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Lessons from the Life of Nephi X: The Division of the Race

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Abstract: A narrative of Nephi's life and lessons that may be learned from the life of Nephi. At times it is better to suffer wrongs than to demand one's rights, and the purposes of God will not be thwarted.

Saints is to honor age or men presiding in the Priesthood. At some Stake conferences we have noticed that in passing the sacrament the brethren carry it first to the man holding the highest office in the Priesthood; in others they offer the bread and cup to the first person they come to. So that there is no fixed rule in the Church concerning this.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF NEPHI.

X.—The Division of the Race.

TEXT.—And it came to pass that the Lord did warn me, that I, Nephi, should depart from them, and flee into the wilderness, and all those who would go with me.—*II. Nephi 5: 5.*

NO SOONER was Lehi dead than the hatred that rankled in the hearts of Laman and those who sympathized with him seems to have become intensified. It soon became evident that the two peoples could not live together in peace. They had nothing in common except that they belonged to the same family. Laman's vindictiveness grew so cruel that Nephi's life was in danger; and, as the readiest way out of the difficulty, Nephi was instructed of the Lord to take those who would listen to his teachings and obey the commandments of God into some other part of the land. Therefore, he gathered together those people who would listen to him, and, taking that portion of the property that belonged to them, as also the sacred records, the sword of Laban, the Liahona and other treasures, they departed into the wilderness.

How far they traveled or which way they went we are not told, but from the fact that they always appear in their later migrations to have moved northward, it is quite consistent to believe that in this, their first migration, they traveled along the edge of the Andes until they found a suitable place in which to establish new homes. Those who listened to Nephi and accompanied him on this journey were, besides his own family, his brothers

Sam, Jacob and Joseph, his sisters, whose names are not given, and Zorani, with their families. There might have been, possibly, some others, as we are led to infer from the statement in the Book of Mormon, but who they were we are not told.

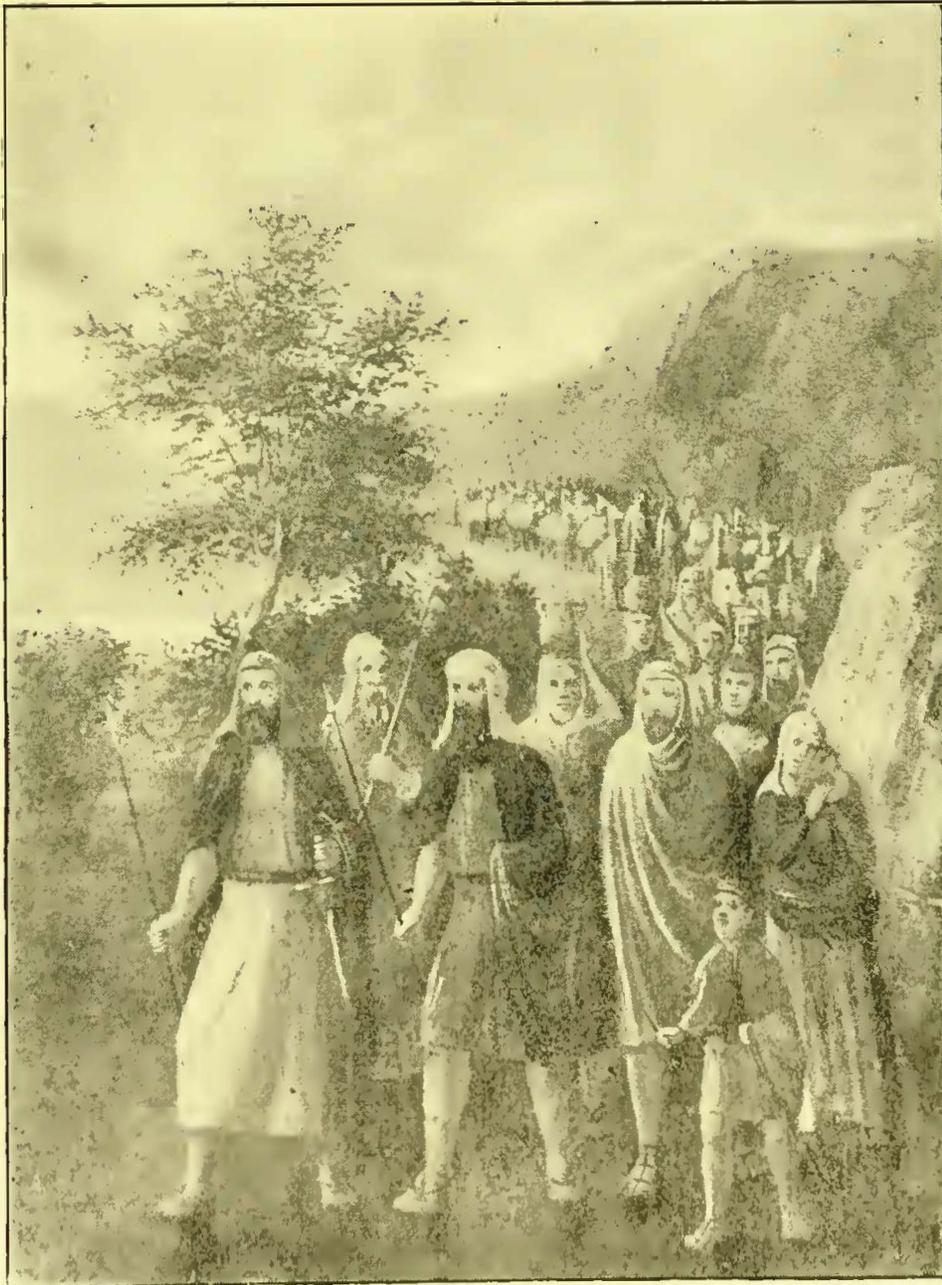
The distance which Nephi and his people traveled was not, probably, very great; that is, it is not to be measured by thousands of miles, for we find that in a very few years the Lamanites had found out their place of retreat, and were harrassing and making war upon them. By Lamanites we mean those who remained at the place of their first settlement with Laman. And as Laman was the leading spirit of the party, they took his name and were ever afterwards known as Lamanites, while those who followed the fortunes of Nephi are henceforth called Nephites. Here then were laid the foundations of two distinct nations, who occupied America for at least a thousand years.

