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Lehi in the Desert, Part III—The Problem

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Abstract: This series is a classic reflection on Lehi's world in Arabia: poetry, tree of life, family affairs, politics, imagery, travel, tents, and foods. It comprises one of the first attempts to test the Book of Mormon against known geographical and cultural details in the regions where Lehi probably traveled in the Old World. The third part focuses on Lehi's dream.

LEHI IN THE DESERT

By
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Ph. D.

The third of an enlightening series of articles on the Book of Mormon

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PART III

THE PROBLEM

LEHI possesses in a high degree the traits and characteristics of the model *sheikh* of the desert. He is generous, noble, impulsive, fervent, devout, and visionary, and he possesses a wonderful capacity for eloquence and dreams. As to the dreams, when the Arabs wander, they feel they must be guided by dreams, and their *sheikhs* are often gifted dreamers.¹⁰¹ The substance of Lehi's dreams is highly significant, since men's dreams necessarily represent, even when inspired, the things they see by day, albeit in strange and wonderful combinations. It is common for men in every age, for example, to dream of ships, but a man in Lehi's day must dream of particular kinds of ships, and no others will do.

In his dreams Lehi finds himself wandering "in a dark and dreary waste," a "dark and dreary wilderness," where he must travel "for the space of many hours in darkness," lost and helpless. (I Nephi 8:4-8.) Of all the images that haunt the early Arab poets this is by all odds the commonest; it is the standard nightmare of the Arab; and it is the supreme boast of every poet that he has traveled long distances through dark and dreary wastes all alone.¹⁰² Invariably darkness is given as the main source of terror (the heat and glare of the day, though nearly always mentioned, are given second place), and the culminating horror is almost always a "mist of darkness," a depressing mixture of dust, and clammy fog, which, added to the night, completes the confusion of any who wander in the waste.¹⁰³ Quite contrary to what one would expect, these dank mists are de-

scribed by travelers in all parts of Arabia,¹⁰⁴ and al-Ajajja, one of the greatest of early desert poets, tells how a "mist of darkness" makes it impossible for him to continue a journey to Damascus.¹⁰⁵ In its nature and effect Lehi's "mist of darkness" (*Ibid.*, 8:23) conforms to this strange phenomenon most exactly.

When Lehi dreams of the vanity of the world, he sees "a great and spacious building," suspended in the air out of reach and full of smart and finely dressed people. (*Ibid.*, 12:18, 8:26.) That is exactly how the Bedouin of the desert, to whom the great stone houses of the city are an abomination, pictures the wicked world;¹⁰⁶ and as the city Arabs still mock their desert cousins (whom they secretly envy) with every show of open contempt, so the well-dressed people in the big house "were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers" at the poor little band of bedraggled wanderers, hungrily eating fruit from a tree, and duly abashed that their poverty should be put to open shame. It is interesting that Joseph Smith, Sr., had almost the same dream, according to his wife, who took comfort in comparing the wanderings of her own family with

different settings of the two: when the prophet's father dreamed himself lost in "this field of the world," he "could see nothing save dead, fallen timber," a picture which of course faithfully recalls his own frontier background.¹⁰⁷ When Dante, another westerner, sees himself lost in the midst of life's journey (one of the commonest and oldest of dreams, we repeat—a very classic among dreams) he is wandering through a dense, dark forest, the forests of his native Tuscany.

In a pleasanter vein Lehi sees "a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world" (*Ibid.*, 8:20), just as the Arab poet describes the world as a *maidan*, or large and spacious field.¹⁰⁸ When he dreams of a river, it is a true desert river, a clear stream a few yards wide with its source but a hundred paces away (*Ibid.*, 8:14), or else a raging muddy wash, a *sail* of "filthy water" that sweeps people away to their destruction (*Ibid.*, 8:32, 12:16, 15:27); such are the two and only types of "river" (for he calls them rivers) known to the desert Arab.¹⁰⁹ When Lehi dreams of people gone astray, they are lost in a trackless waste, "wandering in strange roads" (*Ibid.*, 8:23, 32) or blunder-

