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The Indians - Laman and Nephi Visit Laban

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Abstract: Believes that “all the Indians in North and South America, and the inhabitants of some of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, are descendants of [the Lehite] family, who came away from Jerusalem about 2,400 years” ago.

The Indians.

LAMAN AND NEPHI VISIT LABAN.

WHEN Nephi and his brothers arrived near Jerusalem they consulted together, and concluded to cast lots to see which of them should go to ask Laban for the brass plates containing the records. The lot fell upon Laman; so he went up to Laban's house and, after being invited in, sat and conversed with him for a little while. Now, it is quite probable that Lehi and all his family were well acquainted with Laban before they left Jerusalem, so that they had some reason to expect a kind reception. But when Laman told his business and asked for the plates, Laban was greatly enraged, abused him shamefully, called him a thief, and would have killed him had he not fled out of his house.

When Laman returned to his brothers, and told them the treatment he had received from Laban, they were all very sorrowful, and Laman and Lemuel wanted to go back to their father without the plates; but Nephi said,—No, God sent us here for them, and we will not go back without them, for the Lord always gives His children power, in some way, to do what He commands them. So, after another consultation, they concluded to go and gather together all the gold and silver and precious things that belonged to their father, which he had left in his house at Jerusalem, and offer to exchange them with Laban for the plates of brass. The brass plates were not worth a great deal except for what was written upon them; and Laban, being a wicked man, did not care about the good things they contained; but Lehi's sons wanted to show Laban that they did not wish to steal or beg the plates from him, but were willing to pay him a great deal more than they were worth to any one but themselves. So they all went up to Laban's house this morning, bringing their riches with them, and offered him the whole of them for the plates. But when Laban saw their great treasures he coveted them, and, as he still refused to let them have the plates, he determined to kill them and take their property. So he quarrelled with them, drove them out of the house and sent his servants to murder them. Nephi and his brothers escaped, however, out of their hands, but had to leave all their treasures behind them.

This was a sad blow to them all, and they felt more sorrowful than ever. Laman and Lemuel became very angry with Nephi and Sam and began to beat and abuse them, charging them with being the cause of all their troubles. But while Laman and Lemuel were thus cruelly beating their younger brothers, as they dwelt in a cave in the mountains near Jerusalem, an Angel suddenly appeared in their midst and rebuked them for their wickedness and violence, telling them that the Lord had chosen Nephi, because of his righteousness, to be their ruler and leader, and commanded them to go up once more to Jerusalem, promising that the Lord would deliver Laban into their hands.

Many of our little readers will, no doubt, wonder if Angels ever come to visit people in these days. Yes, numbers of persons have had very glorious and happy visits from them during the last thirty or forty years; and many more might enjoy this privilege if they would only seek for it, and make their hearts, their persons and their houses clean and pure, for good angels will not visit wicked men and women, nor naughty children, neither do they like to go into dirty houses; they only love those who are good and gentle, kind and clean, who love God and try to do as He and His servants tell them. The Lord loves little children who pray to Him, who try to be good and

obedient to their parents, and He sends His Angels to watch over and take care of them, although we do not see them. Still, there are some of them near us most of the time, and a great many children have had their eyes opened by the Spirit of the Lord so that they could see them, and some of our little readers may be so happy, some day, as to see them and enjoy their company, if they will only try to overcome their naughty feelings, always speak the truth and not forget to pray to the Lord.

After the Angel left Nephi and his brethren, Laman and Lemuel still complained and murmured, but as Nephi was determined to go once more to Jerusalem, as the Angel had commanded, they concluded to go with them. It was after dark when they arrived at Jerusalem, and Nephi told his brothers to wait outside the walls while he went up into the city. He proceeded very cautiously, and, on arriving near to Laban's house, found a man lying in the street, before him, drunk. He stooped down to see who it was and found it was Laban. He had girt around his waist, a very beautiful and valuable sword, the hilt, or handle of which was made of gold and the blade was of the very best steel. Nephi took this sword out of its scabbard and cut off Laban's head with it. He hesitated to do it at first, as he had never killed any one before; but the Spirit of the Lord told him to do it, because Laban was a wicked man and would not obey God, and besides, he had tried to kill Nephi and his brothers, and had robbed them of all their treasures and would not give them the plates,—he, therefore, deserved to die.

