



Type: Book Chapter

Appendix 1: Yemen, the Land of the Queen of Sheba

Author(s): Yusuf M. Abdullah

Source: *Lehi and Sariah in Arabia: The Old World Setting of the Book of Mormon*

Published: Bloomington, IN; Xlibris Publishing, 2015

Page(s): 221

Abstract: No abstract available.

Appendix 1

Yemen, the Land of the Queen of Sheba

Yemen is more than just the Republic at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. It borders the largest countries within the Council of the Arab Gulf states, namely Saudi Arabia to the north and Oman to the east. On the other side of the Gulf of Aden lie Somalia and Djibouti, and across the Red Sea lie Eritrea and Ethiopia. The exotic Indian Ocean island of Socotra marks the extreme southern border of Yemen and the Bab al-Mandab straits connect the Red Sea and Arabian Seas. Yemen is thus genuinely situated at an important junction between Asia and Africa, commanding a strategic location along the trade routes connecting the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean.

Despite the fact that Yemen has never been within the spotlight of archaeological investigation, the large number of ancient inscriptions collected and deciphered by European travelers and scholars since the nineteenth century provided the first independent clues to the antiquity of Yemen which were described by classical authors as *Arabia Felix* or *Arabia Eudaemon*. These writers also refer to the wealth and prosperity of the Sabaeans and other states of southern Arabia which managed to conduct successful trade not only overland across Arabia but also via

the Indian Ocean and Red Sea from the first millennium BC onwards. Last but not least the Old Testament throws light on Yemen, the land of the Queen of Sheba (Saba'), from which this mysterious monarch is said to have traveled to meet King Solomon in the tenth century BC, presenting him with spices, and much gold and precious stone carried on a great train of camels. Yemen has now opened its doors to foreign archaeological missions and, after centuries of seclusion, the country finds itself the subject of international attention. A large number of important archaeological discoveries have been made here over the past twenty-five years, including, to name but a few, Bronze Age settlements in the highlands near Dhamar and the Sabr culture at Lahj near Aden, the Bar'an temple at Marib, the Hellenistic and later bronzes from Jabal al-Lawdh and the mummies of Shibam al-Ghiras near Sana'a.

Yemen is therefore no longer the least known country in the world. It is a beautiful land with a very rich cultural heritage, where you can see the past surviving into the present. The antiquity of Yemen is gradually revealing its secrets and the future seems very promising.

Used with permission:

Professor Yusuf M. Abdullah

Sana'a University

Former Presidential Advisor for Cultural Heritage and Museums, Republic of Yemen