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Lesson 44 - The Departure into the Wilderness

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LESSON 44.—THE DEPARTURE INTO THE WILDERNESS.

PLACE.—*The wilderness of the Red Sea.* TIME.—*B. C. 600.* TEXT.—*I. Nephi 2: 1-5.*

1. For behold it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and said unto him, Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and because thou hast been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee,¹ behold they seek to take away thy life.²

2. And it came to pass that the Lord commanded my father, even in a dream, that he should take his family and depart into the wilderness.³

3. And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him.

4. And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance,⁴ and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness;

5. And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea; and he did travel in the wilderness with his family which consisted of my mother, Sariah, and my elder brothers, who were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

¹I. Nephi 1: 18. ²I. Nephi 1: 20. ³II. Nephi 1: 1. Jacob 2: 25. Mosiah 7: 20. Alma 9: 9, 22; 36; 29. III. Nephi 5: 20. ⁴I. Nephi 3: 16, 22-25.

LESSON STATEMENT.

We learned in our last lesson that the Jews at Jerusalem sought to take the life of Lehi, because he bore a message from God which foretold evil to them, unless they repented. It would seem that the wicked who have no desire to repent, almost always act as though the prophet who brings a divine message of chastisement, is responsible, and not they themselves, for the woes pronounced against them. They have, as a rule, sought to slay

the servants of God who prophesied of sorrow and trouble, as though the servant and not the Lord was the one who ordained and executed the punishment. So it was with Lehi, but the Lord preserved him from the hands of the wicked; and blessed him, because he had declared the things which He commanded. And the Lord warned Lehi in a dream to leave Jerusalem, and journey in the wilderness, and go where He should direct him. All this Lehi did. He left his home in Jerusalem, with all the riches it contained, and taking his family with him he went into the wilderness. He took nothing with him except such things as were necessary, as provisions and tents, for the comfort of himself and family, which consisted of his wife, Sariah, and his sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi. Which way they traveled we are not informed, but in a few days they reached the borders of the Red Sea, most probably that portion known to us as the gulf of Akabah. They may have journeyed from Jerusalem to the south end of the Dead Sea, thence southerly by the wady (valley) of Arabah, or they may have taken a somewhat more westerly route.

NOTES.

LAMAN.—The oldest and most wicked son of Lehi. He appears to have been the leader in all the rebellions against God and his father in the wilderness. When the people of Lehi, after his death, split into two parties, one part were called Lamanites, the other Nephites,

after their respective leaders, and by these names they are known all through the Book of Mormon.

LEMUEL.—The second son of Lehi. He followed Laman in all his wickedness, but does not appear to have been the leader in their evil doings. His descendants joined with the Lamanites, and became a part of that people.

SAM.—The third son of Lehi. He was a good, faithful, obedient man, but was not as strong a character as his younger brother Nephi. His descendants became Nephites.

NEPHI.—The fourth and most blessed of the sons of Lehi, and one of the greatest prophets that ever lived. By his faith he soon became the leader of the company in the wilderness and afterwards of that portion which remained true to the Lord, by whom he was chosen as their first king. He is supposed to have been born about 615 years B. C.

SARIAH.—The wife of Lehi. She had six sons—Laman, Lemuel, Sam, Nephi, Jacob and Joseph, and some daughters whose names are not given. Her two youngest sons were born during the travels of the company in the wilderness. Nothing is said of her death.

RED SEA.—The long, narrow body of water that separates Egypt from Arabia. At its southern extremity it is united to the Indian Ocean by the straits of Babel-Mandeb.

THE WILDERNESS spoken of in our text is the desert country between Jerusalem and the Red Sea, including the most south-eastern portion of Judea and a portion of the peninsula of Sinai.

WHAT WE MAY LEARN FROM THIS LESSON.

1. That the Lord blessed Lehi for his obedience in warning the Jews of the judgments of God that awaited them. 2. That the Lord warned Lehi in a dream to leave Jerusalem, and depart with his family into the wilderness. 3. That Lehi was obedient to the word of the Lord. 4. That he left his home and all his riches, and took with him only those things that were necessary for their support while they journeyed. 5. That they passed through the wilderness until they reached the Red Sea, when they

traveled along its borders or shore. 6. That Lehi's family consisted of his wife and four sons (his daughters are not mentioned in this text). 7. We learn from this lesson that Lehi was obedient to God in all things, that for the sake of the word of God he, like Abraham his ancestor, left his home to travel in a strange land as the Lord might direct him; and that he counted the riches of this world as naught, as he left all that he had behind, so that he might more effectually obey God's commands.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. What is the subject of this lesson? 2. Where did Lehi dwell? 3. For what did God bless Lehi? 4. What had he declared to the people? 5. Who commanded him to declare these things? 6. What did the Jews seek to do to Lehi? 7. Why did they so? 8. What did the Lord tell Lehi to do, because of the hatred of the Jews? 9. Where did he go? 10. Who went with him? 11. What did he leave behind? 12. What did he take? 13. What were the names of his family? 14. What can you tell about Sariah? 15. What about Nephi? 16. What about Sam? 17. What about Lemuel? 18. What about Laman? 19. Who were the Lamanites? 20. Who were the Nephites? 21. Who was the first king of the Nephites? 22. What was the character of Lehi? 23. To what sea did he lead his people? 24. What do you know about the Red Sea? 25. What of the Peninsula of Sinai?