



Type: Magazine Article

Miraculous Healing Among the Zunis

Author(s): Llewellyn Harris

Source: *Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 14, No. 14 (15 July 1879), pp. 160–161

Published by: George Q. Cannon & Sons

Abstract: Some Zuni Indians consider themselves to be descendants of Montezuma. A tradition says that more than 300 years before the Spanish arrived, white men landed in Mexico and became the ancestors of the great kings, including Montezuma. They intermarried and lost their distinction. Story told of an elder who administered to 406 Indians afflicted with small pox.

MIRACULOUS HEALING AMONG THE ZUNIS.

BY LLEWELLYN HARRIS.

I ARRIVED at the Zuni village on the 20 h of January, 1878, on my way to the Mexican settlements, to preach the gospel.

Circumstances caused me to stay at Zuni eight days, thus giving me an opportunity to become acquainted with their traditions, customs and history.

They say that, before the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, the Zuni Indians lived in Mexico. Some of them still claim to be the descendants of Montezuma. At the time of the conquest they fled to Arizona, and settled there. They were at one time a very powerful tribe, as the ruins all over that part of the country testify. They have always been considered a very industrious people. The fact that they have at one time been in a state of civilization far in advance of what they are at present, is established beyond a doubt. Before the Catholic religion was introduced among them, they worshiped the sun. At present they are nearly all Catholics. A few of them have been baptized into our Church by Brothers Ammon M. Tenney and R. H. Smith, and nearly all the tribe say they are going to be baptized.

They have a great many words in their language like the Welch, and with the same meaning.

Their tradition says that over three hundred years before the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, some white men landed in Mexico and told the Indians that they had come from the regions beyond the sea to the east. They say that from these white men came the ancient kings of Mexico, from whom Montezuma descended.

These white men were known to the Indians of Mexico by the name of *Cambaraga*; and are still remembered so in the traditions of the Zuni Indians. In time those white people became mixed with Indians, by marriage, until scarcely a relic of them remained. A few traditions of the Mexican Indians and a few Welch words among the Zunis, Navajos, and Moquis are all that can be found of that people now.

I have the history of the ancient Britons, which speaks of Prince Madoc, who was the son of Owen Guynedd, king of Wales, having sailed from Wales, in the year 1160 with three ships. He returned in the year 1163, saying he had found a beautiful country, across the western sea.

He left Wales again in the year 1164 with fifteen ships and three thousand men. He was never again heard of.

The circumstances of the healing of the Indians who were affected with the small-pox, which occurred during my stay among the Zunis, are as follows:

I put up with a Zuni Indian known as Captain Lochee, who had three children sick with the small-pox. After I had been asleep two or three hours, I was awakened by the cries of the family and some of the neighbors who had come in. I arose and inquired the cause of the crying, and was informed by Captain Lochee that his daughter, a child of about 12 years of age, was dying. I saw she was gasping for breath. I felt like administering to her then, but the Spirit of the Lord prompted me to wait a little longer. I waited until she had done gasping and did not appear to breathe. The Spirit of the Lord moved upon me very strongly to administer to her, which I did; she revived and slept well the remainder of the night. I also administered to the other two who were sick in

the same house that night. All was quiet the remainder of the night, and all seemed much better in the morning. The news of this spread through the town, and the next day I was called to visit about twenty five families, all of whom had one or more sick with the small-pox. They also wished me to administer to the sick, which I did. I was called upon to visit from ten to twenty families a day for four days after my arrival, and administered to their sick. The power of the Lord was made manifest to such a degree that nearly all I administered to recovered. The disease was spreading so rapidly that I was unable to visit all the houses. One morning about eight o'clock one of the Zuni women came for me to go and visit the sick; she took me to a house which had a large room in it, about twenty by forty feet. When I entered the room I found they had gathered the sick from all parts of the village, till they had completely filled the house. The stench that arose and the horrible sight that met my eyes is beyond description. They had a Spaniard there, who understood the Zuni language, for an interpreter, who told me they wanted me to administer to all those who were sick in the room. I being the only Elder in the village, it seemed to be a great task to administer to so many, but I called on the Lord to strengthen me. I commenced, and as fast as I administered to them they were removed, but other sick ones were continually being brought in. It was late in the afternoon before I could perceive that they began to diminish in numbers. When I had administered to the last one and went out, the sun had set and it was getting dark. The Spaniard who had stayed there all day asked me if I knew how many I had prayed for. I told him that I did not keep count; he said he had, and that it was 406. The next morning my arms were so sore that I could hardly move them.

There was a Presbyterian minister in the village, who became jealous of the influence I was gaining with the Indians. He persuaded two Spaniards, one Navajo Indian, one albino Zuni, and one of the Zuni medicine men, to circulate lies and frighten the Zunis, telling them that those who were healed were healed by the power of the devil.

I felt weak from the effects of administering so much, and, on the second day after administering to the 406, I started for the settlement in Savoia valley. The next day after arriving in Savoia I was taken down with a severe fever, which lasted about a week. I stopped with the family of Brother John Hunt, who treated me very kindly. It was about three weeks before I was able to resume my journey to the Mexican settlements on the Rio Grande. I spent about four months preaching to the Mexican people in New Mexico. When I arrived at Savoia on my return, I was informed by the brethren that the minister who opposed me at Zuni had passed there and was nearly dead with the consumption. When I arrived at Zuni I was told by some of the most reliable Zunis that all that I had administered to recovered, excepting five or six that the minister gave medicine to, and four or five that the medicine man had tried to cure by magic. The medicine man that opposed me had died during my absence, and the Navajo who opposed me, on returning home, was killed by his people to keep the small-pox from spreading among them.

