast **led** us forth **from the land of our inheritance**
and [3] my sons are NO more
and [4] we perish _____ **in the wilderness**

bb

3 **And after** this [covenant] manner of **language** [see 1 Ne. 3:21]
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.

For further insights see my Commentary. See also John A. Tvedtnes, “A Visionary Man,” in *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon*, F.A.R.M.S., 1999, p. 29-30; Richard D. Rust, “Recurrence in Book of Mormon Narratives,” in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 3/1 (Spring 1994), p. 46-47; Kevin and Shauna Christensen, “Nephite Feminism Revisited” *FARMS Review of Books*, 10/2, 1998, p. 21-22.]

[Par. aa – Circular repetition “Sariah”]

[Par. bb – Working out- the reasons for her complaint]

[1 Nephi 5]

Lehi Had Borne a Confirming Prophetic Covenant Witness to Comfort Sariah

4 And **it had came/come to pass** [changed in 1837] {AG}

that **my father Lehi** spake unto her saying

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

for **if** I had NOT **seen** the **things** of **God** in a **vision**
[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 01
in the which things {AG}
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** [see Note at the end of the chapter]
did **my father Lehi**
comfort **my mother Sariah** concerning us [their **sons**]
while we [their **sons**] **journeyed**
in the wilderness
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 [Bookend #1] **

Now I KNOW of a surety [This phrase is repeated 3 times here]
 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 [O= gave]
 whereby they [my sons]
 could accomplish the thing which
 the Lord hath commanded them

And after this [covenant] manner of language [This phrase has been repeated 3 times]
 did
 she [my mother Sariah] speak [Bookend #2]

[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)]

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?] 02

[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: According to Donald Parry (2007:11), 1 Ne. 5:7-9 is a **chiasmatic 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
- C the Lord hath commanded
- B did she speak
- 9 A they did rejoice exceedingly

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

*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** [*O= that, gave]

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

and he [**my father**] did **search** them [**the records**]
from **the beginning**

11 **And** he [**my father**] beheld that they [**the records**] did contain
the **five books of Moses**
which [**five books of Moses**]
gave an account
of the creation of the world [O= which was]
and also of **Adam** and **Eve** **who were** our first parents {AG}

12 **And also**[A][gave] a **record** cc
[B] of **the Jews**
[C] from **the beginning**
[D] **even down to**
[E] **the commencement of**
[F] **the reign of Zedekiah** king of Judah

13 **and also**[A][gave] a **record**
[B] [of] **the prophecies** of the **holy prophets**
[C] from **the beginning**
[D] **even down to**
[E] **the commencement of**
[F] **the reign of Zedekiah**

and also [gave] a **record**
[of] **MANY prophecies**
which [**prophecies**]
have been **spoken by** the mouth of **Jeremiah**

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

[Par. cc – Extended alternating]

Wherefore 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

15 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

16 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

17 And now

when [he] my father saw ALL these things
 he [my father] was filled with the Spirit

18 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 [O= which] ee

19 **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”]

[1 Nephi 5]

20 And **it came to pass**

that

thus far **I and my father** **had kept** _____ the **commandments**
wherewith **the Lord** _____ **had commanded** us

03

21 And we [**I and my father**] **had obtained** _____ the **records**
which **the Lord** _____ **had commanded** us

["s" added]

and [**had**]searched them [the **records**]
and [**had**]found that they [the **records**]

were **desirable**
yea even **of GREAT worth** unto us

insomuch that

we [**I and my father**] could **preserve** _____ the **commandments** of **the Lord**
unto our **children**

22 **Wherefore** it was **wisdom** _____ in **the Lord**

that we [**I and my father**] should **carry** them [the **records**]with us

as we [**I and my father**] **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	<u>my father</u>	
		B	<u>prophesy concerning his seed</u>
18		C	<u>plates of brass</u>
		D	all <u>nations, kindreds, tongues,</u>
		D'	and <u>people</u>
19		C	<u>plates of brass</u>
		B	<u>prophesied</u> <u>concerning his seed</u>
20	A	<u>my father</u>	