

BOM 08 - 1 Nephi 5-7

Greetings, my dear brothers and sisters. I'm excited and pleased to be with you again today as we resume our study of the Book of Mormon. By way of announcement the Spanish recordings and transcription of each of these podcasts, as well as the Portuguese recording and transcriptions, will be found on 2 separate sites. Margie has opened up 3 different podcasts sites; one for the English; one for the Spanish; and one for the Portuguese. There will be a notice on the English site on how to access these other 2 language sites of the Book of Mormon. To access the Spanish site type in **mstroudSpanish.podomatic.com**; for the Portuguese site type in **mstroudPortuguese.podomatic.com**. We hope that this will avoid undue confusion as the podcast series become more and more in number. Thank you to all of those who are transcribing these lessons in English, Spanish, and Portuguese; and thank you to those, brothers and sisters, on the Spanish and Portuguese teams who are providing this great ministry and labor of love for our brothers and sisters in Mexico, Central America, South America, Spain and Portugal. I pray that as you read the Book of Mormon, along with our podcast studies, that you will pray and ask the Father in the name of Jesus to help this book become alive for you. The prophet Joseph Smith said this:

"I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion; and that a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book."

If this book can bring you nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book, then we need to approach this in a different way than we ever have before. The whole purpose of our existence here on this earth is to be redeemed from the fall and brought back into the presence of God and behold His face while in the flesh. That's the ultimate. That's what the Book of Mormon is inviting us to do. Do you have to do that in this life in order to obtain exaltation in the celestial kingdom? I don't believe so, but there is definitely an advantage to obtaining this favored status with God in this life. Moroni teaches us this principle in Ether 12 starting in verse 38, Quote:

Ether 12:38-39

[38] And now I, Moroni, bid farewell unto the Gentiles, yea, and also unto my brethren whom I love, until we shall meet before the judgment-seat of Christ, where all men shall know that my garments are not spotted with your blood. (now, this part right here)

*[39] And then shall ye know that **I have seen Jesus**, and that **he hath talked with me face to face**, and that he told me in plain humility, even as a man telleth another in mine own language, concerning these things;*

Skip down to verse 41. *And now I would commend you*, and this is speaking to us, because Moroni is addressing the Latter-day Gentiles among whom we are numbered.

Ether 12:41

*[41] And now, **I would commend you to seek this Jesus** of whom the prophets and apostles have written, that the grace of God the Father, and also the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of them, may be and abide in you forever. Amen.*

I want to emphasize where he says *to seek this Jesus*. Notice he didn't say to seek Jesus; he said to seek this Jesus. And who is this Jesus? Why it's the one he's describing in verse 39 that he talks with face-to-face and receives instruction from him in plain humility even as a man tells another in my own language concerning these things. What a great testimony for us to begin the process of drawing nearer to God; and in that process, through the Book of Mormon and personal revelation, we can come to a point where we can see Jesus face-to-face and he will speak to us in plain humility. I would echo the words of our brother Moroni to seek **this** Jesus that he's testifying out here in the book of Ether, remembering that if Moroni was able to obtain this beautiful encounter with the Son of God, then so can each and every one of us obtain that for God the father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and said that they are no respecter's of persons and that their course is one eternal round and in them there is no shadow of changing. We need to have the Lord through his atonement remove our unbelief and be able to see ourselves speaking with the Lord Jesus Christ face-to-face as Moroni described his encounter. Let's go to 1 Nephi 5. In the beginning verses of chapter 5, we are able to see the back story of what's taking place at the tent of Lehi as his sons are in Jerusalem retrieving the plates of brass.

1 Nephi 5:

[2] For she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness; and she also had complained against my father, telling him that he 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.

Starting in verse 2 we see that Sariah went through her own personal Abrahamic test or her own personal Gethsemane and that she complained to Lehi telling him that he was a visionary man; and you *led us forth out of the land of our inheritance, and my sons are no more, and we perished in the wilderness*. This is not hard to understand from a woman's point of view. Her whole life is set up in her family, her children and grandchildren. Also, it's part of woman's nature to seek for and obtain security. Its man's nature to be a risk taker, but it's a woman's nature to be more security minded and seek for safety and refuge. And so, this complaining for Sariah is understandable in that she's probably left a pretty beautiful home in Jerusalem. I think they were wealthy and that she had all of the conveniences of that day; and security, safety, and refuge would be good descriptions for their home in Jerusalem. Well she's up and left all that and now finds herself living in a tent, 3 days journey southeast into the Judean wilderness, and now her sons she fears have been slain or perished under the hand of Laban or as a result of other dangers found in this wilderness journey. Verse 3.

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

I find it interesting that in this particular verse the word *complained* is used instead of *murmur*. Is there a difference between the word *complained* and *murmur*? If there is a difference it would be perhaps in valid righteous concerns versus murmuring, finding fault, backbiting gossiping which all findings their authorship in the dark side. Nowhere do I find in the Scriptures of the word *murmur* is described in any way in a favorable context. This point in my life, I can find no fault in Sariah for her concerns and her complaining. She, as of yet, has not received a witness as to the visionary gift that her husband Lehi has. No doubt Lehi has told her all that has happened to him to this point, but she's yet to receive a witness of that. Is it that she's following her husband simply because she trusts him and that he's always taken good care of her in the past, but now

she finds herself in an extremity, and it's in the extremity were trusting in the arm of flesh no longer is enough and we need to seek comfort from a divine source. Verse 4.

