

THE BOOK OF LEMUEL

Little known to the body of the church, during the summer of 1990, a hitchhiker traveling across the southwest desert made a marvelous discovery while searching for a place to bed down in a cave. Unable to sleep, the hitchhiker began picking at a crack in the floor of the cave, and to his dismay, found nothing less than a lid to a stone box. Upon removing the lid, he discovered a set of aluminum plates, a switchblade knife, and a pair of fuzzy dice.

In his desperation for food, the hitchhiker sold the plates to an archaeologist from BYU, whom he met at a Kentucky Fried Chicken in Shiprock, New Mexico. The relics were reportedly sold for \$100 and a bucket of the Colonel's extra crispy with extra coleslaw and mashed potatoes.

Archaeologists have determined that the plates date from approximately 600 BC and contain writings in reformed Egyptian, which seem to parallel the narrative account of the Book of Mormon. It is thought that the engravings were written by several men, or by one slightly schizophrenic man.

The church has delayed comment until the plates can be fully translated. But we are proud to present this premier look at the translated portions of these plates.

Dear Diary,

I, Lemuel, having been born of nagging parents, therefore I have been harassed much of my life. Not only by my parents, but also by my younger brother, Nephi, and my older brother, Laman, with whom I get along best. There, now maybe my parents will get off my back about keeping a record. LEM

Dear Diary,

It has finally happened! My father is a lunatic! He has decided that he "feels" that we should leave the big city and head into the wilderness. God only knows where. He started talking about leaving after he came home from yelling at the people to repent. He said they threw rocks at him. I think one of them must have hit him on the noggin. He then went and laid on his bed for about 12 hours straight. I thought he was in a coma. LEM

Dear Diary,

It looks like Dad is serious about this leaving thing. He says that he had a dream in which God told him to leave Jerusalem. I guess it couldn't have had anything to do with the mastacolli he ate before he went to bed. I always have dreams like that if I eat pizza before I sleep.

Laman and I are resisting, but it looks like we'll have to go too. We don't really have to I guess, but if we don't, how will we eat? Despair. I have a girlfriend and my own horse. Dad is loaded with gold, which we can't take

into the wilderness because it's too heavy. Of course, that mamma's boy, Nephi, is eager to go. He makes me sick. I think I'll hurl my lunch if I see him again today. LEM

Dear Diary,

We've been living in a tent for three days now. My neck hurts from sleeping on the ground. It must show because Dad and Nephi keep commenting on my stiffneckedness. There are mosquitoes everywhere and I have blisters on my feet. Today Dad said, "O that though mightest be like unto the valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord... blah, blah, blah." Whatever. Constant nagging. He never lets up and Nephi isn't much better. Have to go now. LEM

Dear Diary,

Him I'm Lemnal, and I'm retarded.

Dear Diary,

I didn't write that last entry. Laman must have gotten a hold of the plates; sometimes he's really a jerk. I wish there was a way to erase engravings. Maybe a jeweler could fix it. Dad says we have to go back to town and get some brass plates from Laban. Sure, like Laban's going to say, "Here, take them. Maybe you want my coat too? You want that I should die of pneumonia, then you'll be happy?" He hit me once when we were younger because I spit on him. I'm not going. LEM

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Dear Diary,

Just got back from the city. It was all right, but the walk back was murder. Laman was picked to go talk to Laban. He went over and got drunk with him, then hit on one of his women so Laban pummeled him bloody. After that we went back home and got our gold and tried to buy the plates from Laban but his gang chased us away and stole our stuff. Laman was furious. I thought the vein on his forehead would blow up! He got a stick and we beat Nephi and Sammy with it until we got tired. Finally, Nephi found Laban by a wall. He was hammered, so Nephi chopped off his head and took the plates. LEM

Dear Diary,

Now Dad wants us to go back and get Ishmael and his family. He probably wants us to marry his daughters—he's got about a million kids. I guess I don't mind too much about going to Jerusalem this time, some of Ish's daughters have nice bods, but nothing upstairs. But hey, what more could a man want? I'll write more when we get back. LEM

Dear Diary,

Just got back. Ishmael's daughters are better than I remembered. But there's one that's butt ugly, she's been hanging on Laman like a bad suit. Nephi's been on our backs the whole time. He keeps telling me to repent. Sheesh! It's not like I'm Cain or something! LEM

Dear Diary,

I've had it out here! I'm no camper. I've had diarrhea for the last two months. I haven't been writing much lately because things have been really hard. Now the old man's got a ball he stares into for about eight hours a day. He says it tells him what to do. I'm going to bed. Mom's pregnant, I think. Either that or she has a tumor. I think she's too old to have a baby. LEM

Dear Diary,

Mom was pregnant. She had a boy—named him Joe. We all have families now and most of us have at least one kid. I have two—

Frank and Jesse. They're terrors, but I guess they'll grow out of it. I've got to write more often, but I always put it off. I don't know why, but my wife is getting really buff. I'm worried about it because she has almost gotten stronger than I have. Laman's wife is huge! She's stronger than eight cows. But then, I always told Laman that he had an eight cow wife! LEM

Dear Diary,

Oy! Vey! Would that there was a good deli in the wilderness. I'm craving some bagels and lox, maybe pastrami on rye. Nephi says God told him to build a boat. He's never seen a boat. Jerusalem's landlocked. I've never seen more than a glass of water at one time, let alone an ocean, and Nephi thinks he's Noah all of a sudden. He can't even shoot a bow right, he broke his last week. We went without food because of it, but Nephi probably called it a fast. LEM

Dear Diary,

Laman just gave me a tattoo. It really hurts! He rubbed salt in it before I could stop him, said it would make it feel better. It hurts like the dickens! I don't know why I let him do it; he can talk me into just about anything. I can't believe it's been eight years since we left home and here we are on the beach with a boat that probably won't even float. Mom had another baby—called him Jacob. I can already tell he's nothing but trouble. LEM

Dear Diary,

I'm really seasick. We've been having a party here on the ship Nephi made. It works pretty good, we've been floating around for two weeks now. We tied Nephi up yesterday because he is such a stiff. Then Laman got drunk and really got mad at him. It's been stormy a lot. Everybody says that God is punishing us with this storm and that we should untie Nephi or we might sink. Right! I doubt it. But maybe we'll untie him after Family Home Evening. LEM

END OF TRANSLATED PORTION