WHEN *the Lord has a task to be done, he picks a man who is most suited for the work by temperament and training. When Moses fled into Midian, he traveled afoot in the very deserts through which he was later to lead the children of Israel . . . Lehi was no less prepared and qualified for his great task.*

those of "Father Lehi." But what is significant is not the resemblance of the two dreams (we could furnish a number of genuine parallels to that) but the totally

ing "into broad roads, and they perish and are lost" (*Ibid.*, 12:17) because of the "mist of darkness." Losing one's way is of course the fate that haunts every desert

dweller sleeping and waking, and the Arab poets are full of the terror of "strange roads" and "broad ways."¹¹⁰ To symbolize what is utterly inaccessible, Lehi is shown "a great and terrible gulf," (*Ibid.*, 12:18) "an awful gulf" (*Ibid.*, 15:28), a tremendous chasm with one's objective (the tree of life) maddeningly visible on the other side; all who have traveled in the desert know the feeling of utter helplessness and frustration at finding one's way suddenly cut off by

single short poem the terror, the loneliness, the long journey, the mist of darkness (sultry and thick), the "awful gulf," the broad ways, and the paths that stray.¹¹² The Book of Mormon, in giving us not a few such clear and vivid snapshots (there are many more to come) of life in another world, furnishes picturesque but convincing proof of its own authenticity. Nephi's complaint, "they sought to take away my life, that they might leave me in the wilderness

and correct procedure when Arabs quarrel, and for all its popularity with the poets, no mere figure of speech."¹¹³

The powerful speech by which alone Lehi kept his rebellious sons in line is a gift demanded of every real *sheikh* in the desert, and, indeed against the proud and touchy tribesmen that is the only weapon the *sheikh* possesses.¹¹⁴ When the men assemble in the chief's tent to take counsel together (cf. *Ibid.*, 15:12), the leader "addresses the whole assembly in a succession of wise counsels intermingled with opportune proverbs," exactly in the manner of Lehi; "people of any other country hearing them speak," says our informant, "would simply suppose them filled with a supernatural gift."¹¹⁵ "Poetical exclamations . . . rose all around me," Burton reports, "showing how deeply tinged with imagination becomes the language of the Arab under the influence of strong passion or religious enthusiasm. . . ." ¹¹⁶ If Lehi's language sounds strangely exclamatory and high-flown to us, it is because he is not a westerner, he himself explaining that the figurative language he uses is of ancient pattern, "by the Spirit of the Lord which was in our fathers." (*Ibid.*, 15:12.)

When the Lord has a task to be done, he picks a man who is most suited for the work by temperament and training. When Moses fled into Midian, he traveled afoot in the very deserts through which he was later to lead the children of Israel, and he lived and married among the people of the desert in whose way of life he was to instruct his own people.¹¹⁷ Lehi was no less prepared and qualified for his great task: richly endowed with means and experience, at home on the march, firm, resourceful, cautious, and unhurried, independent, and not to be intimidated (*Ibid.*, 1:18-20, 2:1-4), yet never provoking though he was sorely provoked, he exemplified what Philby has declared in a moving passage—that only the greatest strength of character in a leader can carry a party safely through a dangerous desert:

For many days now I had endured the constant and inevitable friction of my own fixed and unalterable purpose and the solid weight of the innate national

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—Photograph by Underwood-Statton

The land of the desert Bedouins of today

one of those appalling canyons with perpendicular sides—nothing could be more abrupt, more absolute, more baffling to one's plans, and so will it be with the wicked in a day of reckoning.¹¹¹

Wherever else one might find parallels to these things, in combination they could only come from a man who knew the desert. Rubah, one of the earliest and greatest of the desert poets, describes in a

WHEN LEHI dreams of people gone astray, they are lost in a trackless waste. "wandering in strange roads."

to be devoured by wild beasts" (*Ibid.*, 7:16) is ever in the mouth of the Arab poet, for to leave one's enemy lying in the desert to be devoured by wild beasts is standard

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inertia thrown into the balance against me by the united body of my companions. . . . Step by step we had progressed ever away from their hearthfires, but each step had been achieved only by the smallest margin as the momentum of a purposeful mind triumphed at each stage over the inert mass ever ready to recoil from any arduous objective.¹¹⁸

