

THE END OF LABAN

(1 Nephi 1:99-121)

V99-121

Nephi responds in kind to Laman and Lemuel's argument.

Nephi reminds them that the Lord will in fact take care of the situation. Nephi's argument implicitly addresses their lack of faith.

Isaiah 43:16-17 says "thus saith the Lord, which, maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters". This is a reference to the crossing of the Red Sea. Pharaoh's chariots and horsemen were destroyed as Israel's God fought against them.

Nephi's admonition (v.100) sounds like he is expecting the Lord to do something rather impressive to dispose of Laban.

Deuteronomy 9:1-6 is where the Lord not only went ahead of the Israelites, but he also exerted this power alongside them and through them to assure victory.

And note the way Nephi parallels Laban with Egypt in describing their destruction (v.101-102). Nephi is anticipating the Lord doing something miraculous and quite detached from himself. Instead, he finds out he is much more intimately involved in Laban's demise than he wants to be.

V114: Statements, such as the one in this verse, shatter popular views of God as some all-beneficent, all-benevolent being who would never do anything harmful or violent. The fact of the matter is the Lord does not conform to our self-serving views of ethics and morality, and does not have to. He creates, He destroys, He grants forgiveness, He condemns.

Christians, and others as well, like to dismiss the God of the OT, who is entirely capable of issuing commands to kill, with sanitized views selectively drawn from the NT, as though the end of the Law of Moses meant an end to the Lord's anger at wickedness and intolerance of sin.

Why? I think it is because they do not want God to punish people. They see God as good and the devil as evil. Anything "bad" must from the devil. But, the problem comes in our subjectivity in labeling things as "bad". If anything we don't like is "bad", then it cannot be from God, because God is good, not bad. So, it ends up a very self-serving means of ascribing causes and effects to either God or the devil.

But, this verse informs us things don't work that way. The Lord reserves the right to interfere in human history when it suits His needs. And, He does so quite justly.

V121: Nephi doesn't say when he took the armor and garments off of Laban, only that he put them on after the execution. As the beheading was surely a bloody ordeal, it is safe to assume Nephi stripped the armor and garments he later donned prior to beheading.

- 1. Why did Nephi get the plates this time?**
- 2. Why did Nephi kill Laban?**
- 3. Why did the Lord command Nephi to kill Laban?**
- 4. Is it ok to kill?**
- 5. What would you have done?**