[4] And it had come to pass that my father spake unto her, saying: I know that I am a visionary man; for if I had not seen the things of God in a vision I should not have known the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem, and had perished with my brethren.

Lehi answers his wife by saying *I know that I am a visionary man for if I had not seen the things of God in the vision I should not have known the goodness of God but had tarried at Jerusalem and had perished with my brethren.*

And we're still a minimum of 6 years away from the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian armies. The reason Lehi speaks with this kind of assurance is because he has seen the destruction of Jerusalem in vision by the Babylonian hordes. He's seen the city in flames. He's seen many of the people; men, women, and children killed. He's seen the rest of those that survive taken captive. He's seen the city lay in ruins. He's seen the Temple of Solomon destroyed. He's seen all of this in vision and so he can say at the bottom of verse 4, *if I have not seen the things of God in vision I should not have known the goodness of God but had*, speaking as though it already happened, *tarried at Jerusalem and had perished with my brethren.* Notice that he doesn't say *would perished* but its past tense and the reason is past tense because he seen all this in vision. It's an interesting priesthood principal and a doctrinal principle that before one acts out the ministry given to him by God in the flesh; the Lord allows that person who has that ministry to see it in the spirit before it actually takes place in this world. It has been such with all the prophets and is intimated in the 4th chapter of Ether that these men are shown before-hand the experiences in their foreordained ministry so that when it comes time to act upon them in the flesh there is no hesitation; there is no need for decision; they've seen it. They know it and they can act it out immediately in real time. How is it that Moses was able to stand on the edge of the Red Sea and say, *be still and see the hand of God*, as he parts the Red Sea? How did he know that? And the answer is: he'd already seen that in vision, perhaps more than once. In the whole ministry of these prophets as it unfolds I believe that there is nothing in their ministry that takes place that they haven't already been shown and tutored in before physically takes place. So, it is with Lehi in verse 4 speaking as though the destruction of Jerusalem had already taken place. He's seen it in vision. Verse 5.

[5] But behold, I have obtained a land of promise, in the which things I do rejoice; yea, and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban, and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness.

But behold, another reason, for those 2 words refers back to the destruction of Jerusalem and the perishing of his brethren, *but behold I have obtained a land of promise.* I want you to notice the word **a** land of promise, not **the** land of promise, but **a** land of promise in which things I rejoice and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban and bring them down again unto us in this wilderness. How does he know that?

Well, it goes back to 1 Nephi 3:7. He knows that God gave the command to go and obtain these plates. He taught Nephi that principle that whatever God commands he also prepares the way for the accomplishment of that ministry - provides the way. Lehi has enough experience in this

principal from past experiences that have no doubt that if the Lord commanded him to send his sons back there that in the very command the Lord has already prepared the way for any deliverance is necessary from any enemy along the way. Why did it take 3 efforts to obtain the plates? That's because Nephi gained valuable instruction and information in those attempts. The Lord was using that whole experience to teach him some things that would be necessary for him to know in his future ministry as the leader of the Nephi people.

Let's talk about this a land of promise. This indicates that there are many lands of promise; not just one. Now, the Book of Mormon, since it's a record of Joseph talks about their land of promise which Joseph Smith indicated in a future day will include all of North and South America as the land of inheritance for the seed of Joseph. This land that's being promised to Lehi is already been given to others prior to him. As a matter of fact, as Lehi is speaking here, the land of promise that he is to inherit is already inhabited by another huge civilization of people, the Jaredites, that were brought there from the time of the Tower of Babel. The same land that Lehi will have as his land of promise was also claimed by the Jaredites, by promise from God, to be there land of inheritance. Remember the great Book of Mormon promise that's all throughout the book, *inasmuch as ye keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land*. That promise indicates that wherever a righteous man and his family or society of righteous people who are keeping the commandments of the Lord that land that they dwell upon is a land of promise. This land of promise can even come right down to the level of your individual home - The property upon which your home sits upon. And I suppose could even come right down to the individual man and a woman whose physical body is their own personal kingdom and their own personal domain. The word domain is tied into the word dominion; and has to do with having a charge and a stewardship over land and/or property that are given to you by the Lord. Lehi at this time knows nothing about the Jaredite civilization and the fact that the land that he's about to inherit by promise is already possessed by other people. So, it was also in the day Moses when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egyptian captivity, delivered them, he acting as their father and they asked his children; he took them to a place that they were to possess the land of the inheritance. That's another title for a land of promise. Interestingly enough, the land that they were promised, that eventually would be realized in the days of Joshua and thereafter, was currently inhabited by a very wicked nation of people, actually nations the people, that we refer to as the Canaanite peoples. And they were squatters because they were upon the land that was given by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So, you can see these lands, and promise lands, and lands of the inheritance is a very interesting topic and ties in directly with the Abrahamic covenant. Once Moses and Joshua come up and they clear out that land, then that land which is under curse and desecrated by wickedness, once those evil inhabitants are removed, the land rededicated and anchored to the Lord Jesus Christ; that land then for the Israelites becomes a land flowing with milk and honey, a land choice above all other lands. In 1 Nephi 5:5 we see a fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant in Lehi's day, a renewal of that covenant, to Lehi. The Abrahamic covenant, you can read about this in Genesis 17 and in other places in the Old Testament, really centers around land, posterity and priesthood. Within the priesthood aspect are the doctrines, principles, promises, blessings and covenants of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Lehi, as a descendent of Joseph the last of the great patriarchs, is having the Abrahamic covenant fulfilled in his day, to his people, to his seed; and again, it pertains to lands, posterity, and priesthood. In verse 5 we talk about the land aspect of the Abrahamic covenant.

