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## Nephites and Lamanites—Mulekites

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**Abstract:** No abstract available.

We, of all people in the world, are interested in the descendants of Lehi. No other people appreciate so much the real worth of the Indian, or have absolute confidence in his final destiny.—Heber J. Grant, *Improvement Era*, for April, 1922.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### NEPHITES AND LAMANITES—MULEKITES

**A**BOUT the year 600 B. C., a prominent citizen of Jerusalem, Lehi, of the tribe of Manasseh, in obedience to a divine command, left his native city and went out into the barren, forbidding hills of Judea, to the south. He was accompanied by his wife, Sariah, their four sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi, and their daughters. Later this little company was joined by Zoram, a servant of the ill-fated Laban, and by a citizen named Ishmael, a descendant of Ephraim,<sup>1</sup> and his household.

*Conditions in Jerusalem When Lehi Left.* The time of the departure of Lehi from Jerusalem was one of political and religious excitement in the Holy Land. The kingdom of Israel had fallen, and Josiah, king of Judah, had been slain at Megiddo, when attempting to resist an invasion by Pharaoh Necho,<sup>2</sup> who had undertaken a military expedition against the Assyrians. Babylonia was just beginning to aspire to the position of a world power, and there was rivalry between that country and Egypt. Palestine, situated between the two, was affected both by their political propaganda and their military enterprises. Two parties arose in Palestine. One favored the Babylonian aspirations; the other agitated for an alliance with Egypt. Eliakim, also called Jehojakim, king of Judah, was pro-Egyptian, as was his son and

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<sup>1</sup>George Reynolds, *Story of the Book of Mormon*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>2 Kings 23:29.



successor, Jehojakin. In the year 605, B. C., however, the Egyptian pharaoh was defeated at Carchemish, and in the year 596 Jehojakin was forced to surrender to the Babylonians, and he and many of the most prominent men in the kingdom were carried captive to Babylon.

The same year Zedekiah was placed on the throne at Jerusalem by the Babylonian conqueror. Had he remained loyal to the Eastern potentate, the history of Judah might have been different from what it is. But he broke faith with his protector and went over to the Egyptian party. This state of "rebellion," as the Babylonians regarded it, obtained for ten years, and then Nebuchadnezzar came with a mighty host and invested Jerusalem. Soon famine added horrors to the siege. After a year and a half the city was taken. Zedekiah sought to save himself by fleeing out of the country, but he was captured in the plains of Jericho and brought before the infuriated conqueror, at Riblah. His sons, all except Mulek, of whom more hereafter, were slain before his eyes. He, himself, in accordance with the barbarous usage of the time, was blinded and, in that condition, taken to Babylon in chains. (2 Kings 24:17; 25:7.)

*Prophetic Warnings not Heeded.* For a long time preceding this catastrophe, Jeremiah and other prophets warned the government against a pro-Egyptian policy. They told the rulers, in the name of the Lord, that if they relied on Egypt, Jerusalem would be destroyed. They knew this by the spirit of prophecy, and by the predictions of Isaiah concerning Babylon, given a hundred years earlier. But their



warnings were in vain. The Egyptian policy was adopted, and the prophets were ridiculed and persecuted. During the reign of Jehojakim, Jeremiah was threatened with death, when preaching to the people in the court of the temple (Jer. 26:8.) This threat was not carried out, but he was imprisoned instead (36:5) and could only commit his prophecies to writing (36:6-26), and in that form they were burnt in the palace of the king.

In the first year of the reign of King Zedekiah, Lehi added his warning voice to that of the other prophets, but the rulers "did mock him" and sought to take his life. Jeremiah was again cast into prison, where he remained until the city surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar. Lehi departed before the Chaldeans had surrounded Jerusalem and closed all avenues of escape. The fate of Jeremiah is known only by tradition. After the capture of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah governor of Judea. The pro-Egyptians, having learned nothing from the past failures of Egypt to render efficient aid when needed, continued their intrigues. Gedaliah and a number of Babylonian officials were assassinated by a fanatic whose name was Ishmael, whereupon the panic-stricken party leaders fled to Egypt and took with them, by force, Jeremiah and Baruch, his secretary, and, according to tradition, the prophet was, finally, murdered at Tahpanhes. The story of Lehi, after the fall of Jerusalem, is told in the Book of Mormon.

*Palestine and Egypt.* From what has already been said, it may be gathered that, at this time, there



was a lively intercourse between Palestine and Egypt; so much so, that educated men in both countries spoke, or understood, both Hebrew and Egyptian, just as men today speak French, Spanish, or German, in addition to English, or whatever their native tongue may be. Isaiah had predicted that a time would come, when there would be an altar to the Lord in the midst of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord; also, that "five cities in the land of Egypt [should] speak the language of Canaan and swear to the Lord of Hosts" (Isa. 19:18, 19.) This was fulfilled at the time of Jeremiah and Lehi. There was then a great number of Jewish refugees in Egypt, at the border, where a strong fortress had been erected against the Asiatic invaders, and there was also a large colony at Syene, or Aswan, and between these two points Jews were scattered all over the country. At Syene they had a temple, or altar, as predicted by Isaiah. It is necessary to understand the political currents at this remote time, in order to realize the importance of the place which the Book of Mormon fills in the history of the world.

