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Love from Mom :) 6-27-11

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Mon, Jun 27, 2011 at 11:50 AM

To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>

Cc: John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Hello, my Dear Sweet Phillippe, I mean, Dear Elder Phillip Larsen,

I made a list, so hopefully I can think of all the things I want to say to you today. If not, I'll have Email #2, #3, etc., like last week :).

As I look at that website which shows time and temp, I can see you've been having very wintry weather. I hope you're staying warm and comfortable!

Yesterday I saw Taylor Bentall. I know Dad told you he came home on Thursday, and spoke in Sacrament Meeting on Sunday. Very good talk, powerful testimony, but he didn't have much time, and he did not speak in Portuguese at all, because he said he wanted us to be able to understand him. So after Sacrament Meeting I went up to him and gave him a hug, and told him I wanted to hear him speak Portuguese, and told him I had been learning a bit. Then I said in Portuguese, "I speak a little Portuguese." Lesley Bentall was surprised and said Stuart had planned to do that, but never did. I'm really enjoying learning what I'm learning (I know now how to order beer, cold beer!), and I'm seeing that I really am learning. I'm trying hard to say things the way the speaker on the tape says it, and I listen to each lesson over and over until I get it and remember it. Taylor said, very slowly in Portuguese, that he would write a letter to you, or email it. And I understood it!

When I saw Sis. Heiner last week or so, she said that her son, Mike, made it his goal to speak so well people could not tell if he was Brazilian or not. He had a companion or knew someone who spoke that well, and you had to look at his American driver's license to know he was not really Brazilian. Of course, the Elder likely had the Brazilian look about him, and was not 6'2" tall and blond. But still, that would be quite a goal. I think it's wonderful how well you're doing. And really cool about having the gift of tongues for a few days. I told Taylor about that. He said the language ability comes and goes day by day, too. So some days, even without special spiritual gifts, you will understand more than others. He said he can talk about all kinds of gospel things, but has no understanding when it comes to soccer or something like that. I guess with reading the B of M in Portuguese, I'll begin to understand some scriptural words but it would not help if I were to read a knitting pattern in Portuguese.

One question I had for you about the money: in the tapes I'm listening to, they have dialogues where the lady has some reais, and dollars as well, and uses them both. Is that done in Brazil? Or did they just do that for the sake of learning vocabulary in the dialogue?

Nick Anderson, who lost his papers on the way to Brazil, is back now in Birmingham, Alabama. And yesterday I found out he has been reassigned there permanently. I'm sure it's a disappointment to have a change like that. But I asked his mother, and she said that when he found out the Quorum of the Twelve discussed and prayed about his situation, and felt inspired to reassign him, he is fine with it. That's where the Lord wants him to be. I think it's interesting how the Lord puts people in places where He wants them to be, and it's sometimes in a roundabout way.

Rachel has been spending more time with her Mom lately, which is good. They watch Dr. Who together, and other movies. And talk. She missed several FHE's with us, but spent it with her Mom instead, so that is fine. Really good, actually, to strengthen that relationship.

How much time do you have for cooking? Do you cook, much, in the evening for dinner? I'll see what recipes I can send to you, but also maybe need to know if there are any in particular you would like, or any that you could not get ingredients for so if I sent them you could not make them anyway. (Like Stroganoff--can you get sour cream?)

I have a couple of laminated cards to send to you that Julia brought from Seminary for you. I kept them because I wanted to look up the scriptures myself on them before sending them to you. But one of them is signs of the Second Coming, which is cool, considering that we were just talking about that recently with you.

How is the water situation in your house now? Were you able to get a picture of the monkey yet? And have you gotten the package yet? I'm guessing it could take awhile, though the people at the post office assured us it would be there in 8-10 days. They always seem surprised when I tell them it takes longer than that and that you need to put religious pictures on the package. They're just thinking of how the US Post Office functions, and not how it works in Brazil.

How did the kite flying go? About that thing you remembered from Sis. Scott, it makes me think of how teaching happens in all kinds of situations. You were flying kites that day, but you remember what she said about how it is always clear above the clouds. Which is a sort of metaphor for life, I think. And you remembered it, and it may have even been a comment in passing. So that's how the Lord teaches us, too, in little bits and pieces, associated with daily life, not just in meetings or talks.

I have done well with my journal this past week. My goal is to write a few lines each night, and it's a bit easier now that school is out and I can sleep a little later. I don't mind staying up the ten minutes or so later to write, and make sure it's done. So hopefully I can make this a daily habit and when school starts, my day won't feel complete unless I've written something. Karen Ogden said she would write at lunchtime, too. So that's another possible time for me. I want to be sure to record spiritual experiences and insights as well as just what happens each day, but I find that the more I write, the more I can think of to say, so that will come, as well.

I bought a little case for the iPod, a pretty quilted one that zips and has room for the headphones. I just wanted something to put it in when I take it to the gym, or put it in my bag, so it won't get scratched, and so that the headphones are with it. The case was on sale at Barnes and Noble, and I've been eying it for awhile, then they took off \$12 if you bought another little things, so I bought an ID case as well, which I need because of a smaller purse that does not fit my wallet very well. So the two things together cost less than just the technology case would have cost alone, before. Plus, I got the 10% off.

Julia and I are off now to walk to the Hawkins' house (good exercise, and it's now sunny after almost five days of rain!). We'll get oriented on their house and rabbit care while they are gone being in the Pageant this year. I'll write more later if I think of more, but know now that I love you very much (you didn't know that before I just said it, did you? :). I'm so proud of you, and really pleased at how well you're doing, glad you sound so well. Pres. Coopriider always asks about you when he and I meet, and I know he cares about you, too. I'm looking forward to your email, as I always do.

With love,
Mom