There is a difference in receiving this renewed covenant direct from God himself and being the inheritor of the covenant as it's passed down through father to son. This is a renewal of the Abrahamic covenant from God himself by his own mouth to Lehi, as it was the Abraham, as it was Isaac, and as it was to Jacob. You can see this principle of the renewal of these covenants, by God's own mouth, if you go to the Joseph Smith Translation and look at Genesis 17:11-12. The JST concerning the Abrahamic covenant says this:

JST Genesis 17:11-12

[11] And I will establish a covenant of circumcision with thee, and it shall be my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, ...

The ordinance of circumcision was a token, in the flesh, given to the offspring and posterity of Abraham to remind them of the accountability of each child before God at age eight, and that they are to be baptized at age eight years old. So, they receive a token in their flesh at 8 days old as a reminder to that person that when they get to be 8 years old they're now accountable before God for their actions and that they need to enter into baptism which was considered the burial in those days, burying the old man and initiating the birth of a new man. And it goes on and says in verse 11,

[11] ...and thy seed after thee, in their generations; that thou mayest know forever that children are not accountable before me and tell they are eight years old. (Now remember circumcision was given in 8 days. Verse 12,)

[12] And thou shalt observe to keep all my covenants wherein I covenanted with thy fathers; and thou shalt keep the commandments which I have given thee (watch this) *with mine own mouth,* (that's the part you want to underline) *and I will be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee.*

So, when the Abrahamic covenant is renewed; it's renewed by God's own mouth. You can see this principle further in the Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:25 – 40, starting in verse 28, speaking of the priest in the covenants associated with the priesthood after the Holy Order, said,

[28] It being after the order of the son of God; which order came, not by man. (See it's not passed down through lineage, it does not come down through genealogy), *nor the will of man, neither by father nor mother; neither by beginning of days nor end of years; but of God.* (Now this order of the priesthood verse 29:

[29] And it was delivered unto men by the calling of his own voice; (that is the part that you want to underline) *according to his own will, unto as many as believed on his name.*

There's one other principal that is associated with these, as these men and women receive the fullness of the Melchizedek priesthood, which is what we're talking about here, where that man and that woman; that husband and wife; through priesthood ordinances are declared King and a Queen, a Priest and Priestess. This is the Holy Order that we see functioning throughout the Book of Mormon and that see from Adam on up through Joseph the great patriarchal order of the priesthood. Within this order of kings and queens, priests and priestesses, there was also an additional place where a man who was a priest after the Holy Order could obtain the office of high priest. The office of the high priest in the Holy Order entitled this man to administer the ordinances of the Holy Order to others, both male and female. This person who had the keys to preside over and administer the Holy Order also was given a blessing from God that came down

from Adam, the first man. This is why we refer to the Holy Order of the priesthood; this is why I refer to this priesthood as the order of the priesthood after the ancient of days, who was Adam. Adam was given dominion over the whole earth and everything upon it and was pronounced Lord over the whole earth. All of the patriarchs from Adam on down, including Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, held this position of high priest in the Holy Order, where they not only presided over others in the Holy Order but were able to have the keys to administer this order to others, and to obtain Lordship and dominion over the whole earth. The thing that we could look at today to help us understand that would be Pres. Nelson, who's the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, holds the keys to administer all the rights and ordinances within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He has a dominion, if you will, over the membership of the church; a stewardship, but not only that, he's not only the president of the church; he is the present prophet, seer and revelator of God over the whole earth. Now that harkens back to the dominion that was given to Adam when he said, *I will make the Lord over the whole earth and everything in it.* This is a part of what Lehi is experiencing in the 5th verse. Verse 6.

1 Nephi 5:

[6] And after this manner of language did my father, Lehi, comfort my mother, Sariah, concerning us, while we journeyed in the wilderness up to the land of Jerusalem, to obtain the record of the Jews.

You can bet that Lehi and Sariah had a discussion about these kinds of things. It's also interesting, that his wife is name Sariah after the great matriarch Abraham's life Sariah. It was after this manner of language that Lehi was able to comfort his wife. He didn't just tell her to get a hold of yourself, pull your boots, grow up, stop complaining; there was discussion; there was teaching from this prophet and priest and king to his wife who was a priestess and queen in the Holy Order. When the sons returned to the tent, verse 7.

[7] And when we had returned to the tent of my father, behold their joy was full, and my mother was comforted.

[8] And she 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 delivered them out of the hands of Laban, and given them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them. And after this manner of language did she speak.

She spake saying now I know all of the surety. I want you to take a look at those words, *I know of a surety.* That keyword surety is a keyword to help you know that is more than just, here, they are, they made it safely back. She now knows by personal revelation and perhaps angelic administration seen or unseen that what the Lord had promised her husband concerning her children verily was true and she now possesses a witness of that for herself. You want to find out about this surety let's go over Ether 12:4.

Ether 12:4

[4] Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God.

Look at those words surety, anchor, sure, steadfast, always abounding in good works, and glorify God. That is the surety that Sariah has obtained, not from Lehi, but from her Savior. I believe that Sariah, through this whole trial, through this extremity, has come to know her Savior and her master personally and intimately. Back to verse 8.