*The Journey of Lehi.* Lehi, at the head of his little company, began his long journey by traveling three days into the wilderness, and then camping in a valley by the Red Sea, which he called, after one of his sons, *Lemuel*. This may have been at the northern extremity of the Gulf of Akabah, near Eziongeber. In all probability he had, as yet, no definite plan, but relied for his itinerary on the voice of inspiration to direct him from time to time.

From the valley of Lemuel he traveled four



days, in a southerly or south-easterly direction, and then camped at a place which he called *Shazer*. Continuing in the same direction for "many days" and subsisting chiefly on such food as could be procured by the use of bows and arrows, slings and stones, he came to a place which he called *Nahom*. Here Ishmael died. As the word *nahom* means "consolation," or "comforter," it is not improbable that the camp was so named because of the comforting services undoubtedly held on that occasion. From Nahom the little company took an easterly course (I Ne. 17:1) and led a nomadic life for eight years (I Ne. 17:4) in the country they traversed. At the end of that time they arrived at the sea shore, and named the country *Bountiful*, because of the abundance of the good things of the earth which they found there, and which they must have appreciated after their long sojourn in the wilderness.

*In the Country of the Sabaeans.* The road traveled by Lehi from the Red Sea must have led through the country of the Sabæans, in the Arabian peninsula, whence the Queen of Sheba, or Saba, came to visit King Solomon in Jerusalem. (1 Kings 10:1-13.) The Sabæans were known of old as exporters of gold (Isa. 60:6), precious stones, and perfumes (Jer. 6:20.) But whether Lehi had any commercial or social dealings with them the record does not state.

*Another Long "Trek."* How many miles Lehi traveled to the sea coast we know not, but he must have covered a considerable distance in eight years.

Perhaps mention may be made here of a remarkable journey of which American history bears rec-



ord. In the year 1528, seven years after the conquest of Mexico by Cortes, Spanish sailors were ship-wrecked somewhere on the coast of eastern Texas. Most of them perished, some by famine and some at the hands of the natives. But four of them had the good fortune of finding friends. Their names were, Cabeza de Vaca, Dorantes, Castillo, and Estevanico, the latter a negro. These four were carried about in various directions in western Louisiana and eastern Texas. After many experiences, they met at some point west of the Sabine river in Texas. Through fortunate circumstances, they had acquired a reputation as "medicine men" and wielded quite an influence among the natives. Hoping to find the sea shore, they gradually made their way westward, crossing the Rio Pecos, near its junction with the Rio Grande. They then proceeded across Chihuahua and Sonora, and, in due time, reached the Gulf of California. Turning southward, they, finally, arrived in Culiacan, a Spanish settlement, in the year 1536, having made a journey of nearly 2,000 miles in eight years.

*In the Land of Bountiful.* In the Land of Bountiful, Nephi, guided by divine inspiration, constructed a ship large enough to accommodate the entire company, from 60 to 80 souls,<sup>3</sup> and to hold the necessary supplies. In this vessel they were "driven forth before the wind towards the Promised Land" (I Ne. 18:8), which they reached after a perilous and eventful voyage that lasted "many days." (I Ne. 18:23.)

<sup>3</sup>John Fiske. *The Discovery of America*, Vol. 2, p. 501.

<sup>4</sup>George Reynolds, *Story of the Book of Mormon*, p. 44.



*Other Long Voyages.* It would be erroneous to suppose that long voyages were unknown to the Hebrews at this time. Herodotus tells us that Phönician sailors circumnavigated Africa some time during the reign of Pharaoh Necho. They are supposed to have set sail at some Red Sea port and to have been more than two years in completing the voyage, having stopped at convenient places, to raise crops.<sup>5</sup> The story is, of course, doubted by some eminent critics, but it is accepted by others, and, on the whole, it is not safe to discredit the ancient historians without reasons; for they are often vindicated, as more light is shed on their age. We know that the Northern vikings, centuries ago, boldly coasted along the European shores and sailed the full length of the Mediterranean, to Palestine and up to what is now Constantinople. In ships, not more than 75 feet long and 16 feet wide, drawing less than four feet of water,<sup>6</sup> and propelled by oars or driven forth by the wind filling the sails, the Northmen went to the White Sea, to Iceland, Greenland, and to Vinland

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<sup>5</sup>"Necho next fitted out some ships, in order to discover if Africa was circumnavigable; for which purpose he engaged the services of certain Phönician mariners; and he has the honor of having been the first to ascertain the peninsular form of the continent, about twenty-one centuries before Bartolomeo Diaz and Vasco da Gama"—Rawlinson, *The History of Herodotus*, Vol. 2, p. 321; Appleton & Co., New York, 1893.

Mr. Rawlinson also observes: "We may infer, from Necho's ordering the Phönicians to come round by the 'Pillars of Hercules,' that the form of Africa was *already* known, and that this was not the first expedition which had gone round it."—*Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 28.

If this surmise is correct, the expedition of the pharaoh must have been planned for the purpose of ascertaining whether the stories concerning a voyage, or voyages, round Africa were based on facts.

