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Chapter III

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Abstract: Marriages in the Company—The Liahona—The Journey Continued—Nephi Breaks his Bow—Death of Ishmael—They Reach the Ocean—Nephi Builds a Ship—They Cross the Great Waters and Reach the Promised Land

but much that he had revealed to him he was told not to write, as the Apostle John would have the same things shewn to him in a later day, and John would be instructed of the Lord to write the things which he heard and saw.

CHAPTER III.

MARRIAGES IN THE COMPANY—THE LIAHONA—THE JOURNEY CONTINUED—NEPHI BREAKS HIS BOW—DEATH OF ISHMAEL—THEY REACH THE OCEAN—NEPHI BUILDS A SHIP—THEY CROSS THE GREAT WATERS AND REACH THE PROMISED LAND.

WHILE the two families dwelt in the Valley of Lemuel they had a number of marriages. Zoram, Laban's servant, married Ishmael's eldest daughter, and each of Lehi's four sons married one of her sisters. We are not told whether Lehi's daughters were married at this time or not.

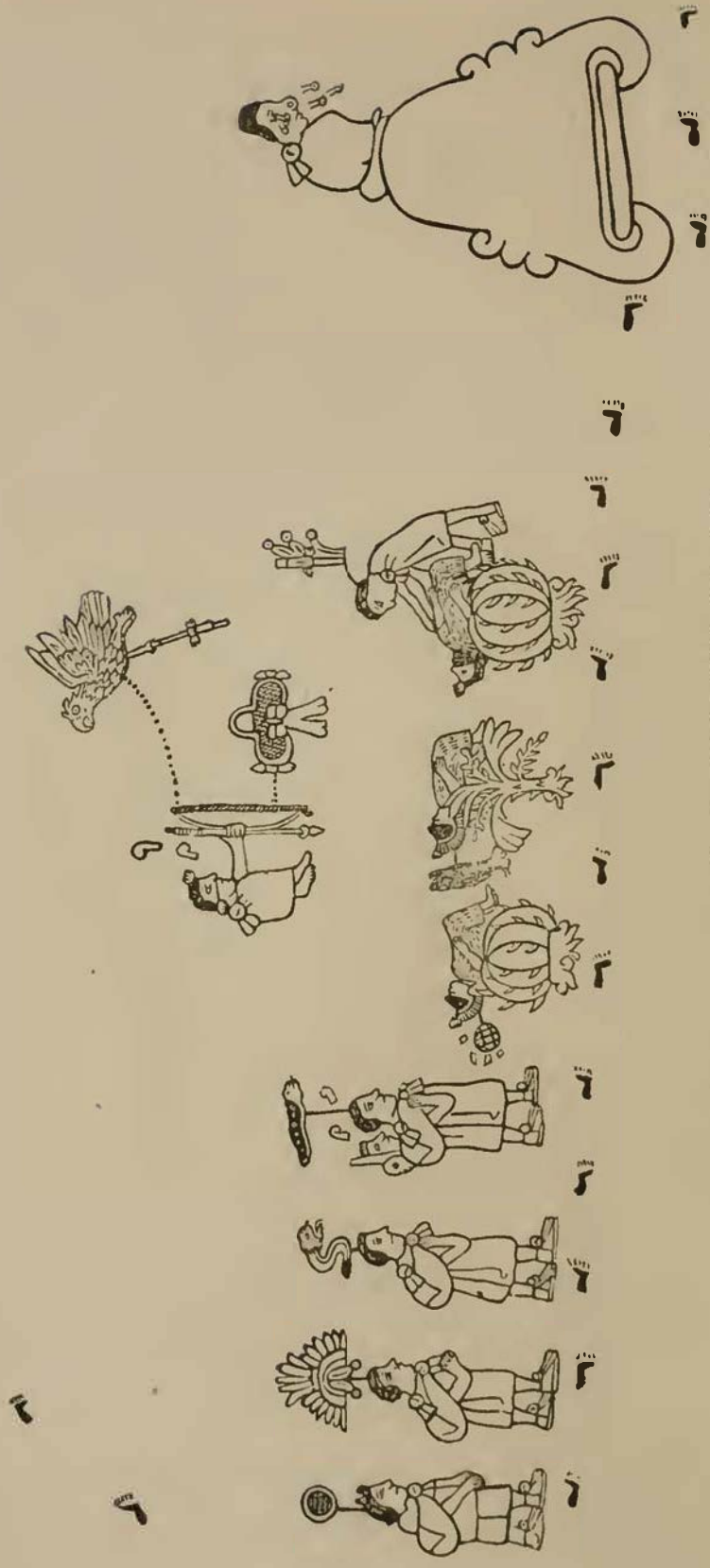
Soon after these marriages the voice of the Lord spake unto Lehi by night and commanded him that on the morrow he should resume his journey. When Lehi arose the next morning and went to the door of his tent he saw a strange object lying on the ground before him. It was a brass ball of very fine workmanship. Within this ball were two spindles or needles, one of which pointed the way that the little company should travel in the wilderness.

