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## God's Great Men: Nephi

Author(s): B. H. Roberts

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**Abstract:** This article gives a brief life sketch of Nephi, who was young, probably under twenty years old, when he became a “pioneer and leader of the family.” He was obedient, he was courageous in confronting Laban, and he never questioned or complained.

Show me the passage of Scripture where Christ denounced polygamy?"

Mr. D.—"You will find it in Luke xx, 26—36 (*reading excitedly*). You have shown me the pretended record of Ephraim—the Book of Mormon—which contains more than the Bible, so it must be of the devil—good night."

Elder B.—"I have some of our works with me which I beg of you to accept and read; they will explain"—

Rev. Davenport.—"We want none of your explanations. I would not take a pinch of salt from you. We want nothing more to do with you."

Mr. D.—"I will take the books although in handling pitch I expect, to be defiled; but in my business as lecturer I have sometimes to handle pitch, and I mean to lecture on the apostasy in general, and the "Mormon" apostasy in particular."

Rev. Davenport (*to Elder Seegmiller*).—"You are a young man, and I hope you are not a believer in that horrible deception. Are you a married man? If not, may God keep you

from ever entering into such a vile system as polygamy, or such an odious delusion as 'Mormonism!'"

Elder Seegmiller.—"No, sir, I am not a married man, but I thank God for such a happy delusion as 'Mormonism;' and as to more wives than one, I trust I shall so live as to be worthy of such a privilege. I bear my testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that the work in which I am engaged is the work of the Almighty, and if I had not received a testimony of its divinity before, I should have received it this evening during the conversation I have listened to (*holding out his hand*)—good night."

Rev. Davenport.—"No, sir, I will not shake hands with you."

So we were shown the door. Our doctrines were correct and we were dear brethren until we were known as Latter-day Saints, then we were treated as vile impostors; but, thank God, we are willing to suffer reproach for righteousness' sake.

## GOD'S GREAT MEN.

### NEPHI.

DEAR Friends:—Many young people have been interested, and perhaps astonished and thrilled with narratives of the men of God, a portion of whose history is found in the Old and New Testaments. Cain and Abel; Noah and the flood; the rescue of Lot, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; the faith and trials of Abraham; the wonderful story of Joseph in Egypt; the rescue of Moses from the Nile and his after greatness as the leader of Israel; the bravery of David; the wisdom and riches of Solomon; the power obtained through faith by Elijah and Elisha; Daniel and his Hebrew brethren, and many others—all these are subjects that may be and are frequently dwelt upon to interest and instruct the young as well as the aged.

Instances of the love of our Savior and blessings obtained by His disciples through faith, abound in the

New Testament and they are or should be kept constantly before our minds as a guide, reproof, correction, or stimulus as our circumstances may require. But it is proper that as Latter-day Saints we should bear in mind that the Lord also led a portion of His chosen people to the Western Continent, and that their history, the Book of Mormon, also contains equally thrilling and remarkable accounts of blessings bestowed upon faithful persons, difficulties overcome, and wonderful feats accomplished.

One of the first of the great and good men spoken of in that book was Nephi. He says that when he left Jerusalem, in obedience to the command of God to his father, Lehi, he was "exceeding young;" (probably under twenty years of age) yet, because of his submission to his father's counsel and faith in God, he was not only chosen before his three brethren,



but also became the pioneer and leader of the family on that long journey by sea and land, to the land of promise. First is shown his faith in believing that they could obtain the records, so essential to his people's welfare, from the powerful Laban. Then his persistence when his brothers murmured and failed in the undertaking. Then his obedience to the dictates of the Spirit to do an act from which his bloodless hands and sensitive spirit shrank is plainly shown forth; but no less so than his strategy in deceiving Zoram and obtaining the records, and his valor and prudence in overcoming the fears of both Zoram and his (Nephi's) brothers. We then have evidence of his earnestness in prayer and his thirst for knowledge, which enabled him to commune with heavenly beings; to find out the meaning of the symbols shown to his father in his dream; to write so plainly concerning the birth and mission of Christ; the apostasy from the Church founded and established by Him and His apostles; the rise and power of the great and abominable church founded by the Devil; the rise, greatness, and decline of the posterity of himself and brethren upon the promised land; the discoveries of Columbus and the gathering of the Gentiles to that land; the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the establishment of the Gospel among them, and the final triumph of the kingdom of God over all its foes. These things were all shown so plainly to him, that to read his writings, one could easily be led to believe that he was reading history rather than prophecy. The events portrayed in the xi-xiv chaps. of I Nephi, show him to have been a prophet, second to none of whom we read in the Bible.