<sup>6</sup>The dimensions here given are those of the viking ship found, some years ago, at Sandefjord, Norway, now to be seen in the museum, Oslo. There may have been larger vessels, but this was probably an average.



and Markland in America. It has even been claimed that evidences of early Scandinavian explorations in South America have been found, as may be seen in an article printed in *The Millennial Star*, Vol. 1, p. 101, the original of which appeared in *The Athenaeum*. We read:

"A highly interesting discovery has been announced by the Danish geologist, Dr. Lund, to the Northern Archaeological Society, as made by him, while excavating in the neighborhood of Bahia, in Brazil. This discovery began with the fragment of a flag-stone covered with engraved runic characters, but greatly injured. Having succeeded in deciphering several words, which he recognized as belonging to the Icelandic tongue, he extended his researches and soon came upon the foundations of houses in hewn stone, bearing a strong architectural resemblance to ruins existing in the northern parts of Norway, in Iceland, and Greenland. Thus encouraged, he went resolutely on, and, at length, after several days' digging, found the Scandinavian god of thunder, Thor, with all his attributes—the hammer, gauntlets, and magic girdle. The Society has commissioned Mr. Rafn (who first established, in an authentic way, the existence of ancient relations between Iceland and Northern America, anterior to the discovery of that part of the world by Columbus), to report on the subject of Dr. Lund's letter, and to publish his report, with a view to direct the attention of the learned to this very interesting discovery, which would seem to prove that the ancients of the North had not only extended their maritime voyages to Southern America, but even formed permanent establishments in that country."

Whether this claim has been, or can be, established or not, is immaterial.

A voyage is said to have been made about 500 B. C., by Hanno, a Carthaginian. With sixty vessels carrying thousands of persons, Hanno sailed from Carthage along the Mediterranean coasts and through



the Strait of Gibraltar and southward along the coast of Africa. Here colonies were established.

A century later another Greek, Pytheas of Massilia, again sailed through the "Pillars of Hercules," as the Strait was called, and turned northward to find England. From this time (340 B. C.), England and Ireland appear upon the world map. Phönician sailors during these centuries were exploring the Indian Ocean and extending the knowledge of the world toward the East.

We know that navigation was well developed in the early days of man, and we may safely regard the voyage of Lehi as one of the many great achievements of past ages.

Dr. Sven Hedin, the famous Swedish explorer, in an address in Salt Lake City in the summer of 1924, told of his discovery of the ruins of an ancient city in central Asia. He unearthed manuscripts, tools, pottery, carpets, money and various other requisites to a fairly high civilization. Some of the manuscripts discovered are the oldest paper records in the world, said Dr. Hedin, dating as far back as 105 A. D., and they reveal the highly organized system of government which existed at that time in China and her provinces. Writings upon the bamboo slabs, Roman earrings and beautifully colored carpets, bits of textile fabrics and pieces of glass, indicated commercial relations between the Roman realm and the interior of China at that early day. We are apt to think that former inhabitants of the earth did not know how to travel, because they had no railroads, autos, or flying machines. But they did travel, al-



though not as generally or extensively as we do, and they had more knowledge of the earth than we sometimes give them credit for.

*Where Lehi Landed.* Just where the colony of Lehi landed in America the sacred record does not state.<sup>7</sup> They did not, however, remain long at the place of landing. It is clear from I Ne. 18:24, 25, that, as soon as the colonists had raised a crop and obtained the necessary provisions, they continued their journey "in the wilderness," until they came to a part of the country where animals of various kinds roamed the hills and grazed in the forests, and they

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<sup>7</sup>In the library connected with the office of the Church Historian, Salt Lake City, there is a sheet of paper on which the statement is written that the landing was in 30 degrees south. That would be in Chile, about where the city of Coquimbo now is situated. The statement is in the handwriting of Frederick G. Williams, at one time counselor to the Prophet, and it is found on a sheet on which a revelation, Sec. 7 in the Doctrine and Covenants, also has been copied. That revelation was given in the year 1829. The presumption, therefore, is that the lines relating to the landing of Lehi were also penned at an early date, and certainly before the year 1837, when Frederick G. Williams was removed from his position as counselor. If this is correct, the statement of Williams would undoubtedly reflect the views of the Prophet Joseph on that question.

Orson Pratt held that view. In his *Remarkable Visions*, the first edition of which, I understand, was published in 1840, consequently some time before the martyrdom of the prophet, he says that Lehi "landed upon the western coast of South America," and in 1874, when he was the Church Historian, in an article written for an encyclopedia, he expressed the same thought more fully, stating that the landing took place, "as is believed, not far from the 30th degree south latitude." (See *Mill. Star*, Vol. 38, pp. 691-2.) The expression, "as is believed," I take to mean, "that Orson Pratt did not advance a theory of his own on this question, but stated what was held to be true among his associates, or some of them, as well as by himself.

Elder Franklin D. Richards expressed the same view in his *Ready References*, and Elder George Reynolds, in the *Story of the Book of Mormon*, p. 41, says Lehi landed "at a point where the city of Valparaiso, in Chile, now stands."

All this is evidence that must be weighed when the question of the landing place of Lehi is considered. It cannot be set aside by any amount of *a priori* reasoning



found "all manner of ore," and especially gold, silver, and copper.