God had prepared this strange instrument or guide for them. In the days of Moses, when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt, a pillar of cloud

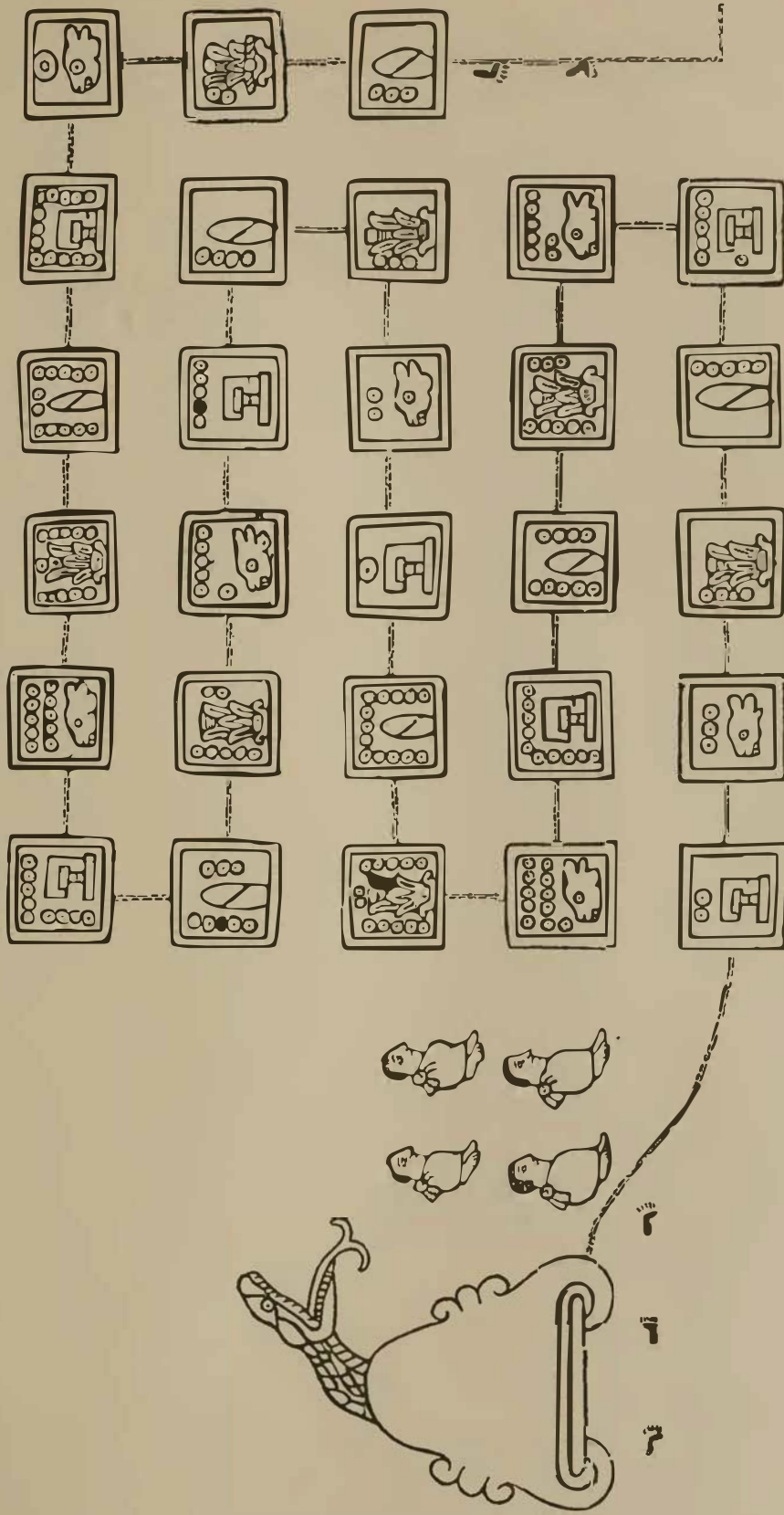
by day and of fire by night moved in front of them. This the Hebrews followed. But to Lehi he gave this Liahona, or compass, as the ball was called; and it pointed the way they should travel. It had one strange peculiarity, which was that it worked according to their faith and diligence. When they kept God's law it shewed them much more clearly the way they should go than when they were careless or rebellious.