The Nephites desired that the land that they now possessed should be called the land of Nephi; and this was the name by which it was always afterward known. It appears that whenever they formed new colonies or occupied new lands, they called the country thus colonized the land of Nephi. Thus its borders were constantly extended till it covered a large portion of the South American continent. About 400 years after, when the Nephites left the land of Nephi in the hands of the Lamanites, and joined the people of Zarahemla, the last named people having been the first occupants of that region, named it after themselves. So from that time forward, for several score of years, the Lamanites occupied the land of Nephi, while the Nephites dwelt in the land of Zarahemla.

The people of Nephi made yet another request. It was that Nephi should be their king. This desire did not altogether please him; but for the safety of his people he consented. The kingly power in his hands partook much of the nature of fatherhood. His people were few in numbers, and he looked after their individual interests, guided them

in their undertakings, directed them in their labors, and when he found that there was danger of an attack from the embittered adherents of Laman, he took the sword of Laban, and, using it as a pattern, fashioned other swords for their defense. Being thus

from communication with all the rest of the world, without excitements, and with very few amusements that are common to most peoples. He knew that nothing would be so dangerous to their spiritual welfare, as well as to their health, as to permit them to spend



THE NEPHITES SEEKING A NEW HOME.

prepared for the attacks of their enemies, the Nephites repulsed them every time they came to battle.

Nephi also taught his people to be industrious. They were a lonely people, cut off

their days in idleness. He therefore taught them many kinds of work, the women to take the wool of the sheep and the hair of the llamas and make clothes thereof; while upon the men devolved the labor of building a tem.

ple, in addition to the work of erecting their own homes. Nephi himself appears to have been a very expert mechanic. The training which he received while building the ship in the land Bountiful, under the direction of the Lord, was of incalculable value to him when he became the leader of this isolated people. It enabled him to teach them how to work in the various metals and woods with which the land abounded, and he thus laid the foundation for the culture and civilization which, in after years, became one of the distinctive marks between them and the Lamanites. The other specially distinguishing mark was their manner of worship. In this Nephi, holding as he did, the Holy Priesthood, also became their guide. He consecrated his brothers, Jacob and Joseph, to be their priests. These latter, by reason of holding the higher Priesthood, which they had received from Nephi, were permitted to officiate in the ordinances of the Lesser or Aaronic Priesthood; that is, in the offering of sacrifices and the kindred rites that are associated with the law of Moses. If they had not held the higher Priesthood, they would have been unable to officiate in the ordinances of the lesser Priesthood, as they were of the tribe of Manasseh, and not of Levi, which latter, by revelation from God, was the one especially appointed to these duties.

One lesson we can learn from the foregoing is that the purposes of God are not to be thwarted by man. When the wicked array themselves against His work, He finds ways of escape for the righteous to fulfill His law.

Another lesson is that it is oftentimes better to suffer wrong than to too stoutly assert one's undoubted rights. Nephi and his people gained by giving up their homes to their hard-hearted brethren. They gained a better inheritance, they obtained peace, and withal the blessing and approval of God.

To remain as one people meant contention, bloodshed and grievous sin; to separate, though apparently at a sacrifice, promised peace, happiness, prosperity and righteousness.

They stooped to conquer, fled to gain new strength.

George Reynolds.

WORK FOR GIRLS.

Florists.

NO WORK, and no employment undertaken for the purpose of gaining a livelihood could be more congenial to a woman than that of raising flowers. It is not necessarily hard work, and is certainly very pleasant work. There are a number of successful horticulturists in the city, but they are all men, I believe. Now, this labor requires very little capital to begin with, and a small plat of ground will prove large enough to supply all the flowers possible to be taken care of by one woman. In short, of all the ways I have thus far spoken of for girls to engage in remunerative employment, this one, to my way of thinking, seems the easiest and most sure. To begin with, one would need to possess a love for flowers, and even if this feeling is not very strong, a little time spent among them will engender in the heart of anyone not coarse or wicked, a real affection for the beautiful blossoms which lift up grateful heads for every moment of time spent in caring for them. If you, my girl friend, have a desire to make a living at a safe, healthful and pleasant occupation, just make a start at rearing flowers for sale, and you will never be contented again without you are surrounded with the lovely, heart-resting blessings. If you live in any of the large towns, no matter if you should be a long way off from the city, a little perseverance and business tact on your part will place you in the way of an independent living. You will need first of all to buy a number of pots, and then if you have a few dollars to begin with, so much the better, for you can buy a great variety of plants with which to start. Now you, my dear, who have only your own indomitable perseverance and a firm reliance on God for your capital, save, scrimp and