1 Nephi 5:

[8] And she 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 delivered them out of the hands of Laban, and given them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them. And after this manner of language did she speak.

I also know of a surety that the Lord have protected my sons and delivered them out of the hands of Laban and given them power, and we will talk about this power over you in just a moment over in the 7th chapter, given them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord had commanded them after this manner of language did she speak.

See that language is filled with gospel principles, doctrine, revelation, ministration; it's the language of Revelation. Verse 9.

[9] And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel.

These sacrifices and burnt offerings are always offered upon an altar. These altars in these days were made of stones, un-hewn, as free from the touch of mortal fallen man as can possibly be. These altars were not only a platform upon which sacrifice in the similitude of the coming atonement of Jesus Christ, but that these altars also act as portals that connect men and women in this dimension with beings in other dimensions. Altars are used by the Dark side to communicate downward. Altars are used by the light side to communicate heavenward.

In verse 10 the first thing that they do after their devotional is delivered the plates Lehi. And at the bottom of verse 10, he says, *he did search them from the beginning*. And here is what we can see in the brass plates. By the way the brass plates are a godly record that will be restored in the coming day and we will as the children of Israel in the latter-days have access to this beautiful record that was kept by Joseph and his descendants. Verse 11, the brass plates.

[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;

We have our version of that part of the brass plates given to us mercifully and through the grace of God in the record call the Pearl of Great Price. We have 3 references that we can look at, modern references, that teach us about Adam and Eve in the creation of the world. One is in Abraham; one is in the book of Moses; and the others in the temple endowment Ceremony. How blessed we are by our father to have restored to us these records which work in companionship with the Old Testament record in Genesis. And I believe that when we receive the brass plates that the complete record of the creation of the world, the story of Adam and Eve, the Garden of

Eden, the fall of man and their eventual redemption will be complete with the restoration of these missing scriptures. The brass plates ...

[12] And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah;

I assume that the beginning spoken of here is not the beginning of the world, since as mentioned in verse 11, but that would since it means a record of the Jews that would be the beginning of the record kept by the posterity of Judah, the 4th son of Jacob, down to Zedekiah who was a descendent of Judith. Verse 13.

[13] And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

That beginning in verse 13, the prophecies of the holy prophets from the beginning, would be from Adam on down to Jeremiah. What a record that would be. We have a tendency to treat that lightly. But I'm excited to see that as is restored to us in the future day. One of the interesting things that Lehi finds out, that he apparently did not know before, is that he's a descendent of Joseph through Manasseh. Skip over to Alma 10, and let's look at verse 3. There is little genealogical descendent given here and it says,

Alma 10:3

[3] And Aminadi was a descendent of Nephi's, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem, (Right here,) who was a descendent of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren.

In our day, the day of the gathering of Israel, if you have any doubt that we're in that day go back and listen to Pres. Nelson's talks since he became president of the church, and you will see that one of his primary emphasis is on the gathering of the house of Israel. We are in the day of Israel. It is my opinion that the day of the Gentile ended last year, and we are now in the day of the gathering of Israel. Ephraim is the first of the tribes to be gathered. He has preeminence over the other tribes. The next one to be gathered will be Manasseh, because Joseph's seed hold the birthright blessings anciently and those birthright blessings are being recognized in our day. The majority of patriarchal blessings given by patriarchs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are 1st Ephraim and 2nd Manasseh and then the other tribes in lesser numbers from there. Truly, Joseph is being gathered in our day. Back to 1 Nephi 5:17.

1 Nephi 5:

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

[18] That these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed.

That has not happened yet, as something future.

[19] Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

Interesting comments that the plates would be preserved, that they would never perish, but the statements they would never be dimmed anymore by time. This is what happens when we disrespect the Scriptures and treat them lightly. The message of the Scriptures becomes obscured, dimmed by personal apostasy. Even in our day and the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the dispensation of the fullness of times you can see that dimming process of the Scriptures mentioned in section 84 starting with verse 54, the Lord says this:

D&C 84:54-57

[54] And your minds in times past have been darkened (think of the word dimmed) because of unbelief, and because you have (here we go) treated lightly the things you have received—

See that same thing happened with the brass plates. You can bet that while they were in the possession of the Laban, an apostate, that they were not used to the full value and that the mysteries and doctrines and covenants, promises that are contained in the brass plates had become dimmed to the people. They were apathetic. They were complacent, back to D&C 84: 55, look what the Lord says:

[55] Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

One of the reasons the Jews were under condemnation, at that time, was because they treated lightly the words of the prophets. They treated lightly the ordinances that were found in the temple of Solomon, and they treated lightly, especially, the holy word of God that they had in their midst. They treated it with vanity and with unbelief. And then back to verse 56 section 84-

[56] And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

[57] And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, (here we go) even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

You see, it's the tendency that people who have a stewardship over sacred things to talk a good warfare, to talk a good fight, but when it comes to actually doing it we fall short. So, the Lord indicts us when he says, *not only to say, but to do according to that which I've written*. This condemnation; this indictment by the Lord was given in September 1832. The church hadn't been organized officially for 2 years until the membership was placed under condemnation because they didn't use the Book of Mormon. You can go back in the history of the church and see that they preferred to use the Bible to prove their case and to show the validity of the restoration. They avoided the Book of Mormon to one point where Joseph stood up in front of the congregation and said, *if nobody else will speak of the Book of Mormon, I will*. And then he gave a discourse out of the Book of Mormon that thrilled the people who listen to it. But the Saints were slow. They treated with vanity and unbelief the Scriptures just as the Jews have done with their scriptures, the brass plates and other writings of the prophets, that were in their midst. It's always been shortcoming of the natural man to treat lightly the thing God gives us. In another place in the Book of Mormon is called, *trampling under our feet the Holy One of Israel*.