Some people have confused this ball, because it is called a compass, with the mariner's compass, that sailors use at sea to direct the course of their ships. But there is a great difference between the two. The Liahona pointed the way that Lehi's company should travel, while the needle in the mariner's compass points to the north. The one shewed the way Lehi *should* go, the other informs the traveler which way he *is* going. The one was specially prepared by the Lord for Lehi and his companions, and was used through faith only; the other can be used by all men, whether believers in the true God, pagans or infidels. At times, also, writing would miraculously appear on the Liahona, giving directions or reproving for sin, as the company most needed.

According to the command of the Lord the company gathered their provisions, their tents, their seeds and other things and again started on their long and oftentimes wearisome journey. They traveled a little east of south, and after four days again rested at a place to which they gave the name of Shazer. Here they hunted and killed game for food. When they had obtained enough for present use they again started, traveling in very much the same direction, and keeping near the eastern shore of the Red Sea.



ANCIENT AZTEC CHART, SHOWING LEHI'S TRAVELS. No. 3.



ANCIENT AZTEC CHART, SHOWING LEHI'S TRAVELS. No. 4

About this time a slight accident occurred which gave cause for much trouble and discontent. It would appear that Nephi was the chief hunter of the company. Going out one day to slay beasts for food he broke his bow, which was made of very fine steel. This made his brothers very angry, for they obtained no food, as their bows had lost their springs. Hungry, angry and dejected, they returned to their tents. They were very much fatigued, and, like most men when hungry and tired, they were in a very bad humor. Even Lehi so far forgot himself, at this time, that he also murmured against the Lord. But Nephi, in this trying hour, retained his trust in God. He did not murmur or complain, but, after having reasoned with the rest of the family, he went to work, and out of suitable wood he made a bow, and out of a straight stick he cut an arrow. When he had done this he went to his father, who had now humbled himself before the Lord and sought forgiveness, and asked him where he should go to obtain food.

Then the voice of the Lord came to Lehi and he was truly chastened because of his murmuring. The voice said, "Look on the ball." When he looked he was seized with fear because of the things which were written thereon, and the rest of the family also feared and trembled exceedingly when they read the writing.

The writing on the ball also directed Nephi to go to the top of a certain high mountain, and there slay game for food. This he did, and brought it with joy to the tents of his people.

We think it probable that the design near the top of the accompanying Aztec map is intended to represent this incident; as the bird has evidently been shot

by an arrow from the hunter's bow. The lower portion seems to shew some of the many attempts made by Nephi's brethren to slay him, when they bound him to trees in the wilderness and otherwise abused him. On the other hand, from the fact that the faces of two of the men are painted black, it is not impossible that they may represent some persons who had been killed. The lower picture is evidently a record of the months or years occupied in the journey.

The journey was thus continued for a long time. The company would travel for a few days, then rest and hunt, then again take up its line of march as the compass directed. It generally guided them through the most fertile portions of the desert. Their journeys appear to have been frequently disturbed by the bad conduct of Laman and Lemuel and of those who would heed them. Before long Ishmael, who was an aged man, died, at a place which they named Nahom. This was a cause of great grief to his children, and a fresh excuse for Laman and his kind to murmur. They complained that they had been led into that strange land to die of want and fatigue, and desired to go back to Jerusalem. So hard hearted had Laman by this time become that, with others, he formed a plot to murder his own father and his brother Nephi. But the voice of the Lord came to them, chastened them severely for their sin, and reproved them with such power that their hearts were softened and they repented. After this the Lord again blessed them.