The following from the *Times and Seasons* is important regarding the question of landing:

"From an extract from Stephens' 'Incidents of Travel in Central America,' it will be seen that the proof of the Nephites and Lamanites dwelling on this continent, according to the account in the Book of Mormon, is developing itself in a more satisfactory way than the most sanguine believer in that revelation could have anticipated. It certainly affords us gratification that the world of mankind does not enjoy, to give publicity to such important developments of the remains and ruins of those mighty people.

"When we read in the Book of Mormon that Jared and his brother came on to this continent from the confusion and scattering at the Tower, and lived here more than a thousand years, and covered the whole continent from sea to sea with towns and cities and that Lehi went down by the Red Sea to the great southern ocean, and crossed over to this land, *and landed a little south of the Isthmus of Darien*, and improved the country, according to the word of the Lord, as a branch of the house of Israel, and then read such a goodly traditionary account, as the one below, we cannot but think the Lord has a hand in bringing to pass his strange act, and proving the Book of Mormon true in the eyes of all the people. The extract below comes as near the real fact, as the four evangelists do to the crucifixion of Jesus. Surely, 'facts are stubborn things.' It will be, as it ever has been, the world will prove Joseph Smith a true prophet by circumstantial evidence, *in experimentis*, as they did Moses and Elijah. Now read Stephens' story:

"According to Fuentes, the chronicler of the kingdom of Guatemala, the kings of Quiche and Cachiquel were descended from the Toltecan Indians, who, when they came into this country, found it already inhabited by people of different nations. According to the manuscripts of Don Juan Torres, the grandson of the last king of the Quiches, which was in the possession of the lieutenant general appointed by Pedro de Al-



varado, and which Fuentes says he obtained by means of Father Francis Vasques, the historian of the order of San Francisco, the Toltecs themselves descended from the house of Israel, who were released from the tyranny of Pharaoh, and after crossing the Red Sea, fell into idolatry. To avoid the reproofs of Moses, or from fear of his inflicting upon them some chastisement, they separated from him and his brethren, and under the guidance of Tanub, their chief, passed from one continent to the other, to a place which they called The Seven Caverns, a part of the kingdom of Mexico, where they founded the celebrated city of Tula'."—*Times and Seasons*, Sept. 15, 1842; Vol. 3, No. 22.

The italics in this extract are mine.

In the *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, Ill., Oct. 1, 1842) the following leading article is found:

"Since our 'Extract' was published from Mr. Stephens' 'Incidents of Travel,' we have found another important fact relating to the truth of the Book of Mormon. Central America, or Guatemala, is situated north of the Isthmus of Darien and once embraced several hundred miles of territory from north to south. The city of Zarahemla, burnt at the crucifixion of the Savior and rebuilt afterwards, stood upon this land as will be seen from the following words in the Book of Alma:—'And now it was only the distance of a day and a half's journey for a Nephite, on the line Bountiful and the land Desolation, from the east to the west sea; and thus the land of Nephi and the land of Zarahemla was nearly surrounded by water: there being a small neck of land between the land northward and the land southward.'

"It is certainly a good thing for the excellency and veracity of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, that the ruins of Zarahemla have been found where the Nephites left them: and that a large stone with engravings upon it, as Mosiah said; and a 'large round stone, with the sides sculptured in hieroglyphics' as Mr. Stephens has published, is also among the left remembrances of the (to him) lost and unknown. We are not going to declare positively that the ruins of Quirigua



are those of Zarahemla, but when the land and the stones and the books tell the story so plain, we are of opinion that it would require more proof than the Jews could bring to prove that the disciples stole the body of Jesus from the tomb, to prove that the ruins of the city in question are not one of those referred to in the Book of Mormon."

Later on in the same article we read:

"It will not be a bad plan to compare Mr. Stephens' ruined cities with those in the Book of Mormon."

The Prophet Joseph was the editor of the paper at this time.

*Beasts in the Forest.* Nephi informs us: "There were beasts in the forests of every kind, both the cow and the ox, and the ass and the horse, and the goat and the wild goat, and all manner of wild animals."

This is one of the passages in the Book of Mormon, which has very generally been relied on by adverse critics to prove that the volume is but clumsy fiction. Even as painstaking an historian and keen reasoner as John Fiske pauses long enough in his masterly review of the story of the discovery of America,<sup>8</sup> to give vent to his sentiment in a cynical sneer at Nephi—"the veracious chronicler;" thereby justifying the doubtful compliment paid to himself, among others, by Dr. W. H. Holmes<sup>9</sup> in the following line: "The compilations of a Bancroft, a Winsor, or a Fiske, illumined as they are by exceptional genius, could not always rise above the vitiated records upon which they drew." But notwithstanding the cock-

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<sup>8</sup>*Discovery of America*, Vol. 1, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup>*Handbook of Aboriginal American Antiquities*, Part 1, p. 11.



sure criticism of the passage in the record of Nephi, I consider it one of the strong, irrefutable proofs of the authenticity of that book.

Let us remember that, when Lehi and those with him came to this side of the world, no matter where they landed, they saw here animals unlike any they had ever seen before, and yet bearing some resemblance to creatures familiar to them. If they landed in South America—and we may, for the time being, take that for granted for the sake of this argument—they saw, probably, the ancestor of the *llama*, an animal resembling the camel but smaller and without the hump. They saw the *alpaca*, an animal so closely related to the llama, that some have regarded the two as variations of the same species. Both bear a strong resemblance to sheep. The llama is about three feet high at the shoulder. It is not found wild any more.