Go with me over to Alma 37:4, again speaking about the brass plates. Alma speaking to his son Helaman said,

Alma 37:4-5

[4] Behold, it has been prophesied by our fathers, (and your reading that prophecy right there in 1 Nephi 5) that they should be kept and handed down from one generation to another, and be kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord until they should go forth unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, (now notice for what purpose) that they shall know of the mysteries contained thereon.

Is it any wonder why we don't have the brass plates? Why would the Lord give us additional records that contain his mysteries when we treat lightly the one we have in front of us called the Book of Mormon? Verse 5, Alma 37,

[5] And now behold, if they are kept they must retain their brightness; yea, and they will retain their brightness; yea, and also shall all the plates which do contain that which is holy writ.

Remember the way they retain their brightness is by what we do with them. It is not a matter of the plates becoming dimmed with some patina of time they only retain their brightness as the purpose for which they are written illuminates the reader and leads them to Christ. So, it is with the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon has no value and unless as Joseph Smith said that *abiding by its precepts will bring us nearer to God than any other book*. It's what we do with it that counts and it's what we don't do with it that condemns. This is why I believe, that at this point in time in the day of the gathering of Israel, there has never been a more appropriate time for us to obtain the power and knowledge, wisdom and understanding from the Book of Mormon through revelation and angelic ministry than right now. I believe that's why the Lord wanted these podcasts to be done and to be done in Spanish. I believe that the majority of the tribe of Manasseh are Spanish speakers. 1 Nephi 5:20.

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.

Notice that you have 2 leaders in this colony now. It's you have the father and the son that are stepping out and fulfilling the commandments, taking a leadership role in this colony. Nephi, being mentor by his patriarchal father, so that in the day not too far in the future, he will take his place as a king and a ruler and a priest over the Nephi people. Verse 21.

[21] And we had obtained the records which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them and 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.

We talked about why that is, especially with that last verse in Alma that the brass plates contain the mysteries of God. Without these mysteries you cannot fully obtain and be blessed by the covenants handed down from the fathers to their children.

[22] Wherefore, it was wisdom (verse 22) in the Lord that we should carry them with us, as we journeyed in the wilderness towards the land of promise.

Chapter 6, there are 2 sets of records being kept at this point. Lehi is keeping his own records of his doings and Nephi is keeping his records of his doings. Later on, Mormon refers to the large plates of Nephi and the small plates that Nephi. These are records kept by Nephi. In the large plates he keeps a record of the secular, historical, governmental things of his people. And on the small plates are reserved for the sacred writings, the revelations, prophesying's, administrations from heaven. Lehi is keeping a record also. It was this record of Lehi that Joseph Smith translated that encompassed the 116-page manuscript lost by Martin Harris. In chapter 6 verse 4 Nephi says this:

1 Nephi 6:

[4] For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved.

[5] Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto those who are not of the world.

You know, brothers and sisters, as you converse with the Lord through the veil, as you have sacred dreams and revelations, anything that is sacred and godly, you should write it down. You should be keeping your own small plates because what God tells you through revelation is Scripture. Go over to section 68 in the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 3 and 4, it says this:

D&C 68:3-4

[3] And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

[4] And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.

Now that is speaking to the priesthood leadership in the newly organized church; but it also pertains to you within your own dominion; within your own kingdom and stewardship. Whatever the Holy Ghost reveals to you is Scripture; is the will of the Lord for you; the mind of the Lord for you; the word of the Lord for you; and the voice of God and the power of God for you unto salvation. Can you tell me anything that God tells you, that shouldn't have a priority and not be written down? 1 Nephi 7, in the first verse, Lehi received this instruction from the Lord through revelation that his sons should again return into the wilderness and go to the house of Ishmael and talk to him about he and his family joining them in the wilderness. The purpose for this is in the last few lines in verse one.

1 Nephi 7:

*[1] And now I would that ye might know, that after my father, Lehi, had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not meet for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone; but **that his sons should take daughters to wife, that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise.***

Now, you got the 2nd ingredient in the Abrahamic covenant. Remember, one was land; another one was posterity. What good is a land of promise if there's no one to inhabit it? So now we are moving into the 2nd element of the Abrahamic covenant – posterity, or in other words, seed unto the Lord in the land of promise. Lord commanded Lehi,

[2] And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that I, Nephi, and my brethren, should again return unto the land of Jerusalem, and bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness.

Now, this must've caused some kind of consternation, because there is a search warrant out, for all intents and purposes, for the murder Laban, and for the disappearance of Laban's servant Zoram. Perhaps some observant soul in Jerusalem also noticed that the sacred plates of brass were also missing. So, to go back up there, when all of this is at a height of investigation, would be no small thing. Perhaps even though we don't know and may have had some evidence that Lehi's family was also involved in this since their disappearance is probably also raised questions within the Jerusalem environments. All these things put together form a situation that could be very hazardous to these men as they go back up to Jerusalem. Well Lehi's sons go to Jerusalem into the house of Ishmael in verse 4 said,

[4] And it came to pass that we went up unto the house of Ishmael, and we did gain favor in the sight of Ishmael, insomuch that we did speak unto him the words of the Lord.

