

Family Home Evening

Lehi's Journey

Song:

"The Iron Rod" (LDS Hymnbook p. 274)

Lesson:

Ask everyone to share something they know about Lehi. Read the following article from the Friend:

LEHI

Mabel Jones Gabbott, "Lehi", Friend, Mar. 1971, 21

The great city of Jerusalem was buzzing with excitement and talk. It was the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, King of Judah. All seemed well; yet Jeremiah, the prophet of the Lord, was saying that Jerusalem would be destroyed if the people did not repent of their wrongs.

Lehi knew of the prophecy; he had heard the talk among the people. His oldest son, Laman, had said, "That can't happen here." "Of course not," Lemuel, his second son, had answered. Nephi and Sam, Lehi's younger sons, had said nothing. They looked toward their father for direction.

Lehi, his wife, Sariah, and these four sons had dwelt all their days in the land of Jerusalem. Lehi was a man of great wealth. It is believed he was a merchant and an expert in vine, olive, fig, and honey culture. He was a man of learning, in both the language of the Jews and that of the Egyptians.

Now, as he went forth, he prayed to the Lord for his people, and the Lord answered by showing Lehi what was about to happen. Lehi was overcome, and he returned to his own house at Jerusalem. Again the Lord showed to Lehi the destruction that was to come to his people, the Jews, in Jerusalem if they did not repent. Lehi went among the people and tried to warn them. But the Jews would not listen. They laughed at Lehi, and tried to kill him.

The Lord told Lehi to take his family and escape into the wilderness. Hurriedly he left his house and his gold and silver and other precious things. He took only his family and some provisions and tents.

They traveled three days. Then Lehi pitched a tent by a river in a broad valley. Here he built an altar of stones and gave thanks unto the Lord.

But Laman and Lemuel, the oldest sons, were not thankful. "Jerusalem won't be destroyed," they said to their father. "You were foolish to leave our beautiful home and come to this wilderness."

Lehi spoke to his sons about what he knew would happen. He spoke with such power, being filled with the Spirit of the Lord, that their very frames shook. They were stilled and obeyed their father.

The Lord told Lehi that before he went further, he should send his sons back to Jerusalem for the sacred records of his people and the genealogy of his family. The sons were gone for some time, and Sariah, their mother, feared they were lost. When they returned safely, Sariah said, "I know for sure now that the Lord is leading us and will protect us."

Again the Lord told Lehi to send his sons to Jerusalem to bring Ishmael and his family out of Jerusalem. This they did. Later Lehi's sons married the daughters of Ishmael.

Now Lehi had fulfilled all he had been asked to do. The Lord spoke to him at night and told him that the next day he should continue his journey. When Lehi came from the tent the next morning, he was surprised to find upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship, made of brass.

Within the ball were two spindles, and one spindle pointed the direction they were to go. Lehi called this director, or compass, a Liahona, which means "guidance is the Lord's." The Liahona gave directions that showed the most favorable parts of the wilderness. When the family needed food, Lehi inquired of the Lord and received directions miraculously written on the ball, telling him where to find food. The Liahona led and instructed them because they were humble and had placed their faith in the Lord. Thus Lehi led his family to the land of promise.

Discuss Lehi's role in the story. Why do you think he was chosen to do God's will? In what ways is he different from modern-day prophets? In what way is he the same? How would you have acted as one of Lehi's children if you had to leave your home and friends?

Play the game "Lehi's Journey. Play as individuals or teams. Take turns rolling the dice and move your game piece, following Lehi and his family's journey from Israel to the Promised Land.

Adapted from: "Lehi's Journey to the Promised Land" by Diane Decker Friend, Jan. 1996, 39