Nephi then stripped Laban of his clothes and put them upon himself, girding his sword round him also, and went towards Laban's house. On his way he met Zoram, Laban's servant, who, supposing Nephi to be his master, readily obeyed his command to fetch the brass plates out of Laban's treasury and to bring them outside the city walls. Upon Nephi's approach his brethren fled from him in dismay, supposing him to be Laban, and that, having killed their brother, he was now come to slay them. Nephi called after them, however, and as soon as they heard his voice they were glad and returned. Zoram, finding that he had not been following Laban, as he supposed, trembled and turned to flee. But Nephi knew that if Zoram went back to Jerusalem to tell what had happened, the wicked Jews would follow them and try to kill him and his brothers, so, being a large and very strong young man, he laid hold of Zoram to prevent his running away and talked to him until he finally consented to accompany them into the wilderness to their father Lehi.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

[For the Juvenile Instructor.] KIND HINTS.

LITTLE boys and girls should not use tea or coffee, nor drink soup nor anything else while it is hot. Why? Because the Lord has told us that it is not good to do so; (see Book of Doc. & Cov., Sec. 81.). Now we are all satisfied that God knows what is best for us, not only in eating and drinking, but in everything else that affects our happiness in this life as well as in the life to come; and when he has been so kind as to speak to us and tell us what is for our good, do you not think it very ungrateful and wicked not to pay attention to what He says? What do you think of children who habitually disregard the wishes of their parents? You would say they do not love their fathers and mothers, or they would do as they tell them. And the angels and good men will think we do not love God much if we do not strive to please Him in every respect.

God has also said that it is not good for us to use tobacco or liquor or to eat much meat in summer, and He has promised that all who will give heed to His advice and obey all His commandments shall become very wise and very good. People who do not use any hot drinks, tobacco, intoxicating liquors, nor a great deal of meat, are always healthier, happier and handsomer than those who do.

Now, if any of the little boys and girls who read this have indulged in these or any other bad habits, we hope that they will discontinue them at once, and if they have not formed them we trust they will never be so foolish as to do so. If they will abstain from the use of tea, coffee, tobacco, intoxicating liquors, bad words and everything that is wicked, they will grow up to be healthy, happy, wise and useful men and women, and they will be loved by the Lord and by all good people.

THE LION.



The lion is not a very large animal, but is very strong and powerful, so much so that he is called the king of beasts. The illustration above represents what is told in the following fable,—a fable, we must tell you, is a short story conveying a moral, by which some principle is taught.

A lion had a little mouse in his power, and was just going to set his paw on it and crush it to death, when the little thing pleaded for its life, and the lion let it go. The mouse, full of gratitude, thanked the lion, and said if it ever had the opportunity it would do a good turn for the lion. The powerful beast looked down on it with contempt, wondering how such a little thing could imagine it could be of any service to him. But by and by the lion was caught in a net set for him by some hunters, and when the little mouse heard the roars of its preserver, who was unable to free himself, it came and cut the meshes of the net with its little sharp teeth, and set the lion free. This is the fable; and though beasts cannot talk, the moral is, that we should never despise the power of anything to do good, no matter how insignificant it may appear to be.

The following extract, from a book called Algeria and Tunis, concerning a pet lion, is interesting. A gentleman visiting at a house in Algeria, says: "In a few minutes the door opened, and a lion entered the room, the man only leading him by a tuft of his mane. He was a magnificent animal, two years old, and full grown, all but his mane, which, although but a foot long, made, nevertheless, a respectable appearance. He did not seem to care about our being strangers, but walking about the room like a large dog, permitted us to take liberties with him, such as patting him, shaking a paw, and making him exhibit his teeth and claws. He showed, however, a marked predilection in favor of his old acquaintances, and lying down before them, turned on his back to be scratched. After a scratch or two he began to yawn, and was fairly settling himself for a nap, when a cigar was puffed in his face, a proceeding he evidently did not approve of. Rising in a hurry, curling up his lips, and wrinkling his nose, he exposed to view a splendid set of teeth, a sure sign he was not pleased. A hearty sneeze seemed to restore him to good temper; and bearing no malice, he returned a friendly pat, bestowed upon him by Captain Martenot, who had been the aggressor, by rubbing his head caressingly against his knees."