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Chapter XIII

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Abstract: Lehi Commanded to Embark upon the Ship—Food Prepared for the Voyage—Jacob and Joseph—Did the Ship have Sails?—Voyages and Ships of Egyptians—Dancing and Rudeness of Laman and Others at Sea—Nephi Remonstrates—Is Treated Harshly and Bound Hand and Foot by his Brothers—Lehi and Sariah very Sick—Four Days of Terrible Tempest—Compass Would not Work—Driven Back Before the Wind—Terror of Laman and Lemuel—Nephi's Patience and Self-Control—The Lord Shows Forth His Power—Nephi Released—The Ship Steered in Right Course—His Prayer Answered and Tempest Quelled—Reach the Promised Land

CHAPTER XIII.

LEHI COMMANDED TO EMBARK UPON THE SHIP—FOOD PREPARED FOR THE VOYAGE—JACOB AND JOSEPH—DID THE SHIP HAVE SAILS?—VOYAGES AND SHIPS OF EGYPTIANS—DANCING AND RUDENESS OF LAMAN AND OTHERS AT SEA—NEPHI REMONSTRATES—IS TREATED HARSHLY AND BOUND HAND AND FOOT BY HIS BROTHERS—LEHI AND SARIAH VERY SICK—FOUR DAYS OF TERRIBLE TEMPEST—COMPASS WOULD NOT WORK—DRIVEN BACK BEFORE THE WIND—TERROR OF LAMAN AND LEMUEL—NEPHI'S PATIENCE AND SELF-CONTROL—THE LORD SHOWS FORTH HIS POWER—NEPHI RELEASED—THE SHIP STEERED IN RIGHT COURSE—HIS PRAYER ANSWERED AND TEMPEST QUELLED—REACH THE PROMISED LAND.

NOW that the vessel was finished, the voice of the Lord came unto Lehi that they were to embark upon the ship. It was still through him that the word came for a movement of this character. They had prepared fruits and meats and honey in great quantities, and "provisions according to that which the Lord had commanded them;" these with all their "loading" and their seeds and everything they had brought with them, they carried on board their vessel, and embarked themselves, "every one according to his age." At this point we find mentioned, for the first time, the names of two sons of Lehi, who were born in the wilderness—Jacob and Joseph. These boys grew up to be faithful and renowned men of God, and were a great help to their brother Nephi, after they reached the promised land.

After they put forth to sea they were driven by the wind towards the promised land. We are not informed as to whether they used sails or other means to propel their vessel; but as they were "driven before the wind" it is most likely they had

sails. They steered their ship by the direction of the compass which the Lord had prepared for them.*

*—In this connection it may be of interest to know something of the progress which had been made in the art of navigation at the time Lehi and his company made this wonderful voyage by direction of the Lord. The earliest record of the practice of this art after the construction of the ark by Noah—excepting the account we have in the Book of Mormon of the voyage of Jared and his brother and their colony—is that of the Egyptians, who at a very remote period are said to have established commercial relations with India. This traffic was carried on between the Arabian Gulf and the western coast of India, across the Indian ocean. It may be that Lehi himself might have been familiar with a famous expedition by sea which was fitted out by Necho II. king of Egypt; for as near as we can ascertain this was done in his day. This Necho was the king of Egypt against whom Josiah, king of Judah, fought when he received his death-wound (*II. Chron. xxxv. 22*). He fitted out a fleet in the Red Sea, and having engaged some expert Phœnician pilots and sailors, he sent them on a voyage of discovery along the coast of Africa. They were ordered to start from the Arabian Gulf, and come round through the Pillars of Hercules (now the straits of Gibraltar) into the Mediterranean, and so return to Egypt. This voyage was a very daring one for those days. Through it the peninsular form of Africa was ascertained, and the cape of Good Hope was doubled about twenty-one centuries before it was seen by Diaz* or doubled by Vasco de Gama. The vessels of the Egyptians were frequently of large dimensions, and were generally propelled by oars, though they understood to a certain extent the use of sails. We read of one vessel in later times carrying as many as 400 sailors, 4,000 rowers, and nearly 3,000 soldiers.

There can be no doubt but that the ship upon which Lehi and his company embarked was in every respect superior for the pur-

*—Bartholomew Diaz discovered it in 1487, in the reign of John II., king of Portugal, but did not land. He named it Capo Tormento, from the storms he experienced there; but the king afterwards changed its name to Cape of Good Hope; and Emanuel, his successor, sent Vasco da Gama, in 1497, with orders to double it and proceed to India.—*The Ancient Egyptians* (Wilkinson) 1, 2, pp. 109, 110.