From this time the compass changed the course of their travel and they journeyed almost directly eastward. This must have taken them across the peninsula of Arabia to its eastern coast.

It took them eight years to make the journey, during which time a number of children were born, including two sons to Lehi's wife. These he called Jacob and Joseph. As they went the Lord strengthened them, that they endured their privations and labors without fatigue. He would not permit them to make any fire to prepare their food, but rendered it sweet to them without cooking.

They had great joy when they came to the sea. They gave to it the name of Irreantum, which word means many waters. The land on the coast they called Bonntiful, because of its much fruit and wild honey. While they rested on the sea shore the Lord gave Nephi a new command. It was that he should build a ship to carry the company across the ocean. As we may suppose, Nephi's brothers made all kinds of fun of him when they found he was about to try to build a ship. But this did not affect him. He knew that God never told a man to do a thing that he did not give him power to do. And it was so in this case, the Lord revealed to Nephi all that was necessary, and the building of the ship began.

At first Nephi's brothers would not help him in the least. They treated him as the people did Noah when he was building the ark. They called him a fool, and mocked him, and then threatened to throw him into the sea. But the power of God was so strong upon Nephi that had his brothers attempted to carry out their threat they would have withered before him like a dried reed. As it was, when he stretched forth his hand towards them they felt a shock, which made their whole frames quiver. This convinced them that God was with their brother, for no man could have

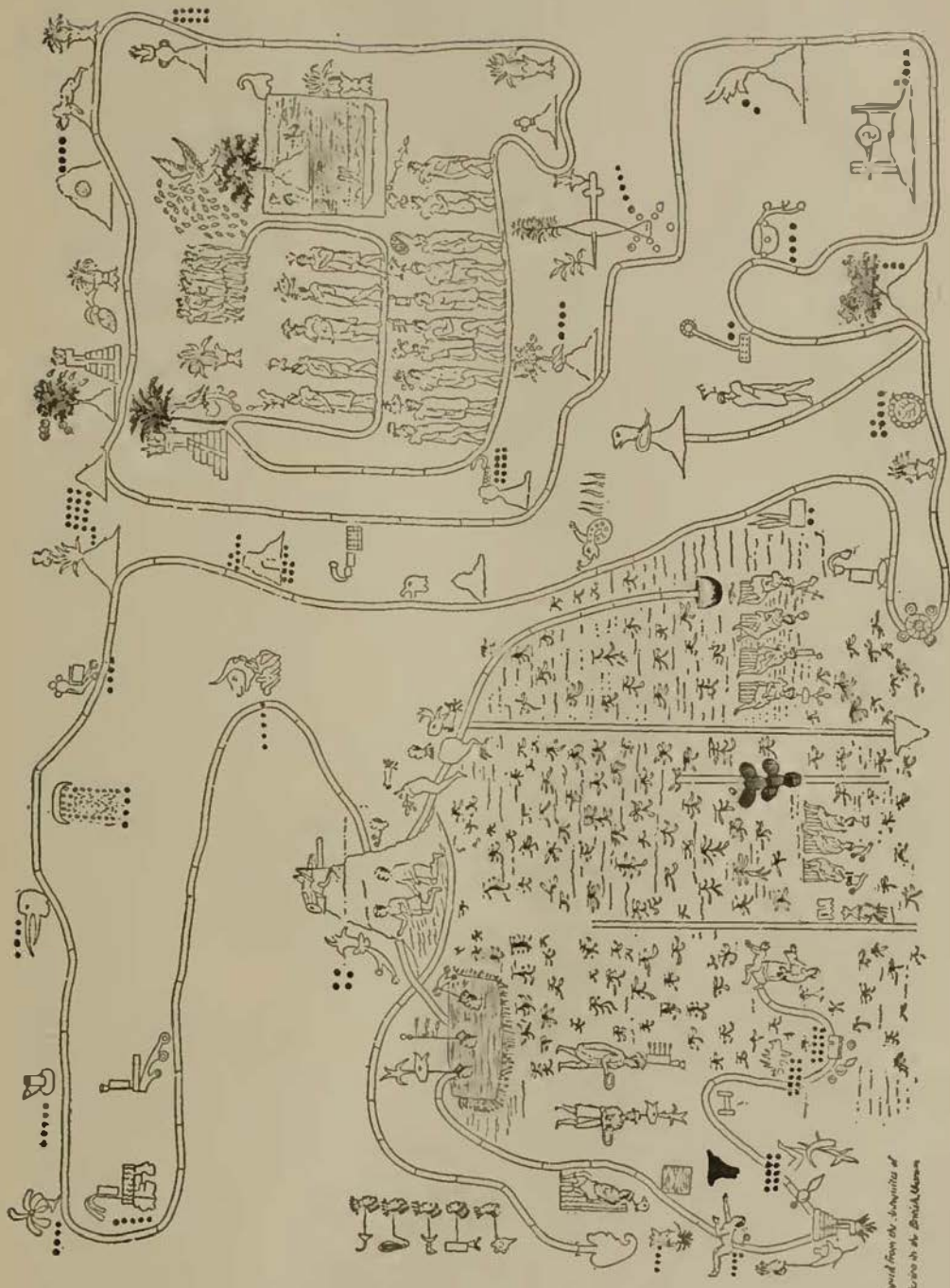
such power unless God was with him. After this they went to work and helped Nephi build the ship; and a good ship it was, the Lord having directed the way in which it should be fashioned.