Those words might have been written to describe the achievement of Lehi. Had the Lord wished it, he could have transferred the whole party through the air; as it was, he apparently wanted them to do as much as possible on their own, with a minimum of miracles. Of all the righteous men in Jerusalem, Lehi alone was singled out for a task requiring a combination of qualifications and a measure of faith which few men have ever had. But though Lehi was no ordinary man, one fact about him should begin to emerge at this point of our study: that he was an actual flesh and blood person in a real situation, and no synthetic and overdrawn character of romantic fiction moving among the phantasmagoric stage properties that were once thought to represent the gorgeous East.

THE FLIGHT INTO THE WILDERNESS

THAT a wealthy Hebrew should leave the land of his inheritance at a moment's notice and on no stronger authority than a dream move his whole family out into the desert may seem at first blush highly improbable, to say the least. And yet Lehi was doing not only the sensible but also the ordinary thing: from the earliest times to the present day the correct procedure when going got rough in Egypt or Palestine was to seek the security of the deserts. Take the case of Sinuhe. He was a high official at the court of Amenemhet I, and one night as he was dozing half-asleep in his bed, he heard voices in the next room. What they said portended a serious political shakeup to his fuzzy comprehension, with danger to himself. So, taking nothing with him, he rushed out afoot into the night and the desert where within forty-eight hours he nearly perished of thirst. He was rescued by some Arabs and befriended by a *sheikh* with whom he

had had business connections in Egypt; living with the desert people, Sinuhe himself in time became a famous *sheikh*. This story, thirteen hundred years earlier than Lehi's day, illustrates that coming and going between the desert and the city which from the first offered obvious commercial and political advantages. As to the flight motif, had not Moses and the prophets and Father Abraham himself sought safety from their enemies by flight into the desert? Most significant is the behavior of those very Jews who had driven Lehi from the land, for when the city was finally besieged, the Jewish leaders, "the chiefs of the army . . . hid in the wilds during the siege," and after all was lost, they fled to Egypt.¹¹⁹ "Hiding in the wilds" was exactly what Lehi was doing.

The desert to which Sinuhe fled was the country south of Palestine, the classic hide-out land both of Egyptians and Jews, where "men of all conditions and nations . . . look to the Arab camp as a safe retreat and refuge."¹²⁰ While the Syrian desert is "the unenvied resort of defeated tribes,"¹²¹ the proper paradise of the outcast was ever Edom and the south country, "the land of disoriented groups and of individual fugitives, where organized semi-nomad Arab tribes alternate with the flotsam and jetsam of sedentary society, with runaway slaves, bandits, and their descendants. . . ." ¹²² Even the great merchants who brought forth the civilized Nabataean state placed their confidence, says Diodorus, in their ability to disappear quickly and easily into the desert—like any common Bedouin.¹²³ So Lehi is not the first big merchant to take to the back-country with his worried family. Even in the present century Arab farmers and town-dwellers, to flee exactions of a tyrannical Turkish government, fled to the desert and adopted the life of wandering Bedouins.¹²⁴ At this very moment thousands of *fellahin*, raised to a life of farming, are starving in the Syrian desert as the result of hasty and ill-advised flight from their homes. As far as Lehi's flight into the wilderness is concerned, the Book of Mormon shows flawless judgment in every detail: the man-

ner of his flight is strictly in keeping with the best conventions, and he takes what we know now was the *only possible* direction he could have taken.¹²⁵

We have mentioned that "the Jews at Jerusalem" who finally got away when the city fell ended up in Egypt. Many of them settled far up the Nile, at Elephantine or Yeb.¹²⁶ It is in that region that we located, in a previous article in the ERA, ("The Book of Mormon as a Mirror of the East," April, 1948, p. 202) some important Book of Mormon names, not realizing at the time that those names belonged to the descendants of Lehi's own contemporaries.¹²⁷ The famous colony has been described as "but an eccentric deviation from the broad pathway of Hebrew history: it led nowhere, and had no influence on the development even of Egyptian Judaism."¹²⁸ In such words we might describe Lehi's own migration—an eccentric deviation breaking off completely from the main current of Jewish history, but, like the Elephantine settlement, preserving its own peculiar version of transplanted Judaism intact. The story of Elephantine, that scholars were at first most reluctant to believe, confirms the possibility of just such an emigration as Lehi's.