I find it interesting that Lehi's family are from the tribe of Manasseh; Ishmael's family are from the tribe of Ephraim. So, with the marriage of Ishmael's children to Lehi's children you now have a complement of the full seed Joseph in this colony. Also, interesting, that later on the promised land, the other tribe that will be associated with them is Judith through Zedekiah and his son Mulek. And will talk more about that when we get to that point. What did they say to Ishmael to soften his heart that he decided to take the journey? Well you go back to verse one and you can see that they're talking to him about a land of promise; that Lord's promised Lehi and that Ishmael and his seed will have an inheritance and that land. I am sure the whole concept of the Abrahamic covenant, and that we've talked about, lands of inheritance and promised lands were well understood by Ishmael as it were by Lehi. And that may have been a statement there that would cause his heart to contemplate and then be softened by the spirit of the Lord so that they would leave. We don't know what they left behind, but we know that Ishmael is probably an older man because he's one of the first to die in the colony as they are journeying in the wilderness. Number 6 it says:

[6] And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael and their families, did rebel against us; yea, against me, Nephi, and Sam, and their father, Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters.

Let's talk about the number of people that we have in these 2 groups; Lehi's family and Ishmael's family. Is pretty easy to determine the number in Ishmael's family; there's mother and father 2 sons and 5 daughters. How about Lehi's family? We know that there are Lehi and Sariah, Lehman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi. Were there any daughters in Lehi's family? Well there must've been because the Lord has asked that Ishmael's family come down and there are 2 sons

in that family. Were there 2 daughters at least in Lehi's family? Let's go to 2nd Nephi chapter 5 find out, verse 6:

2 Nephi 5:6

[6] Wherefore, it came to pass that I, Nephi, did take my family, and also Zoram and his family, and Sam, mine elder brother and his family, and Jacob and Joseph, my younger brethren, (here we go) and also my sisters, and all those who would go with me. And all those who would go with me were those who believed in the warnings and the revelations of God; wherefore, they did hearken unto my words.

So, we know that Nephi's got at least 2 sisters here. And these 2 sisters probably are older sisters to match up to the sons of Ishmael who come into the wilderness with additional family. The fact that sisters are mentioned means that at least 2 sisters went with Nephi into the wilderness. Were these sisters the elder daughters of Lehi who had married Ishmael's sons? It seems probable. We remember that Lehi's married daughters who among those who rebelled against the faithful members of the Nephi's party when they were bringing issues family into the wilderness. We'll read about that just a moment. It would be hard to believe that these rebellious daughters of Lehi would leave their husbands and children and desert Nephi's camp without this being mentioned. Their sudden repentance is something that Nephi does not record. The only reasonable conclusion that we can come to is that the sisters of Nephi who accompanied him in the wilderness were 2 younger daughters of Lehi. They were doubtless born to the patriarch in the wilderness after he left Jerusalem. Unfortunately, their names are not given, nor are any special mention of their birth record in the sacred text. Apparently, they were born after Jacob, Lehi's firstborn in the days of this tribulation in the wilderness, and before Joseph his last born. All of this is speculation based on the fragmentary record that we have. Perhaps, if we had the book of Lehi, we would have the answer in full to these inquiries. Interesting to contemplate. Another question that comes up that we don't know, was Lehi and/or Sariah, were they related to Ishmael? Is their blood relationship here? And if there was, would that be one of the elements of Ishmael's heart being softened and joining Lehi and his family in the wilderness. Now these are questions that we can ask, and we can ponder. It's in this process that the Scriptures open up to us more even if we don't find the definitive answers. It shows the process of pondering and seeking, asking, and receiving personal revelation. Verse 6

1 Nephi 7:

[6] And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael and their families, did rebel against us; yea, against me, Nephi, and Sam, and their father, Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters.

There's a rebellion in the wilderness. Its 2 the daughters of Ishmael in 2 of the sons of Ishmael and their families rebelled against us. Verse 7:

[7] And it came to pass in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.

You can bet that Lehman Lemuel had a part in this.

[8] And now I, Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, therefore I spake unto them, saying, yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel: Behold ye are mine elder brethren, and how is it that (he's can asked some questions are now is the questions section) ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds, that ye have need that I, your younger brother, should speak unto you, yea, and set an example for you?

Hard heartedness, brothers and sisters, comes as a result of refusing to hearken to the Holy Spirit. Go with me to D&C 29:7; we get a definition of hard heartedness.

D&C 29:7

[7] And ye are called to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect; for mine elect (here's how you define the elect) hear my voice and (look at this) harden not their hearts;

When the Lord speaks, and we hear and obey your considered is elect. When the Lord speaks, and you refuse to hear and are disobedient it's referred to as hard heartedness; Back over the 1 Nephi 7:8. I would submit to you that blinded mines is a consequence of hardened hearts. I think there's a sequence where Nephi says, *how is that you are so hard in your hearts*, and I believe that that leads to and so blind in your minds. Verse 9:

1 Nephi 7:

*[9] How is it that ye have not **hearkened** unto the word of the Lord?*

That's written and revealed. That word of the Lord comes to them through an angelic minister that they have beheld with their own eyes. It comes to them from their patriarch prophet, seer and revelator, Lehi; and comes to them through the whisperings of the still small voice. Verse 10:

[10] How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord?