They must have seen the *huanacu*, which some have classed as a variety of the llama, but which Dr. von Tschudi regards as an entirely different animal. The huanacus are about the same size as the llamas. They live in small herds and are very shy. They saw, probably, the *vicuña*, an animal somewhat smaller than the llama, being about two and a half feet high at the shoulder, and having a long, slender neck. Then they must have seen the *tapir*, an animal that has been compared to a pig, and also to a rhinoceros, although it has no horn.

It must also be remembered that none of the strange animals, peculiar to this continent, when first seen by the colonists of Lehi, had a name, known to



them. How, then, was Nephi to mention them in his record? To be sure, he could have given them arbitrary names, but what useful purpose would that have served? He did exactly what any historian would have done in his place. He compared the strange animals he saw with animals he had known in his homeland, and gave to them familiar names, expressive of the peculiar qualities for which those names stood in his day. And that is the obvious reason why he called them "cows," "oxen," "asses," "horses," "goats," and "wild goats." The names were not meant to express "blood relationship" with the old-world animals known by these names, but resemblance in some characteristic or other.

The Spaniards, on their arrival here, encountered a difficulty similar to that which Nephi must have experienced. "The resemblance," says Prescott, "of the different species to those in the Old World, with which no one of them, however, was identical, led to a perpetual confusion in the nomenclature of the Spaniards, as it has since done in that of better instructed naturalists."<sup>10</sup> And yet, the Spaniards had one advantage. When they arrived on the scene, all the animals had names, and they could learn these of the Indians, as they, of course, did, when they were able to make themselves understood.

Garcilasso Inca de la Vega, who wrote his delightful *Royal Commentaries* in the 16th or beginning of the 17th century, uses almost the same phraseology as Nephi, although he was a native of Peru

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<sup>10</sup>*Conquest of Mexico*, Vol. 1, p. 394.



and knew the Indian names for all the animals. He says:<sup>11</sup>

"There are other animals in the Antis, which are like *cows*. They are the size of a very small cow, and have no horns."

He refers to the tapir, which is so much like a cow that when European cattle were introduced into Brazil, the natives called them "tapyra." It is an animal about four feet from nose to tail, and the Spaniards used to call it *gran bestia*. But hear Garcilasso again:

"The male huanacu is always on the watch on some high hill, while the females browse in the low ground, and when he sees any man, he gives a neigh *like that of a horse*, to warn the others."

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"The vicuna stands higher than the highest *goat*. They are swift, and a greyhound cannot come near them."

In addition to the animals mentioned, the colonists must have seen deer and stags, the roe and the fallow deer, and such "wild animals" as foxes, lions, tigers, rabbits, etc. But the point to note is that the Inca, when describing the strange animals to his Spanish readers, compares them with "horses," "cows," "goats," just as the Prophet Nephi did twenty centuries before him, in his record. That I take to be a strong proof of its authenticity.

*Hebrew Classification of Animals.* Nephi was a Hebrew, and the expression of his thoughts, naturally, conformed to the idioms of his mother tongue.

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<sup>11</sup>Roy. Com., Translation by Sir Clements Markham, publ. by the Hakluyt Soc., London, 1871; Vol. 2, pp. 383 and 386.



The Hebrews did not always classify objects as we do. For instance, observing that the animal we call "horse" had a peculiar way of "leaping" or galloping, they gave him a name expressive of that characteristic and called him *sus*, from a root, meaning "to leap." The horse was the "leaper." But presently they noticed the flight of a certain bird and fancied there was some resemblance between that mode of traveling and the leaping of a horse. Then they called the bird also *sus* or *sis*, and the swallow, as far as the name was concerned, was put in one class with the horse. For the same reason of classification a moth was called *sas* from the same root as the horse and the swallow. Again, they had at least six words for "ox." One of them was *aluph*, from a root meaning to be "tame," "gentle." It was used for both "ox" and "cow," because either could be "tame." For the same reason it might mean a "friend," and sometimes it meant the "head" of a family, or a tribe. Another word for "ox" was *teo*, translated "wild ox" on account of its swiftness, but the word also stands for a species of gazelle.

The enumeration by Nephi of "cow" and "ox," "ass," and "horse," "goat," and "wild goat," and all manner of "wild animals," meaning the strange specimens met with in the New World, conforms strictly to what might be expected of a Hebrew. The passage, therefore, as has already been said, is a strong proof of the truth of the record.

*Strife Among Brothers and Emigration to the Land of Nephi.* After this digression, which I hope has not been unwelcome, we pick up the thread of



the wonderful story. Ever since the departure of Lehi from Jerusalem, his elder sons, Laman and Lemuel, manifested bitter antagonism against their younger brother, Nephi, for reasons similar to those which prompted the sons of Jacob to sell Joseph, their brother, as a slave. As long as Lehi, the venerable head of the family, lived, the children were kept together, in a way, but when he died, a rupture occurred. Nephi, Sam, Zoram, and their families; Jacob and Joseph, two sons born in the wilderness; with some of their sisters; and others who believed in the divine calling of Nephi, separated themselves from the older brothers, their families, and adherents, and, after a journey that lasted "for the space of many days," pitched their tents in a new locality, which became known as the Land of Nephi. Here they engaged in agriculture, stock raising, and various other industries, and prospered exceedingly. (2 Ne. 5:7-11.)