As to the direction taken by Lehi's party there can be no doubt: for many days they traveled south-southeast and finally struck out due east over a particularly terrible desert and reached the sea. Nephi is careful to keep us informed of the main bearing of every stage of the journey, and never once does he mention a westerly or a northerly trend. The party traveled for eight years in but two main directions, without retracing their steps or doubling back, and many of their marches were long, forced marches. This entirely excludes the Sinaitic Peninsula as the scene of their wanderings, and fits perfectly with a journey through the Arabian Peninsula. The slowest possible march "in a south-southeasterly direction" in Sinai would reach the sea and have to turn north within ten days;¹²⁹ yet Lehi's people traveled "for many days," nay, months,¹³⁰ in a south-southeasterly

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direction keeping near the coast of the Red Sea all the while. Ten days take a foot traveler the entire length of that coast of Sinai which runs in a south-southeasterly direction—and what of the rest of the eight years?

What entirely excludes Sinai as the field of Lehi's journeyings is the total lack at all times of timber to

build ships with, to say nothing of a lush and beautiful Land Bountiful. Thus the great Solomon had to bring all his timber by land from Palestine to the Red Sea because there was no wood on the Red Sea with which he might build ships. Lehi was faced with the same problem and had to travel for eight years before he reached the lovely for-

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On Knowing

THE FUTURE

BY RICHARD L. EVANS

PEOPLE sometimes ask impatiently: "Why can't we know more about the future?" "Why shouldn't we know the future?" One part of a possible answer to this problem, so far as our individual acts are concerned, is that oftentimes we can't know more about the future because oftentimes the pattern of the future isn't yet fixed. By this we mean that many things that will happen in the future will depend upon what we do and upon what others do, and since in the use of our free agency we and other men have left many decisions unmade concerning future matters, the results that are to follow those decisions may not now be known. Another reason, and an all-sufficient one for many, is that it is part of the plan and purpose of Providence that we should not in most instances know what the future will bring in detail in our own individual lives. For those who would like further answer, suppose we ask ourselves what life would be like if we did know everything that was going to happen to us. Actually a detailed foreknowledge of trials and tragedies to come might well destroy much of the happiness that is. Also in knowing the future, there would be less of the joy of discovery and less of the growth that comes with faith and effort. Imagine the monotony of a life in which each hour, each day, each year, everyone knew everything he was going to do, everything that was going to happen—nothing of the unexpected, nothing of the unforeseen, no pleasant surprises, no unlooked-for joys, no merciful concealing of sorrows. This, of course, is carrying speculation to absurdity, but it does invite attention to the wisdom of things as they are. And even if there were some means of acquiring a detailed knowledge of the events to come in our own lives, it still wouldn't bring us happiness. We must learn to live by faith from day to day, shaping the future as best we can with every earnest effort, and trusting the mercy and the wisdom and justice of God as the future unfolds before us.

"The Spoken Word" FROM TEMPLE SQUARE
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ests of the south Arabian coasts.

The desert into which Lehi first retreated and in which he made his first long camp has been known since Old Testament times as the *wilderness* par excellence. Thanks to the Bible, it is this very section of the earth's surface to which the

word *wilderness* most closely applies, so that Nephi is using the word in its fullest correctness.¹²²

From 1 Nephi 8:4 and 7, we learn that by *wilderness* he means waste, i.e. desert, and not jungle. Today we call the region a desert, yet Woolley and Lawrence preferred