[11] Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us, in delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record?

Do you see those questions? Hard hearts, blinded minds, won't hearken to the word of the Lord, forgotten that scene angelic administrations, forgotten the great things the Lord done up to this point and before. Verse 12.

*[12] Yea, and how is it that ye have **forgotten** that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? **Wherefore**, let us be faithful to him.*

What's the opposite of forgotten? Remember! Pres. Kimball gave a great talk on the importance of the word remember. Remember is the word that you see used throughout the Book of Mormon. There is emphasis on remembering things. One of the purposes of these sacred records that they've risked their lives over is to keep them in remembrance of what great things the Lord has done for their holy father's. Verse 13:

[13] And if it so be that we are faithful to him, we shall obtain the land of promise; and ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the destruction

of Jerusalem; for all things which the Lord hath spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem must be fulfilled.

Again, as we mentioned earlier that a minimum of 6 years from this point; and takes place in 586 B.C. If you look at the bottom of your page, if you have Scriptures prior to the 2013 edition, their dates printed in the bottom of the page. You can see that was somewhere between 600 and 592 B.C. Then Nephi says that he knows; and it's because he's been out there. When they were up there both times; you can bet they got a first-hand feel for the events, and spirituality, and the status of the people in Jerusalem. They can see that things have not gotten better. In fact, you will see in verse 14 that he learned while he was out there that they've rejected Jeremiah and have cast him into prison. You can read about that in the book of Jeremiah. Well, Nephi just tells it like it is. Verse 15.

[15] Now behold, I say unto you that if ye will return unto Jerusalem ye shall also perish with them. And now, if ye have choice, go up to the land, and remember the words which I speak unto you, that if ye go ye will also perish; for thus the Spirit of the Lord constraineth me that I should speak.

Well, they didn't really matter that. They lay hands upon him and they bind him with cords and seek to take away his life by leaving him in the wilderness bound to be devoured by wild beasts. Why do they get so mad at him? Where does this spirit of murder, now, we've now gone from contention, to beating you with a rod, to physical assault, and now where we're out and out planning first-degree murder with malice of forethought upon your own blood. Where does this come from? Go with me quickly to Nephi 16. Here is another example, and we can see what's taking place in the hearts of Lehman and Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael and the daughters of Lehi and others. In verse 1 it says:

1 Nephi 16:1-2

[1] And now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had made an end of speaking to my brethren, behold they said unto me: Thou hast declared unto us hard things, more than we are able to bear.

They're doing this again. This is ongoing, contentious, murderous situation. *Thou hast declared unto us hard things more than we are able to bear.* Think about what we just read where he said *you go back to Jerusalem you will die; it's your choice; go-ahead but remember I told you. You go there you will die.* The best that could happen to them, if they went there, is that they would be taken captive, carry away to Babylon. Verse 2.

[2] And it came to pass that I said unto them that I knew that I had spoken hard things against the wicked,..

Boy, I love Nephi; he just does not shirk at all. He tells it like it is.

[2] ...according to the truth; and the righteous have I justified, and testified that they should be lifted up at the last day; (here's your key) wherefore, (think about those around us, brothers and sisters) the guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center.

In our society those were the loudest, who proclaim the loudest their evil deeds and ungodly acts, are the ones that are most guilty of the very things that they proclaim. That's just the nature of the fallen telestial to world culture. Verse 17, back to Nephi 7:17.

1 Nephi 7:

[17] But it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, according to my faith which is in thee, wilt thou deliver me from the hands of my brethren; (this part right here) yea, even give me strength that I may burst these bands with which I am bound.

Now, Brother Bednar, a few years ago gave a great talk on the strength of the Lord. Let's look at some scriptural examples of this strength of the Lord. Let's go to Mosiah 24 look at verse 15 this is where Amulon, the apostate, persecutes people of Alma. Verse 15 it says:

Mosiah 24:15

*[15] And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did **strengthen them** (there's that strength) **that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord.***

There's an example of what the strength of the Lord can do. Let's go to Alma chapter 14, and let's look at verse 26. Just want to give you some scriptural cross-references in this concept of the strength of the Lord. This is Alma and Amulek, who were in prison, they've been pitifully treated; in verse 26:

Alma 14:26

*[26] And Alma cried, saying: How long shall we suffer these great afflictions, O Lord? O Lord, (here we) go **give us strength according to our faith which is in Christ, even unto deliverance. And they broke the cords with which they were bound; and when the people saw this, they began to flee, for the fear of destruction had come upon them.***

Doctrine and Covenants 24:12, speaking of the promise given all Oliver Cowdrey the Lord says,

D&C 24:12

*[12] And at all times, and in all places, he shall open his mouth and declare my gospel as with the voice of a trump, both day and night. **And I will give unto him strength such as is not known among men.***

One last reference in the Pearl of Great Price, Moses 1:20. This is where Moses is confronting Satan, in verse 20.

Moses 1:20

*[20] And it came to pass that Moses began to fear exceedingly; and as he began to fear, he saw the bitterness of hell. (That's because devils feed upon fear) **Nevertheless, calling upon God, he received strength, and he commanded, saying: Depart from me, Satan, for this one God only will I worship, which is the God of glory.***

Well, this is the strength of the Lord that is being spoken out in 1 Nephi 7:17.