*Temple of Nephi.* In due time, they even built a temple, patterned after the temple of Solomon. (2 Ne. 5:16.) Curiously enough, Josephus when mentioning the temple which Onias built at Syene, Egypt,<sup>12</sup> uses practically the same language as Nephi: "Onias built a temple and an altar to God, like, indeed, to that in Jerusalem, but smaller and poorer." The temple of Solomon was 70 by 20 cubits; that of Onias was 70 by 20 spans, exactly half. The temple in Jerusalem was built upon a solid rock; that in Egypt, on an artificial mound; yet it was patterned after the more costly structure. The same may be

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<sup>12</sup>*Antiq. of the Jews*, Vol. 1, p. 461; Boston, 1849.



said of the temple of Nephi. It was made as much like the pattern as the limited resources would permit.

*Remarkable Traditions.* It may be recalled here that a great many Indian tribes have traditions concerning the migration of their ancestors.

The Lenape Indians had a tradition to the effect that, in the olden times, their king left the kingdom to his two sons. Owing to a quarrel they soon separated. The party who had been attacked decided to depart. Accordingly, he set out, accompanied by a number of his adherents. After having wandered about for forty years, they came to the Delaware river, where they settled. This, they think, happened about the beginning of the 15th century. But whether the tradition refers to some such recent event or to a migration in the remote past, must be left undecided. They also have a tradition that some time in the dim past during a migration, their ancestors came to a deep water, which they could not wade. Then God made a bridge for them, on which they crossed over in one night, whereupon the Lord removed the bridge. This, possibly, is the same incident as that which in the *Walam Olum*, according to modern translators, is described as a passage of ten thousand Indians in one night over a deep water on the ice. It may, or it may not, have been ice; probably not.

However, the tradition has it that the number of ancestors left on the shore of the "great water" presumably after the first miraculous crossing, was *seven*. This, says Dr. Brinton, "at once recalls the seven



caves (*chicomoztoc*) or primitive stirpes of the Mexican tribes, the seven clans (*vuk amag*) of the Cakchiquels, the seven ancestors of the Quechuas, etc., and strongly intimates that there must be some common natural occurrence to give rise to this widespread legend."<sup>13</sup>

The Shawnees used to tell a story of how their ancestors arrived in the western world after having crossed an immense sea, being in possession of some mysterious power by means of which they could walk on the water as on solid ground. They used to repeat this story annually, and to offer sacrifices as an expression of gratitude for their safe passage over the deep.<sup>14</sup>

*Lamanites Decide to Exterminate the Nephites.* The separation between the Nephites and Lamanites did not bring permanent peace. The Lamanites were impatient of any kind of restraint, and ravenously hungry for power. Naturally, they keenly felt the material loss of the exodus of their brethren. Lacking intellectual, moral and spiritual superiority, they resorted to brute force to gain their object, and as an excuse for their hostility and the atrocities they committed, they claimed that they, or their fathers, had been wronged in the wilderness, on the sea, and in the new country, and that they were only meting out justice. Hatred, like fire, grows, if fed, until it becomes uncontrollable. The Lamanites nursed theirs, and, finally, they bound themselves by oath to exterminate the Nephites, to destroy their records, and

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<sup>13</sup>*Libr. of Aborig., Amer. Liter., Vol. 5, p. 139.*

<sup>14</sup>See Schoolcraft, *Indian Tribes*, Vol. 4, p. 254.



sink their traditions in oblivion. (Enos. 14.) While in pursuit of these objects, they, themselves, sank lower and lower from generation to generation. They became ferocious, bloodthirsty, steeped in superstitious idolatry and moral filth. (Enos 20.)

*Beginning of the Division into Clans or "Gentes."* At the time of the death of Nephi, about fifty-five years after the departure from Jerusalem, the descendants of Lehi began to divide, according to parentage, into Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Zoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites. (Jacob 1:13.) This seems to be the beginning of a characteristic feature of Indian society, in which the "gens" or the clan, and not the family, is considered the unit. However, Jacob, the historian, ignores this division and refers to the followers of Nephi as Nephites, and to the adherents of Laman as Lamanites. ( Jacob 1:14.)

*Nephites Prosper.* As time passed, both Nephites and Lamanites multiplied and "spread upon the face of the land." (Jarom 8 and 11.) The former became prosperous, although they were frequently harassed by Lamanite marauders. Among them prophets, priests and teachers labored diligently. The Lamanites, or at least a great many of them, preferred the life of hunters and wandered about, like the Bedouins, ever on the outlook for prey. They acquired a taste for raw meat (Enos. 20), a sure indication that they were on the road that leads to savagery.

*Moral Decline Among the Nephites.* During the latter part of the third century before our era, many of the Nephites in the Land of Nephi had become corrupt. They had not moved far enough away from



Lamanite influence. Some of them fell in conflicts with the savage neighbors, who were carrying off their flocks and herds and entrapping the people, in order to make them slaves. Under such conditions progress could not make rapid strides. War is insanity. It is a curse to both sides.