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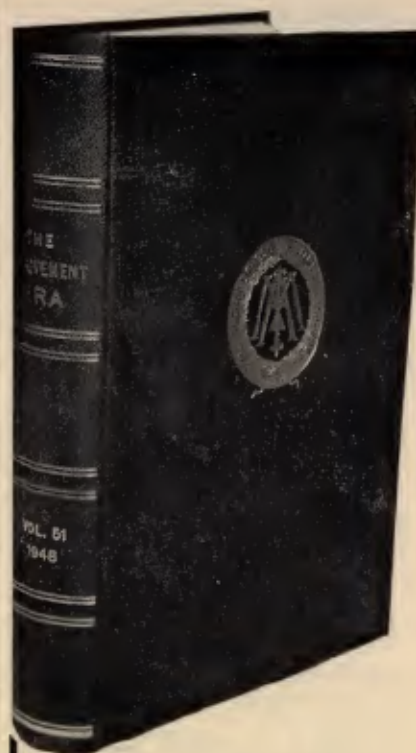
"I READ IT in a Book"

BY RICHARD L. EVANS

IN defending a statement that is questioned or challenged, not infrequently someone will say: "I read it in a book" (as if this were a final and unanswerable defense). But the books of men are no more infallible than are men. An error is an error—even in a book! It is true that print tends to give weight to what is printed. And if we have seen it in print, it leaves its impression upon us, and many will choose to believe it, no matter who wrote it, or when, or why. But much that is printed contradicts much else that is printed, and it therefore follows that much of what is written and read must be wrong: If, for example, we were to turn to a textbook of a generation ago, we would be astounded at how much that was then proclaimed in print has since been set aside. And what reason have we to suppose that much of what we conclude today will not likewise seem absurd to those who follow in fifty years—or even in five! It doesn't seem likely that we shall be the exception—either in literature or in life. But even when an irresponsible person writes, if his words appear in print, they will almost certainly impress some people. A lie from the lips of a man may travel far and fast—but it may be forgotten when breath fails or memory fades. But a printed lie enjoys a kind of infamous immortality. It lives on the page long after those who penned it have passed. But fortunately we are not obliged to believe everything we read, any more than we are obliged to believe everything we hear. Man-made theories and "authorities" come and go, and so-called "final" findings have so often proved to be anything but "final." We should certainly read and seek knowledge out of the best books and be ever grateful for the blessed companionship of good books and for all the truth and beauty that have been preserved in print; but where controversial considerations are concerned, we can well afford to wait and watch, not being too hasty in assuming so-called "final" conclusions, for the books of men are no more infallible than men. What is written is written—but if what is written is not true, writing it or saying it doesn't make it so.

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the older word to designate this particular desert—the Wilderness of Zin. "The term 'wilderness' does not necessarily mean an uninhabitable waste," wrote Kenyon (thus associating the two words as Nephi does), "rather it means a country such as nomads may inhabit, with oases and wadies where crops may be raised."¹⁰² So Lehi's wilderness had "more fertile parts" in which survival was possible. (*Ibid.*, 16:16.) The particular waste in which Lehi made his first camp is among the most uninviting deserts on earth; though some observers think the area enjoyed a little more rainfall in antiquity than it does today, all are agreed that the change of climate has not been considerable since prehistoric times—it was at best almost as bad then as it is now.¹⁰³ Even if Lehi took the main southern route down the Arabah, as he very probably did, since it was the direct road to the Red Sea, and a caravan way known to all the merchants, he would be moving through a desert so repelling that even the hardened Bedouins avoid it like the plague. Nor need we look there for any monuments of his passing: "The Egyptians, the Patriarchs, the Jews, the Romans, the Crusaders, and the Arabs all passed over these tracks, and they have given us place-names and no more. Probably in their eyes the country was too detestable to merit further reference. . . ." ¹⁰⁴ Detestable certainly describes the place in the eyes of Lehi's people, who "murmured" bitterly at being led into such a hell.

(To be continued)

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¹⁰²W. E. Jennings-Bramley, "The Bedouin of the Sinaitic Peninsula," *PEPQ* 1906, p. 106, and 1907, p. 281.

¹⁰³Thus from the *Mu'allaqat*: Tarafah lines 34, 40; Imr'ul Qais 46-49; Antarah 25-28; Labid 40-43; W. Ahlwardt, *Sammlungen alter arabischer Dichter* (Berlin, 1903) II, No. iii, 8-20; v, 58-63; viii, 1-8; xii, 24-26; xv, 40-49; xxii, 1-19; xxviii, 30-37; xxx, 9-11; xl, 51-69; xli, 19-21. Other poets are cited in Beockelmann, *Gesch. der arab. Lit.* pp. 10, 16f, 19, 20, 21, 22, 54, 91.

