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## Indian Legends

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**Abstract:** This article is a book review of *Indian Legends* by James W. Lesueur.

## INDIAN LEGENDS

THE LEGENDS of the American Indians bear witness to the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. The Nephite record teaches that the ancestors of the Indians were of the blood of Israel; and Indian tradition contains clear evidence of a knowledge of Israel's God, and of Christ's message.

In a recent book entitled *Indian Legends*, Elder James W. Lesueur, of the presidency of the Arizona Temple, has brought together, from standard sources, more than two hundred such traditions, and has arranged them in groups to show their harmony with the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The stories of the origin, migrations and wars of the Indians, forming Part 1, are everywhere reminiscent of the Book of Mormon account. In the stories of the creation, the deluge and the Tower of Babel, forming Parts 2, 3, and 4, can be recognized, though often distorted, the Biblical account of the same events. The religious customs and beliefs of the Indians in Part 5, shows an agreement with Israelitish doctrine and practices which is more than accidental. Parts 6, 7 and 8 reveal the Indian traditions of a god who visited them and of a lost record quite in accordance with the Book of Mormon story. The book concludes with a series of legends which are really splendid moral lessons. More than fifty excellent illustrations help explain the text and embellish the work.

*Indian Legends* makes fascinating reading, and is well worth the perusing of all who are interested in the Book of Mormon. The book is convincing in its claim that the religious doctrines and customs of the American Indians were drawn from Hebrew sources. Therefore, the book is corroborative evidence of the truth of the work established through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith the Prophet.

We congratulate President Lesueur upon his industry and skill in producing this interesting volume.—W.

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## WHY THE INDIANS ARE HEBREWS

(MRS. SIMON'S *Ten Tribes of Israel*, pages 89 to 149).

1. THEY had their cities of refuge, Cholula being one.
2. They had the feast where boughs were carried. (Lev. 23 : 40.)
3. They had their Cherubims over the ark of covenant.
4. Their temples were rich with ornamentation.
5. Their Priest wore headdress or crown like Aaron.
6. They had breastplates for the High Priests.
7. They had fringe on their garments.
8. Offered their first fruits.
9. Had their ablutions or molten sea for the Priest.
10. Sprinkled dust upon their heads in humiliation.

11. Had knowledge of the tree of life.
12. Knew of the holy virgin.
13. Called their temple the House of God.
14. Had periodical fasting and prayer.
15. They had their thank offerings.
16. They believed in sacrifice.
17. They had a knowledge of the cross.
18. They broke no bones in offering up sacrifice.
19. They built altars of twelve stones.
20. They believed in washing and anointing with oil.
21. They kept the laws of purification after birth.
22. On the death of a husband the oldest brother should marry the widow.
22. They believed in circumcision.
24. They had a knowledge of the Book of Genesis.
25. They observed the law of eating proper meats.
26. They observed many days of feasts.
27. They ate the Sacrament, calling it the flesh of God.
28. They believed in self-denial and suffering.
29. They ate certain herbs and roots for purification.
30. They worshipped a trinity.

—*Indian Legends*, page 172

#### THE BIRDS AND THE FLOOD

(*Pima Indians*, page 245)

When the waters covered all the earth two birds were hanging onto the sky with their beaks. The larger was gray with a long tail and beak; the smaller was the tiny bird that builds its nest like an olla, with only a very small opening to get in. The larger one cried and cried, but the other just held on tight and said: "Don't cry. You see that I'm littler than you, but I'm very brave. I don't give up so easily as you do. I trust in God; He will take care of those in danger if they trust in Him."

—*Indian Legends*, page 317

#### A TRAVELER'S IMPRESSIONS OF "MORMONISM"

(*Concluded from page 199*)

All religions are provided for. Episcopal churches, Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, Christian Scientists, abound; and the Latter-day Saints have no privileges in the State except those which are derived from their numbers, their wealth and their remarkable industry and prosperity.

The "Mormon" Church owns highly valuable property in the centre of the city. It is numerous, though not in proportion so numerous as of old. . . .

Brigham Young and his people knew that there were great mineral riches in these mountains and on these plateaus, just as there were in Colorado, on the other side of the Rockies through which they had trekked. But they did not want to set up a mining colony which would