*Mosiah Leads Another Exodus.* The only salvation was a new exodus. Mosiah, one of the great characters of the Book of Mormon, appeared on the scene. He realized that the time had come for another separation, wherefore he gathered round him "as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord" and led them "out of the land into the wilderness" (Omni. 13)—a second Moses. Amaleki, the historian, says: "They were led by many preachings and prophesyings, and they were admonished continually by the word of God; and they were led by the power of his arm, through the wilderness, until they came down into the land which is called the land of Zarahemla." (Omni 13.) Brief though this account is, it, nevertheless, conveys the impression that the journey was one of considerable distance and beset with many difficulties.

*Zarahemla.* Zarahemla was not an uninhabited country. It has already been stated that King Zedekiah and his attendants, when fleeing from Jerusalem, were captured near Jericho and brought back by their captors. But those who had charge of the youngest prince, Mulek, escaped with him, and eventually were brought, "by the hand of the Lord, across the great waters into the land where Mosiah discovered them" (Omni 16), and where they had dwelt "from that



time forth;" that is to say, ever since their arrival. They had become exceedingly numerous, notwithstanding wars and contention among themselves. These founders of Zarahemla, having been forced to flee from Jerusalem in haste and in all probability being illiterate, subordinate serfs in the palace, brought no records with them. As a consequence, their language had lost its original purity, and during their struggle for existence, they had first neglected and then forgotten the faith of their fathers. Such were the conditions existing in the country when Mosiah arrived. He and the Nephites, however, were welcome, and, in due time, they united with the people of Zarahemla, generally called Mulekites, and Mosiah was chosen to be the king. (Omni 19.) This is supposed to have happened about 200 B. C. Zarahemla was a southern country with reference to the Jaredite land, Moron. (Ether 9:31.) It cannot have been an exceedingly long distance away from the Land of Nephi, or a Land of Nephi, since it was frequently invaded by Lamanite marauders; and yet it was so far away that communication between the two was a matter of considerable difficulty. (Mosiah 7:1; 21:25.) The general impression that the Mulekites landed somewhere in North America and then emigrated to the northern part of South America, and that Mosiah found them there,<sup>15</sup> we need not discuss at this time.

*Mosiah Interpreter of a Stone Tablet.* The Mulekites had in their possession a large stone tablet with

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<sup>15</sup>Orson Pratt, *Remarkable Visions*, Liverpool, Dec. 14, 1848; George Reynolds, *Book of Mor. Dict.*, p. 349.



inscriptions to them unintelligible. King Mosiah interpreted them, and found them to be a biographical sketch of the life of Coriantumr, the Jaredite, with an account of his lineage and the battle of Ramah. (Omni. 20-22.)

*King Benjamin.* Mosiah was succeeded by his son, Benjamin. During his reign Lamanites invaded Zarahemla but were driven back with immense loss of life. (Words of Morm. 14.) The most notable event of his long and benevolent reign was a great revival, toward the end of his days, which had the result that the entire people solemnly entered into a covenant to serve the Lord and keep his commandments.

*Mosiah II and the Record of Zeniff.* The successor of King Benjamin was Mosiah II. (Mos. 6:4.) In the fourth year of his reign he sent out an expedition under Ammon, to ascertain, if possible, what had become of Zeniff and his colony, who had emigrated from Zarahemla during the reign of Benjamin. He succeeded in bringing back with him King Limhi and many of his subjects, and the Prophet Alma and his followers, and from their records, the Record of Zeniff, and the Account of Alma,<sup>16</sup> King Mosiah learned the fate of those who had followed Zeniff. King Limhi was a grandson of Zeniff.

*Lehi-Nephi and Shilom.* According to those records, the Lamanite king, Laman, had granted Zeniff the privilege of founding settlements in the districts of Lehi-Nephi and Shilom. But as soon as the country had been built up, through the industry

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<sup>16</sup>Mosiah 9 to 24, incl.



of the settlers, the Lamanites invaded it for purposes of plunder and murder. As long as Zeniff lived, the Lamanites did not prevail, but his son Noah was an unrighteous ruler, who weakened the country by immorality, oppressive taxes, and tyranny.

*Martyrdom of Abinadi.* During the administration of Noah, Abinadi, the prophet, was martyred, and the convert, Alma, fled to a place he called Helam, where he built up a colony. After the death of Noah, who was burned at the stake, his son Limhi became king, and he and his subjects were made the slaves of the Lamanites, being compelled to pay to their masters, half of all they produced.

*Four Missionaries.* Mosiah had four sons, Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni. These, having been miraculously converted, went on a mission to the Lamanites. Ammon entered the service of Lamoni, king of Ishmael, and he was converted. Aaron went to the Land of Jerusalem, and from there to Middoni, where he and others were cast into prison. Being liberated by King Lamoni, he proceeded to Ishmael, preaching on the way and making many converts. Later, he and his brethren, Omer and Himni, went to the Land of Nephi, where the father of Lamoni reigned. Being converted, he proclaimed religious liberty. The movement spread rapidly, and thousands were converted, in the Land of Ishmael, in Middoni, in Nephi, Shilom, Shemlon, Lemuel, and Shimson. To distinguish themselves from the unconverted Lamanites, they called themselves *Anti-Nephi-Lehis*. (Alma 23:17.) And as a proof of their sincerity, they put aside their weapons of war,



determined never again to shed the blood of man (Alma 24:17, 18), but rather give their own lives. (v. 22.)<sup>17</sup>