¹⁰⁴The entire section on "Travel" in the *Hamasa* of Abu Tammam (Calcutta, 1856) 206-9, is taken up with the exhaustion and terror of travel in the dark. The mist of darkness is mentioned in nearly all the passages given in our preceding footnote.

¹⁰⁵"During November, December, and March, there are often dense mists. . . . These mists depend upon the wind, and often alternate with intense droughts." Sir Ch. Warren, "Notes on . . . the Country lying between Egypt and Palestine," *PEPQ* 1887, p. 44. At the opposite end of Arabia, Philby, *The Empty Quarter*, p. 96 reports "a thick mist descended upon the ground and blotted out the landscape after sunrise." *Id.*, p. 134: "Next morning the . . . air cold and clammy. Everything was

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grimed with sand and the sun was feeble in the extreme." p. 183: "A light, clammy northern breeze gently fanned a thick damp mist. . ."

¹⁰⁷Al-Ajjaj, in Ahlwardt, *op. cit.* II, No. 1.

¹⁰⁸Arabs shun houses of stone and clay. T. Canaan, in *Jnl. Pal. Or. Soc.* 13, p. 37; Jacob "was honest and dwelt in a tent." A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients* (Leipzig, 1916) p. 316. One is reminded by Lehi's imagery of the great stone houses of the ancient Arabs, veritable skyscrapers, with the windows beginning fifty feet from the ground; at night these would certainly give the effect of being suspended above the earth.

¹⁰⁹Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith* (Ed. Preston Nibley, Stevens & Wallis, Salt Lake City, 1945) pp. 47-50. These dreams must be considered only in their most general aspects, since Mother Smith is here at an advanced age recalling purely from memory the dream of another person reported to her thirty-four years before (see Introduction pp. vii and ix); moreover her constant and devout reading of the Book of Mormon, with whose characters she liked to identify her own people (*Id.* p. 196) may well have influenced her memory after so many years. But certainly the fallen timber is a striking image which may well have been part of the original dream.

¹¹⁰Thus Al-Bochtori, *cit.* Brockelmann, *Gesch. d. ar. Lit.*, p. 88, cf. Lebid, *id.* p. 55. *Maidan* means both "large, spacious field," and "an ample life" is Arabic.

¹¹¹The Arabic *Misyal*, *Masyal*, *Masil*, or *Masilah*, is . . . a hill water-course, which rolls a torrent during and after rain, and is either partially or wholly dry at other seasons,—the stream flowing slowly underground. In England we want the feature, and therefore there is no single word to express it. Our "river" is an imperfect way of conveying the idea." Sir Richard Burton, *Pilgrimage to Al Madinah & Meccah* (London, 1893) I, 250, n. 2. However inadequate our word "river," it is the only one available in the language; hence its use in the Book of Mormon.

¹¹²E.g., Al-Ajjaj, in Ahlwardt, II, No. 1; Th. Noeldeke, *Veterum Carminum Arabicorum* (Berlin, 1890), p. 111; the last verse of the First Psalm is another example.

¹¹³The eastern wall of the Arabah, down which the southern trade-road ran, is interrupted frequently by such abrupt gorges. " . . . titanic walls, lofty donjons, huge projecting bastions, and moats full of deep shade," says Burton (*op. cit.* I, 207) describing its southern extension. A famous Egyptian school text of the Ramessid period ("The Travels of an Egyptian") comments with wonder on the broken terrain and the great heights and depths that the traveler encounters in Palestine.

¹¹⁴In Ahlwardt, *op. cit.* III, No. 1.

¹¹⁵Noeldeke, *op. cit.* p. 95; Brockelmann, *op. cit.* pp. 19, 21; Antarah, 1.6.

¹¹⁶" . . . he was not one to keep silent when the contest of words began," thus of a true leader, cited by Brockelmann, *op. cit.* pp. 6-7. In the *Beni Hilal* epic the first requirement of every leader is skillful and inspiring speech.

