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Abinadi the Martyr

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Abstract: A poem telling the story of Abinadi, his preaching to King Noah, and his martyrdom.

was frightful; that of Shylock was tame in comparison. Of course it was wrong to treat any one so; and every man was loudly in favor of the guilty ones being punished, but I think no one was ever convicted for the offense.

Arriving at Salt Lake City the men were complimented upon their zeal for the common good, which had no doubt prevented the hostiles from further deprecations, and dismissed.

But what was the cause of all this alarm, destruction and loss of property, and loss of life? Simply this. A settler, whose name I withhold, as he is still living in Southern Utah, saw an Indian in his garden one evening taking a few ears of green corn. With his rifle he shot the Indian dead! But the slain Indian was White Cloud, a noted chief, and his band,—until then friendly—took a fearful and bloody revenge. The time and expense of the expedition, the houses plundered and burned, horses stolen, the whole amounting to thousands of dollars in value, and the death of Mr. Campbell, was a heavy price to pay for a few ears of green corn.

Here let me say, that almost all wars and troubles between the whites and Indians in the Rocky Mountain region, have been caused by the acts of unwise or unprincipled whites; and I am certain the history of the Territory will prove my assertion.

For many years the pioneers of Utah were obliged to be in constant readiness for defense. For this purpose all able-

bodied males were organized as a Territorial militia known as the Nauvoo Legion. Those having horses were organized as cavalry; the residue as infantry and artillery. The cavalry were required to be ready for service at short notice whenever called upon by night or by day, with horse, saddle and equipments, arms and ammunition and provisions, all at their own cost, and without expectation of pay. For many years the services of these "minute men," as they were called, were in constant requisition, as shown in the early history of Utah, Salt Lake, Tooele, Cache, Weber, Juab, Sanpete, Iron and other counties. The defensive wars of 1849, in Utah County, the Ute war of 1853, the Tintic and Tooele campaigns, and the Sanpete war, costly and bloody as they were, were all carried on by the Territorial militia; while not a single United States soldier ever assisted in the defense of the hard earned homes of the settlers.

But there was some compensation even in this. The settlers learned lessons of self-reliance that could be acquired in no other way; and fully exemplified the wisdom of that old saying—"Stormy seas make good sailors." The members of the Nauvoo Legion never took arms as aggressors, nor for pay, plunder or renown; they acted always on the defensive, and only grasped their rifles to defend their homes, their wives and children, and the common safety of all. *Santiago.*

ABINADI THE MARTYR.*

See the gifted Abinadi, stand before a Nephite throng,
Speaking words of inspiration, fearless, calling loud and long
To the king, his priests and people, every one, both high and low
That the Lord in sore displeasure, would their greatness overthrow.

You shall all be brought to bondage, fathers, mothers, daughters fair,
All shall feel the wrath of Heaven, all shall see God's arm made bare.
Lashed shall be the heavy burdens, on your backs from morn till night;
Soon the hail and wind and tempest, shall o'ertake you in your flight.

And you, ye great and proud King Noah, all your greatness now is gone;
Soon your life shall be in value, as a garment scorched and torn,
As the blossom of a thistle which the wind blows o'er the land,
Or the dry stalk in the field when trodden under foot of man.

* Mosiah, chapter 11.

I have seen your sins and whoredoms, "saith the Lord," in light of day,
 And your great abominations, tho' they long have borne sway.
 Now the Lamanites no longer in their thousands can be driven
 By your *fifties*, as when vict'ry crowned you from the God of Heaven.

I have seen the great taxation which your people cannot bear,
 In your folly made to fatten, those who've fallen in your snare.
 I have seen the gold and silver, and the ziff, the brass and iron
 Made t' adorn the spacious palace, when you sit upon your throne.

And the temple, which your fathers built to my most Holy name,
 You have wickedly polluted, while you glory in your shame.
 From the seats of my High Priesthood, which my wisdom hath designed,
 Now is heard the lying precepts, from your priests of darkened mind.

All I've said shall come upon you, king and people, every one
 Who has heard this proclamation, take my warning and return
 Unto God, in true repentance, that you may His mercy see,
 Hear the words of Abinadi, for, "thus hath God commanded me."

Who is the Lord, said great King Noah, who wouldst afflict my people so?
 And who, I ask, is Abinadi, who thus declares our overthrow?
 Bring him here that I may slay him, for thus daring to appear
 In the kingdom of King Noah, who is honored far and near.

Abinadi now is sought for, but is nowhere to be found.
 King, nor priests, nor wicked people, care not for the Gospel's sound;
 But continue in their folly, waxing worse from day to day,
 Heeding not the prophet's warning, till *two years* had passed away.

Then in power, and voice of thunder, Abinadi's words were poured
 Upon king, and priests and people, who in their wrath defied the Lord.
 Such is the power of human blindness, when no light from Heaven is nigh,
 All the priests *save one* condemned him, Abinadi, thou shalt die!

(This one was Alma, who had spoken in defense of truth, tho' vain,
 For the king was wroth and ordered, that young Alma should be slain;
 But he fled and while in exile, wrote the words we hold so dear,
 Of the Prophet Abinadi, whose loved mem'ry we revere.)

Now the wrath of king and people, rise like tempest on the main;
 Seize this fellow, bind him, slay him, let him perish in the flame.
 Touch me not, said Abinadi, till my message I declare;
 Touch me not, for God shall smite you, hold, ye wicked ones, forbear!

Now he stretched his arm and told them, that in nations far away
 Men would tell these deeds of darkness to their children, and would say,
 See how vain the strength of kingdoms, or the power of man to save,
 When the Lord comes out in vengeance, let the wicked cease to rave.

Still, in language sharp and powerful, Abinadi's words were hurled
 On the Nephite king and people, till his message had been told.
 Then the face of Abinadi shone in glorious lustre bright,
 Like as Moses' on Sinai, hallowed by the heavenly light:

Now they scourge his skin with faggots, soon the scorching flames ascend,
 While he told them of their future, that their own fate in the end
 Would be also pains and burnings, still the flames around him roll,
 And the last words of Abinadi, were, "Oh, God, receive my soul!"

Oh may the youth of modern Israel, ever cherish scenes like these,
 That such tales of *pure devotion* may not vanish with the breeze;
 That the names of noble martyrs may in honor still be sung
 By the good and wise in Zion in the ages yet to come.

A. N. Macfarlane.