When the vessel was finished the Lord told Lehi and his people to go on board. They took with them fruit, meat, honey, and other food in abundance, with many other things needful for their comfort; also seeds to plant in the soil of the promised land. Then they all embarked—men, women and children—beginning at the eldest, down to the least. A favorable wind sprang up and they were swiftly carried towards the promised land. First they crossed the Indian Ocean, then the South Pacific Ocean, and after many days reached the west coast of South America. They landed at a point somewhere near where the city of Valparaiso, in Chili, now stands.

But we must not forget to tell you that on the voyage they had another of those ever-recurring outbreaks. Laman, some of the sons of Ishmael and others, at one time grew very merry. By and by they became boisterous and rude. They danced and sang and talked very improperly. Nephi reproved them. This opened the old sore. They said they would not have him for their ruler, but would do as they pleased. Then they seized him and bound him, hands and feet, so tightly that he suffered a great deal. The result was that the Lord was angry at their wickedness, and the compass ceased to work. A heavy storm arose, a head wind drove them back upon the waters, the waves threatened to engulf them, and they were all in danger of being drowned. For three days the rebels continued stubborn in their anger; during

that time they would not loose Nephi, and every one who plead for him or spoke in his favor was threatened with like tortures. But at last the danger grew so threatening that they released him; but his legs and arms had swollen so greatly by reason of the way in which he had been tied that he could scarcely use them. Notwithstanding his great weakness and sufferings, as soon as he was loosed he took the compass, and in his hands it began to work. Then the wind fell, the storm ceased, and there came a great calm. .And Nephi took charge of the ship and guided it without further trouble, to the promised land.*

* On the opposite page we present a reduced copy of a hieroglyphic drawing in the British Museum representing the journey of the forefathers of the Mexicans from Asia to this continent. The original was first given to the world by the famous Italian traveler Gumelli Parerri in his book entitled "Giro del Mondo." Clavigero, Humboldt and others have endeavored to explain the meaning of this drawing. You will notice a palm tree near a hieroglyphic which much resembles that supposed to represent Jerusalem in the commencement of the Boturini manuscript. This is said to signify the house of God; here the journey began. Near by is a bird, which stands for Asia. The tradition runs thus: Huitziton was a person of great authority amongst the Aztecs, in Asia, who for some reason, not remembered, persuaded his countrymen to change their country. While he was thus meditating, a bird was heard singing in a bush, ti hui, ti hui, which means "let us go." "Do you hear that?" said Zaepaltzin. "it is the warning voice of the secret Deity to leave this continent and to find another." Therefore they started, with those they could persuade to go with them, traveling by Tlapalan, translated, the country of the Red Sea, and after long journeys reached the land where the hieroglyphic leaves them.



Figured from the description of
the tomb of the British Museum