¹¹⁷P. Baldensperger, "Arab Life," *PEFQ* 1925, p. 81.

¹¹⁸Burton, *op. cit.* I, 280.

¹¹⁹W. J. Phythian-Adams, "The Mount of God," *PEFQ* 1930, 1931; Caiger, *Bible and Spade*, p. 5.

¹²⁰Philby, *The Empty Quarter*, p. 216.

¹²¹W. Albright, in *The Biblical Archaeologist* IX (1946) p. 4f.

¹²²P. Baldensperger, "Arab Life," *PEFQ* 1927, 170f.

¹²³C. L. Woolley and T. E. Lawrence, *The Wilderness of Zin* (London, J. Cape, 1936) p. 34

¹²⁴Albright, *Archaeol. and the Relig. of Israel*, p. 101.

¹²⁵Diodorus, *Hist. Lib.* XIX, 94-100; cf. Jerem. xlix, 31f, noting the great freedom of movement of "the wealthy nation."

¹²⁶A. Jausen, "L'immolation chez les Nomades," *Revue Biblique* N.S. 3 (1906), p. 95.

¹²⁷At this date it is plain that all other routes of escape would be closed; the intimate danger would be, of course, from the north, see J. L. Myres, "God and the Danger from the North in Ezekiel" *PEFQ* 1932, 213ff, while the south desert remained open to the end; some Jewish settlements there actually "appear to have escaped destruction" altogether, Albright, in *The Bibl. Archaeologist* IX (1946), p. 6.

¹²⁸Albright, *op. cit.* p. 5f.

¹²⁹*The Improvement Era* 51 (April 1948), 202ff.

¹³⁰Caiger, *Bible and Spade*, p. 188.

¹³¹See below, notes 150-152.

¹³²They were still near the Red Sea when their bows wore out, which could hardly have happened within a year of their departure from Jerusalem; see below, n. 177.

¹³³Significant is Margoliouth's suggestion (*Relations betw. Arabs & Israelites*, p. 47), that when Jeremiah (Lehi's contemporary) "speaks of them as dwelling in the wilderness, that word may be

(Continued on following page)

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Lehi In The Deseret

(Continued from preceding page)

a general designation for the (Arabian) peninsula of which so large a portion is arid and uncultivated." If this is so, Nephi's "wilderness" is definitely the Arabian Peninsula.

¹²²In Woolley and Lawrence, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
¹²³A great deal has been written on this subject. We shall content ourselves with a single observation from Woolley and Lawrence, *op. cit.* p. 36: "All our evidence points to the antiquity of present conditions. . . . It is, we think, both natural and correct to assume that at all periods in man's history the southern desert has been very much the desert that it is today."

¹²⁴*Id.*, p. 37

Mission To Polynesia

(Continued from page 180)

was soon called, and, when she came in, she stood and eyed me with a very suspicious look. When one of her sisters tried to force her to me to shake hands, saying, "That is Pa," she jerked her hand away saying, "It is not," and left the room. Their mother soon came in. She looked quite natural and quite as young as when I left home, being more fleshy now than then. At Winter Quarters she, with the rest of the family, all but the youngest, suffered under severe fits of sickness, and the scurvy deprived her of her upper teeth, and when she talked her voice was unnatural; except for that, I could see no change in her. But the children had all grown entirely out of my recollection, and none of them knew me. I left them June 1, 1843, and now this was the 28th of September, 1848. Such a cruel separation causes emotions that none can know but those who experience it. It was more like the meeting of strangers than the meeting of a family circle.

Writing about the same event, Louisa recorded,

He looked rough and sunburned. None but the eldest daughter recognized him. The others did not seem pleased with his appearance. So much did we seem like strangers that we scarcely knew what to say to each other. . . . The scene evidently affected him as the feelings between him and his children were coincident. It was sad to realize what a change the lapse of years brings, changing forms and features in the domestic circle even to cause estrangement along with separation. Nothing short of the interest and advancement of the kingdom of God could justify so lengthy a separation.

(To be continued)

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