This is a true statement of the manner in which the power of God was made manifest among the Zunis, and also the judgments of God which followed some of those who opposed it. It seemed that I was, by the providence of God, cast among them; and I felt that I was one of the weakest of my brethren, and to ask the Lord to strengthen me if it was His will to make His power manifest through me. If the Lord had not strength-

ened me I could not have borne up under what I passed through at Zuni.

[We received the foregoing communication from Brother Harris last December, but circumstances prevented our publishing it at that time. We are pleased to be able to state that since the receipt of his letter, his account of the healing has been amply corroborated by the Indians themselves, who have been questioned upon the subject by Elder Ammon M. Tenney.—Ed. J. I.]

Curiosities in Human Food.

AMONG THE AUSTRALIANS.

Continued.

THROUGHOUT the whole of Australia the labor of diving for the shell fish which the natives devour is given to the women to perform. One writer who witnessed the operation among the natives of Van Dieman's Land, an island on the south of the Australian continent, describes it as follows:

"About noon we saw them prepare their repast. Hitherto we had but a faint idea of the pains the women take to procure the food requisite for the subsistence of their families. They took each a basket, and were followed by their daughters, who did the same. Getting on the rocks that projected into the sea, they plunged from them to the bottom in search of shell-fish. When they had been down some time, we became very uneasy on their account; for where they had dived were seaweeds of great length, among which we observed the *fucus pyriferus* and we feared that they might have been entangled in these, so as to be made unable to regain the surface.

"At length, however, they appeared, and convinced us that they were capable of remaining under water twice as long as our ablest divers. An instant was sufficient for them to take breath, and then they dived again. This they did repeatedly till their baskets were nearly full. Most of them were provided with a little bit of wood, cut into the shape of a spatula and with these they separated from beneath the rocks, at great depths, very large sea-ears. Perhaps they close the biggest, for all they brought were of a great size.

"On seeing the large lobsters which they had in their baskets, we were afraid that they must have wounded these poor women terribly with their large claws; but we soon found that they had taken the precaution to kill them as soon as they caught them. They quitted the water only to bring their husbands the fruits of their labor, and frequently returned almost immediately to their diving till they had procured a sufficient meal for their families. At other times they stayed a little while to warm themselves, with their faces toward the fire on which their fish was roasting, and other little fires burning behind them, that they might be warmed on all sides at once.

"It seemed as if they were unwilling to lose a moment's time; for while they were warming themselves, they were employed in roasting fish, some of which they laid on the coals with the utmost caution, though they took little care of the lobsters, which they threw anywhere into the fire; and when they were ready they divided the claws among the men and the children, reserving the body for themselves, which they sometimes ate before returning into the water.

"It gave us great pain to see these poor women condemned to such severe toil; while, at the same time, they ran the hazard of being devoured by sharks, or entangled among the weeds that rise from the bottom of the sea. We often entreated their husbands to take a share in their labor at least, but always in vain. They remained constantly near the fire, feasting on the best bits, and eating broiled fucus, or fern-roots. Occasionally they took the trouble to break boughs of trees into short pieces to feed the fire, taking care to choose the driest.

"Sometimes a party of women will go out on a raft made of layers of reeds, pushing themselves along by means of very long poles. When they arrive at a bed of mussels, they will stay there nearly all day diving from the raft, with their nets tied round their necks, and, after remaining under water for a considerable time, come up with a heavy load of mussels in their nets.

"They even manage to cook upon this fragile raft. They make a heap of wet sand upon the reeds, put a few stones on it, and build their fire on the stones, just as if they were on shore. After remaining until they have procured a large stock of mussels, they pole themselves ashore, and in all probability have to spend several hours in cooking the mussels for the men. The mussels are usually eaten with the bulrush root.

"There is a sort of crayfish which is found in the mud-flats of rivers and lakes. These are also caught by the women, who feel for them in the mud with their feet, and hold them down firmly until they can be seized by the hand. As soon as the creatures are taken, the claws are crushed to prevent them from biting, and they are afterwards roasted, while still alive, on the embers of the fire. Tadpoles are favorite articles of diet with the Australians, who fry them on grass.

The ordinary limpet, mussel, and other mollusks, are largely eaten by the natives, who scoop them out by means of smaller shells. Sometimes they cook the mollusks by the simple process of throwing them on the embers, but as a general rule they eat them in a raw state.

(To be Continued.)

A BIRD THAT TURNS SOMERSAULTS.—There's a pretty little bird that lives in China, and is called the fork-tailed parus. He is about as big as a robin, and he has a red beak, orange colored throat, green back, yellow legs, black tail, and red and yellow wings. Nearly all the colors are in his dress, you see, and he is a gay fellow.

But this bird has a trick known by no other birds that I ever heard of. He turns somersaults! Not only does he do this in his free life on the trees, but also after he is caught and put into a cage. He just throws his head far back, and over he goes, touching the bars of the cage, and alighting upon his feet on the floor or on a perch. He will do it over and over a number of times without stopping, as though he thought it great fun.

All his family have the same trick, and they are called tumblers. The people of China are fond of keeping them in cages and seeing them tumble. Travelers often have tried to bring them to our country, but a sea voyage is not good for them, and they are almost sure to die on the way.

HARD work prevents worry. "Work, but don't worry," the old saw says; but some people don't work, so they take it out in worrying.