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The Women of the Book of Mormon

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Abstract: Celebrates the noble women in the Book of Mormon, notably Sariah and the mothers of the stripling soldiers who fought under Helaman.

THE WOMEN OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

It seems strange that in most histories there is but little said of the women. The bravery of the men who have endured hardships is extolled, but that of the women, who have passed through the same trials, is usually forgotten. The same appears true in the Book of Mormon. Very few direct references are made to the women, although they are alluded to in various places.

At the time that the events recorded in the Book of Mormon happened, the women of the Gentile nations enjoyed but few rights and privileges; but we are led to believe that, among the Nephites, they enjoyed a much greater liberty and freedom; that their lives had a great influence upon the lives of others.

The Gospel gives liberty to all, and the Nephites were governed by the laws of Moses to which was added the gospel; and through that the women were able to enjoy the liberty which they desired.

During the Rule of the Judges, the women began to receive greater consideration and Mormon was untiring in his efforts to give safety to the women and children. In the trying times, when, Amalickiah desired to become the ruler of the entire continent, Mormon was the leader of the Nephites, and perhaps never did they have greater need of a brave leader. He was striving for the liberty of his people and tearing a piece from his robe he inscribed on it

his war cry, "In memory of our God, our religion and freedom, and our peace, our wives and our children." He presented his "Title of Liberty" before God and asked His blessings upon it; and, when the Nephites read the words inscribed, they all joined together and gained the safety so much needed.

Perhaps nowhere does the mothers influence show more plainly than with the two thousand young men under Helamen. Their mothers were good, God-fearing women and had brought up their sons to be full of truth and integrity and as we read, "They were exceedingly valiant for strength and activity: but behold, this was not all; they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever things they were instructed; for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before Him."

It was in a time of great need when they marched against their enemies. It is said, "Their mothers' teachings and their prayers were weapons of destruction to their foes and shields of defense for themselves." God was with them and led them to victory.

With what tears and prayers did those mothers see their beloved sons leave them to go, perhaps never to return, to face an enemy! What faith was exercised in their behalf!

The Nephites, once being inhabitants of Jerusalem, it does not seem strange that their manners and customs in their new

land should still be much like those of their ancestors, although it would be impossible for them to live exactly their old life in a new land. Nor did the Nephites lack the teachings of wise and learned men, for many were the prophets of those days. And by those inspired teachers many good and virtuous seeds were sown. Some fell among the rocks; some in thorny places, but many on fertile soil which brought forth good and abundant harvests, therefore there is no doubt that their domestic life was generally cultivated and refined.

The subjects which are taught to the people today, such as industry, economy and especially moderation in dress were also the teachings of those days. The women profited by the teachings, for it is often told in the Book of Mormon that the women wore dresses of cloth which was made by their own hands. They were industrious and thrifty for mention is also made of their clothes being of fine silk, twisted or twined linen.

Neither did they differ from the women of today in the desire to make themselves beautiful with ornament and dress; and never did a woman of the nineteenth century look upon her jewels with more pride and admiration than did the women of the Nephites. They were mortal, as we are, and often vanity and pride would enter their hearts; and they were ambitious to clothe themselves in costly apparel; often

were their minds filled with thoughts of their ornaments of gold, silver, and precious stones. Not alone were the women weak on these points, but the sterner sex, too, with all their force of character, could not resist the temptation of adorning their persons with precious jewels and robes of gorgeous color. It was from nature with her many forms and rich tints that they copied their colors and designs.

There were many noble women in the Book of Mormon, and one that is worthy of mention is Sariah, the wife of Lehi. In her home in Jerusalem, she had been used to every comfort and enjoyed luxury and ease; but, when Lehi was called upon by the Lord to leave Jerusalem and go out into the wilderness, Sariah was ready and willing to leave her home of beauty and comfort and her life of ease and go with her husband into an unknown land. There were hardships and trials that had to be endured on their long uncertain journey of hopes and fears. Lehi received revelations and messages from the Lord to sustain him, but Sariah traveled on, toiling and uncomplaining, putting her trust in God.

It is most likely that the women of those days were filled with the same joys and sorrows, the same hopes and fears, the same trials and triumphs, as are the women of today. They were tempted and tried, and will receive their just reward for all their actions, as we expect to do. And they were

wise and brave, for their sons were among the wisest and bravest who have ever dwelt upon this earth. God honored the women of the Nephite nation, for they sought to honor Him, and they taught their sons and their daughters to walk uprightly and in all virtue and sobriety.

Gertrude Derbidge.

FOR THE REWARD.

I would not rest till I am weary,
I would not cease till sinks the sun;
Until the work that God brings near me,
Has all been done.

Each work neglected is bereavement,
A loss to some, great or small;
Each noble triumph of achievement
Is good for all.

Whatever unforeseen conditions
Around our paths in life prevail,
If we are faithful to our missions
We cannot fail.

The soul that never slights a duty
Howe'er wear'some, strange or hard,
Will see at last the undimmed beauty
Of its reward.

O, glorious thought, to feel in heaven,
That none by our neglect were harmed,
That every work that God had given
Was well performed!

O, let us then with firm decision,
Do every task, bear every load,
And leave at last, with due submission,
Our work with God.

Marie Dunford.

WHEN the best things are not possible, the best may be made of those that are.

MOST of our misfortunes are more supportable than the comments of our friends upon them.

DICKINSON FARM.

THE STORY OF A NEW ENGLAND WINTER.

Oh, mother! Here are two men coming up the road.

"Who are they, dear?"

"I'm sure I don't know. They have little satchels and— good gracious, they're stopping at our gate!"

"That's strange! Uncle Silas would come in the morning in his wagon; Aunt Mary by stage and grandpa and grandma won't be here until dinner time. I can't imagine who else would spend Thanksgiving with us."

It was the eve of a bleak November day. For hours there had been the flutter of snowflakes in the air. The beautiful crimson and scarlet foliage that a short time before had been the glory of the Green Mountains now rustled and crackled under the feet of the travelers. Even now, as twilight drew on apace, the clouds began to thicken and the white heralds of the storm fell more rapidly. The great day of preparation was almost at its close. From cellar to garret everything was in readiness for the morrow's feast. The fattened turkeys were dressed for the oven. A dozen mince and pumpkin pies were cooling on the shelves in the pantry, and they were flanked by tarts and apples, and nuts and everything else that a horde of hungry children could desire. Even the best barrel of cider had been tapped, and the great squares of maple sugar that had been so carefully stored away in March, were brought forth to do