Then notice how the qualities of Moses and David were combined in him during their eight years of travel across the wilderness of Arabia. Picture him, if you can, on their arrival at the sea shore, standing alone upon that mountain in the land Bountiful; without a fire, without tools, without a model, and for aught we know, without a trade; and yet commanded to build a ship. Can you imagine what faith it must have re-

quired to take the skins of beasts and make a bellows; to extract fire from the stones; to take the ore and melt it, obtaining therefrom the iron; to temper it and make tools of steel; and with those tools construct a vessel suitable to carry a colony with provisions, seeds, etc., across those great and, to them, unknown waters? And all this in opposition to the wishes of his elder brethren, who called him a fool, and declared the task impossible. One may say: If God commanded him, he must have known that He has all power, but we find that Moses demurred to going before Pharaoh, even when God commanded him. Laman and Lemuel, too, had evidences of the power and purposes of God, but those evidences did not kindle any such faith in them. The ship having been built and laden, our noble hero now had to become captain and guide her all that long journey across the Indian and Pacific Oceans, from what we call the Arabian Sea to South America. This accomplished and the colony safely landed, he was soon deprived of the counsel, experience, and assistance of a loving and God-fearing father; his brethren pursued their own lazy and filthy inclinations; and again he led those who would follow him over an unexplored country for hundreds of miles. Here he continued laboring in their interests in the capacity of agriculturist, miner, architect, builder, engraver, warrior, ruler, instructor, prophet, seer and revelator for a period of about forty-five years longer; ably assisted, no doubt, by his elder brother Sam, and his younger brothers, Jacob and Joseph. True, we have but little of their history during that time, as the abridgment made by Mormon and first translated by Joseph Smith was lost, and that which we have is taken from other plates, on which they, the Nephites, engraved their prophecies and teachings; but from what we have, we can understand that their labors in cultivating the soil, building homes and a temple, working in the mines and defending themselves, must have been very great. No wonder they loved Nephi exceedingly. We can imagine how the young must have venerated him as they heard and



thought upon how he had led their fathers and mothers, and with what pleasure they listened to him, as with eloquence and earnestness he recounted to them the mercies and blessings God had bestowed upon them, portrayed their destiny and entreated

them to be obedient and faithful.

There are many other noble characters spoken of in that sacred book and some of their distinguishing traits may be referred to hereafter by yours affectionately,

UNCLE JAMES.

## OUR BODIES, AND HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THEM.

### CHAP. VII.

#### VEGETABLES.

PEOPLE who fail to eat some kind of vegetables, daily, neglect obtaining an important aid towards maintaining health. Vegetables are, to a great extent, nature's purifiers of the human system. They possess medicinal properties, more or less, in the saline elements, or natural salts, contained in them; and the pure liquid they draw from mother earth is more healthful than any other fluids of which we can partake. It is worthy of note that our bodies are about three-fourths water, our nourishment, therefore, should be in similar proportion. As the water in vegetables is the best that can be absorbed, containing in solution various essential, chemical, elements that thereby readily enter into the physical structure, it is manifestly a wise policy to include vegetables in our diet. The lack of a sufficiency of fresh vegetable food is known to produce scurvy, and other diseases of like character, tending, also, to weaken the nervous system.

The finely contrasted flavors that are in the great variety of edible vegetables add very much to the pleasure of eating, and they who avoid using that class of food deprive themselves, correspondingly, of considerable of the gratification that should always accompany the act of eating. Another benefit connected with a free use of vegetables, besides providing an abundance of pure nourishment, is that their bulk gives a feeling of satisfaction as to quantity, and at the same time, they furnish a proportion of indigestible material needful as a natural stimulant to the digestive organs. When food is altogether fine,

or concentrated, such as white bread, meat, cheese, etc., it is mostly absorbed into the system, leaving very little residue in the intestinal canal; a sluggish condition of the alimentary organs is the consequence, resulting in constipation and its many attendant evils. All this is avoided by a proper use of vegetables.

And now, having, very briefly, shown the necessity for this class of food to be freely used, we will name the principal kinds of vegetables, displaying a variety that should be sufficient to suit all tastes. First is the potatoe, because it occupies the same position among vegetables that wheat does among the grains, it is king; the others are asparagus, artichoke, beets, (and young beet tops,) cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, dandelions (before blossoming), green peas and beans, kale, lettuce, leeks, onions, parsnips, radishes, rhubarb, sea-kale, shalot, sorrel, spinach, spring nettles, tomatoes, turnips, vegetable marrow, etc., to which may be added the spicy herbs, parsley, pepper grass, mustard and cress, water cress, endive, horse-radish, winter savoury, garden sage, sweet marjoram, lemon thyme, etc. From such a list as this, by judicious admixtures, we might easily have as many agreeable changes as there are days in each month.

The best time to eat vegetables is at dinner; fruits should not be eaten at the same meal with them, they do not "agree" together, potatoes are the only exception to this rule, they go well with any kind of food. It is not advisable to have many kinds of vegetables at one meal, it is best to restrict the number to one, or perhaps two, besides potatoes. The better plan is