1 Nephi 7:

[17] But it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, according to my faith which is in thee, wilt thou deliver me from the hands of my brethren; yea, even give me strength that I may burst these bands with which I am bound.

[18] And it came to pass that when I had said these words, behold, the bands were loosed from off my hands and feet, and I stood before my brethren, and I spake unto them again.

Notice in verse 17, he asked for straight the burst these bands, but the answer to his request is they are just loosed and drops off.

[19] And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me, but behold, one of the daughters of Ishmael, yea, and also her mother, and one of the sons of Ishmael, did plead with my brethren, insomuch that they did soften their hearts; and they did cease striving to take away my life.

See miracles don't convert. When you've lost the spirit of the Lord and are so devoid of light miracles can actually inflame and exacerbate emotions to violence and even murder. I think it's interesting that at this point that *one of the daughters of Ishmael* and also her mother and one of the sons Ishmael pled with my brethren, that includes Lehman and Lemuel, and also the other son of Ishmael who appears to be hardhearted, *insomuch that they did soften their hearts and cease striving to take away my life*. What do we know about this one daughter of Ishmael who stood in behalf of Nephi against his brethren and the others who wanted to kill him? If you look at your footnote on verse 19a; it takes you to 1 Nephi 16:7.

1 Nephi 16:7

[7] And it came to pass that I, Nephi, took one of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also, my brethren took of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also Zoram took the eldest daughter of Ishmael to wife.

Another footnote is 1 Nephi 18:19.

1 Nephi 18:19

[19] And Jacob and Joseph also, being young, having need of much nourishment, were grieved because of the afflictions of their mother; and also my wife with her tears and prayers, and also my children, did not soften the hearts of my brethren that they would loose me.

This is the incident where they entered into the ship and began their journey to the Promised Land where they again attacked Nephi because of his boldness. From these 2 cross-references, we can see that the daughter of Ishmael, who pled with his brethren insomuch that they did soften their hearts, is the future wife of Nephi. Back story, did they know each other? Well in Jerusalem was there all ready of friendship that had entered into that now has blossomed; or was beginning to blossom into a romance that ends with the marriage? Verse 20: This is amazing, goes from murderous, look at the sway of emotions here,

1 Nephi 7:

[20] And it came to pass that they were sorrowful, because of their wickedness, insomuch that they did bow down before me, and did plead with me that I would forgive them of the thing that they had done against me.

[21] And it came to pass that I did frankly forgive them all that they had done, and I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord their God for forgiveness. And it came to pass that they did so. And after they had done praying unto the Lord we did again travel on our journey towards the tent of our father.

What is it; the display; the physical display of the strength of the Lord that freed Nephi from their strong cords? What is it; the long-suffering the Lord, where the spirit of the Lord returns **briefly** to cause them to experience the sorrow and repentant attitude? What is it? One thing for sure, it's not the consistent, quiet, comforting influence of the Lord spirit. It just seems like they are stirred up from one extreme to another and as we'll see in the Book of Mormon that's the word that Nephi and other prophets used to describe those who have Lucifer for their master instead of the Savior. I love the words, *I did frankly forgive them*. There was a talk given this last conference by Elder Holland on this very principal. Very timely, very forceful when he gets out says, to you I speak – to you I speak. I was just thrilled when I heard that powerful apostle gets up and address the Saints that way. Let's go over to section 64 and look at verse 9. This is the doctrine of forgiveness that the Lord has revealed to us.

D&C 64:9-11

[9] Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

That a lesson in and of itself.

[10] I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.

[11] And ye ought to say in your hearts—let God judge between me and thee, and reward thee according to thy deeds.

It is part of the law of the Lord; the law of the gospel; that you forgive those who trespassed against you. This is the law that is found in the telestial world. It is the law of the interaction between us and other of Father's children. It is the law that teaches us to forgive even our enemies. Again, Elder Holland's talk gives great detail on this law of the gospel, a covenant we enter into in the temple and that we need to take more to heart. Verse 22:

1 Nephi 7:

[22] And it came to pass that we did come down unto the tent of our father. And after I and my brethren and all the house of Ishmael had come down unto the tent of my father, they did give thanks unto the Lord their God; and they did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto him.

Wow, what a tumultuous experience, this going back and forth to Jerusalem. The back story of what takes place with father and mother, Lehi and Sariah, and the sisters of Nephi, Sam, Lehman and Lemuel while their brothers are gone. We can see the nature of the fallen man working here over time and the influence of dark beings to destroy this mission to take a remnant of the seed

of Joseph, a small colony of less than 50 people, and take them into a promised land of inheritance; initiating and fulfilling with this group the Abrahamic covenant.

Well, brothers and sisters, I hope this is been helpful to you. I hope that it helps us take the Book of Mormon into our lives in a different light to where it becomes alive to us. I pray that these words of this sacred book will continue to bless our lives, that these words will act as revelatory triggers, and as we read the Book of Mormon this time that the heavens will be opened to us and that we will receive the mysteries of godliness that are contained within this book. I pray humbly for this, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

References:

1 Nephi 5
1 Nephi 6
1 Nephi 7
Ether 12:38-39
Ether 12:41
JST Genesis 17:11-12
Ether 12:4
D&C 84:54-57
Alma 37:4-5
D&C 68:3-4
2 Nephi 5:6
D&C 29:7
1 Nephi 16:1-2
Mosiah 24:15
Alma 14:26
D&C 24:12
Moses 1:20
1 Nephi 16:7
1 Nephi 18:19
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