*The Establishment of the Republic.* Before King Mosiah II passed away, the people of Zarahemla, following his advice, changed their form of government from that of a monarchy to a republic, presided over by judges. Alma, the younger, was the first presiding judge. This form of government lasted for about 120 years.<sup>18</sup> During this time the conflict between the good and evil forces was incessant. Such characters as Zeezrom and Korihor (Alma 10:31; 30:12) had an influence for evil among the people. The apostate movement of the Zoramites reached considerable proportions. They even had a gathering place of their own, with synagogues and a prayer stand. (Alma 31:1, 12, 21.) The defection of Amalickiah threatened the very existence of the republic. (Alma 48:1-6.) But the Lord raised up such men as Moroni and Teancum, and many others, who through their prayers and labors became the saviors of the people.

*Helaman.* In the year 50 B. C., Helaman, the son of Helaman, was appointed presiding judge. In his day a great number of Nephites migrated northward, eventually reaching a region where there were "large bodies of water and many rivers." (Hel. 3:4.) It is specially noted by the historian that they "spread

<sup>17</sup>Alma 17 to 26, incl.

<sup>18</sup>1. Alma. 2. Nephihah. 3. Pahoran I. 4. Pahoran II. 5. Pacumeni. 6. Helaman, the younger. 7. Nephi. 8. Cezoram. 9. His son. 10. Seezoram. 11. Lachoneus I. 12. Lachoneus II. From 91, B. C., to 30, A. C.



forth into all parts of the land," from "the sea south to the sea north, from the sea west to the sea east." (Hel. 3:5-8.) Also that they dwelt in tents and in houses made of "cement," on account of the scarcity of timber.<sup>19</sup>

*Nephi II.* Helaman, who died in the year 39 B. C., was succeeded by his son Nephi. But, owing to the deplorable moral conditions in the country, nine years later he resigned, in favor of Cezoram (Hel. 5:1.)

*Nephi and Lehi go on a Mission.* Nephi and his brother, Lehi, went on a mission, first among the Nephites, and then among the Lamanites. (Hel. 5:16-20.) Thousands of the latter received the gospel, and many of them became missionaries to the Lamanites. (Hel. 6:4.) Nephi returned home in the year 23 B. C. Finding Gadianon robbers in offices, and being threatened with death (Hel. 8:1), he lifted up his voice crying repentance and predicting judgments. (Hel. 7-12, incl.)

*The Prophet Samuel.* Another prophet, Samuel, the Lamanite, added his testimony to that of Nephi. (Hel. 13-15, incl.) Then Nephi transferred the records, of which he was the custodian, to his son Nephi, and passed beyond human view. (3 Ne. 1:3; 2:9.)

*Nephi III.* During the days of the third Nephi our Savior was born in Bethlehem. The Nephite republic was overthrown. A monarchy was again set

<sup>19</sup>Any substance used for the purpose of "cementing" the stones together may properly be called "cement." Dr. Fewkes, in his description of *A Prehistoric Mesa Verde Pueblo*, speaks of "fine masonry," "stones set in mud," etc. Smiths., Rep. for 1916, pp. 461-88.



up, with one Jacob as the first king. (3 Ne. 7:10.) This revolution was brought about by secret societies. Nephi lived to see the darkness of which Samuel, the Lamanite, had prophesied as a sign of the crucifixion of our Lord. (Hel. 14:20; 3 Ne. 8-10.) The sign began with a terrific storm, "such a one as never had been known in all the land." For three hours the thunders rolled and the lightnings struck, and the wind, raging, furious, shook the trembling earth. And then it became dark. A veil was drawn over the scenes of destruction. Zarahemla was destroyed by fire and Moroni by earthquake. Moronihah had been buried by an avalanche and many other cities were destroyed, entirely or in part, and many lives were lost.

*Christ Appears.* After this, our Lord, himself, appeared to the Nephites who were assembled around the temple in the Land of Bountiful. He appeared twice. (3 Ne. 19:15.) During these visits he taught the people the fundamental principles of the gospel, selected twelve apostles, taught them how to baptize; administered the sacrament; expounded the Scriptures, and gave to his disciples a parting blessing. (3 Ne. 28:1-12.)

*The United Order.* From the year 36 to 201, A. D., the people were united and had all things common. They lived in a United Order. There were no rich and no poor. Or, rather, they were all rich; for the resources of the earth belonged to all alike.

*Strife and Destruction.* But, alas! the enemy of God and man again succeeded in sowing discord and strife. In 322, A. D., the conflict began which raged



intermittently and with varying success until the final battle at Cumorah, where the Nephites became extinct as a nation, in the year 385, A. D.

From that time, darkness, as thick as that which fell over the country to signalize the drama on Calvary, veiled the history of the survivors, until it was partly lifted by Columbus and the discoverers who followed him. Earnest endeavors have been made, and are still being made, to penetrate the mysterious depths of Indian history, but unless we follow the guiding facts contained in the Book of Mormon, we will be lost in surmises.

This is, briefly, the story of the Book of Mormon. As it is true, corroboration should be found in the legends and history of the Indians; in their religious conceptions and rites; in the monuments left by their ancestors, and in their languages. Is there any such corroborative evidence?