Upon one occasion, after they had been out to sea some time, Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael and their wives began to dance, to sing and to indulge in very rude language and conduct. They made themselves so merry and behaved so improperly, forgetting by what power they had been brought where they were, that Nephi became alarmed, for fear the Lord would be angry with them and smite them because of their wickedness, and they should go to the bottom of the sea. He spoke to them, therefore, with that soberness and gravity which the sense of peril inspired. But, as usual with them, his words made them angry. They declared that their younger brother should not be a ruler over them. Laman and Lemuel were not content with speaking harshly, they went so far as to handle him roughly and to bind him hand and foot with cords, which were lashed so tightly as to give him pain and to cause his wrists and ankles to be very sore and swollen. They kept him in this condition for four days. It was in vain that his father and mother, his wife and children, and others plead for him. They could not move them to release him. Indeed they threatened every one with vengeance who spoke to them in his favor. This conduct nearly brought Lehi and Sariah down to the gates of death. They became so sick that they were confined to their beds, and were almost ready to be consigned to a watery grave. Yet even this grief and sickness of theirs had no effect upon these cruel and pitiless men. Their hearts were steeled against the voices of love and affection; they were insensible to every humane emotion and every human appeal. Nothing but the power of God could reach them, and they were soon made to feel that. After they had bound Nephi, the compass ceased to work, and they did not know in what direction they should steer the ship. A storm arose, and it

pose for which it was designed to any vessel known among men at that time. The Lord had directed its construction. He knew what was needed—the capacity required, the strain to which it would be subjected from the winds and the waves, and the length of time it would be upon the ocean in making the voyage—and it must have been admirably adapted to meet all these wants.

continued to rage with such violence that they were driven back, apparently at the mercy of the waves and in great danger of being engulfed by them. This terrible tempest frightened Laman and Lemuel exceedingly. They were afraid they and all on board would be drowned; but they were resolved not to loose Nephi, even when entreated to do so by their parents and others. But by the fourth day the tempest had become so frightfully fierce, that even Laman and Lemuel were terror-stricken and softened, and they repented and released Nephi. They had to be threatened with destruction and brought face to face with death before they would yield. During all this time, suffering from pain and in a condition so wretched, Nephi did not lose his patience and self-control. Great as were his afflictions he did not murmur against the Lord; but he looked unto Him and praised Him all the day long. He was in circumstances that many men would think dreadful and even unbearable; their faith would be greatly tried thereby, and perhaps would fail. Our own Church history furnishes a case of this kind. Sidney Rigdon, once a prominent man in the Church, the first counsellor of the Prophet Joseph, was taken by the mob in Missouri at the same time that the prophet and others were, and was put in prison by them. His afflictions he felt so severely that he murmured about them, and said:

“I never will follow Brother Joseph’s revelations any more, contrary to my own convenience. The sufferings of Jesus Christ were a fool to mine.”

This doubtless was one cause of his subsequent apostasy; for he lost the spirit and never afterwards manifested the faith and power which he had formerly possessed.

The Lord could have manifested His power in behalf of Nephi so as to have prevented his brothers from binding him as they did. But it did not suit His purposes to do so. There are many things which the Lord suffers for the purpose of testing individuals or the people, and also that He may show forth His power and to fulfill His word which He has spoken concerning the wicked. The cruel conduct of Laman and Lemuel towards Nephi exhibited the wickedness of their hearts and brought them under condemnation before the Lord, and at the same time showed up in strong colors his faith and patience

and the greatness of his soul. After Nephi had been released he took the compass and it worked as he desired it should, and he was able to steer the ship in the direction of the promised land. He prayed unto the Lord and the violence of the tempest was quelled, and the elements became serene and calm. Sailing for some time after this occurrence they reached the promised land.

CHAPTER XIV.

LAND AND PITCH THEIR TENTS—PLACE OF LANDING—CULTIVATE THE GROUND—GOOD CROPS—FIND ANIMALS OF EVERY KIND—ALSO ORES—RAISE LARGE FLOCKS AND HERDS—“CARNEROS DE LA TIERRA”—FIND THE HORSE—WAS THE HORSE EXTINCT WHEN THE WHITES DISCOVERED AMERICA?—REASONS FOR THINKING IT WAS NOT—WILD HORSES SEEN BY SIR FRANCIS DRAKE IN 1579—OPINION OF PROFESSOR MARSH—HORSES SEEN BY DRAKE, NOT SPANISH.

THEY landed and pitched their tents, and they acknowledged that the Lord had indeed fulfilled His promises unto them. He had guided them through the wilderness, had enabled them to construct a vessel, in which He had brought them safely across the mighty breadth of ocean which extended from the coast of Arabia to the coast of what is now called South America, or as they, with good reason, called it, “The Promised Land.” The prophet Joseph, in speaking of their place of landing, said* it was on the coast of the country now known as Chili—a country which possesses a genial, tem-

*—They traveled nearly a south, southeast direction until they came to the nineteenth degree of north latitude; then, nearly east to the sea of Arabia, then sailed in a southeast direction, and landed on the continent of South America, in Chili, thirty degrees south latitude.