

He Took His Brother's Place

Nasomsee had broken a treaty. He must die. Chief Black Hawk, his father, knew this and knew it well.

Nasomsee had killed an Iowa brave. The Iowa had fired first and wounded Nasomsee, but as he fell Nasomsee had shot and killed the brave.

"Nasomsee cannot go to the Iowa village," said his brother Loud Thunder. "He is badly wounded."

"My son broke the treaty!" Black Hawk insisted.

"He cannot travel," Loud Thunder replied.

"Nasomsee is a Sauk." Black Hawk's voice was firm.

"Then I will go in his place, Father. I will die for him and for the honor of my people," Loud Thunder decided.

That settled, Black Hawk and Loud Thunder left the same morning. They rode for seven days until they came to the Iowa village. Then Loud Thunder got off his horse and said good-bye to his father. Alone, he marched toward the offended tribe. He sang the Sauk death song as he went.

Iowa braves quickly surrounded him and began to dance the Death Dance, but Loud Thunder showed no fear. Their war chief sent for Black Hawk. After talking with the Sauk chief, he held a council with his own braves. Then he spoke to all of his people. He told them that Loud Thunder had come to die for his brother.

At once the people began to cheer Loud Thunder. They gave him food, two horses, and set him free. There was great rejoicing among Black Hawk's party as Loud Thunder returned. They hurried back to their own lodges to share the good news with the rest of the tribe. Loud Thunder had been spared!

The story is true—one that is well known in Sauk folklore. It runs close to another that is also true. Long, long ago the Great Spirit mad a treaty with man. So long as man kept that treaty, they were friends. Day by day the Great Spirit came to walk and talk with man.

Then one sad day man broke the treaty. He did what the Great Spirit had said he must never do. He ate of forbidden fruit. He must die!

But the Great Spirit had a Son who loved man very much. He did not want him to die.

"I will go down to earth and take his place," He said. "I will die for him."

And so, He did. No one called a council with the Great Spirit as the Iowa chief had done with Black Hawk. No one plead the Son's cause. People did not cheer Him. Instead they cried, "*Away with this man. Crucify Him.*" And they put Him to death on a cross. Because of this, man can confess his sins, turn from them and live forever with Him. (John 1:9; 3:16)

The story has been handed down from father to son ever since that day. But it has not changed through the years as folklore is so likely to do. That is because

it has been preserved in a wonderful book called the Bible. Men can still read about it in Genesis 3 and Romans 5. and they can still be set free from their sins! This is the promise: “...*if the Son makes you free, you will be free for sure.*” (John 8:36 New Life Testament)