

A BOOK OF MORMON CRITIQUE

By Apostle Don McIndoo

The beautiful poem below was written by Renan Chuc of Ticul, Yucatan, an Elder in the Church of Christ. I believe it captures the very essence of this marvelous book. We shall use seven of the elements of his poem as our guide for a critique of the Book of Mormon.

OH, BOOK OF MORMON
(Translated from the Spanish)

Eternal book, thou art hidden
In Cumorah's lonely hill;
Plates of immortal wisdom
Revealing the story of the past.

Venerable book, blessed and full
Of profound and inspired philosophy;
Thou hast come to unite in joy
The houses of Joseph and Judah.

History of America, told in radiant brilliance
Of wondrous and mystical splendor:
The doctrines which the prophets spoke
Were the flowering paths of the Nephite.

Oh, book of eternal and simple truths
Containing verities announced by prophets;
Thou art the wisdom of sage and poet;
Enlightening the world through the ages.

1. "ETERNAL BOOK, THOU ART HIDDEN IN CUMORAH'S LONELY HILL." Mormon, the final leader of his people and servant of Jesus Christ, wrote the following words on one of the last plates, and today they are found in the introduction of the Book of Mormon on page iii. ***"Written and sealed up, and hid unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed; to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof; sealed by the hand of Moroni and hid up unto the Lord..."***

Just what was the purpose of the Lord in hiding this record in the earth? The ancient traditions of the Toltecs of Mexico give answer. Quetzalcoatl, the White God of ancient Mexico (also called Viracocha by the Incas and Itzamná by the Maya), gave the Toltecs a warning concerning the coming of the conquerors from Europe. After this He told them, ***"Carry your great books into the jungles. Place your histories deeply in caverns where none of these men can find them. . For children of War are these bearded strangers. They speak my precepts, but their ears do not listen"***¹

This ancient tradition (prophecy) alludes to the coming of the Spanish conquistadors. The accuracy of the tradition, and the danger to the Book of Mormon, is borne out by the coming of Bishop Diego de Landa to ancient Maní, Yucatan. Landa's impact on history rests, in large part, upon the ***"...famous Auto de fé of July 1562 at***

Maní, at which, in addition to some 5000 'idols', he burned as he tells us twenty-seven hieroglyphic rolls, all he could find but could not read..."²

Moroni, the son of Mormon, wrote, ***"I am the same who hideth up this record unto the Lord ... Yea, it shall be brought out of the earth, and it shall shine forth out of darkness, and come unto the knowledge of the people: and it shall be done by the power of God;"*** (Mormon 4:17 and 21). These words of Mormon and his son, Moroni, fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah, given 1200 years before these events took place.

Isaiah prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem, and he prophesied that after her destruction the words of her inhabitants would speak as if from the earth. ***"And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust."*** (Isaiah 29:4)

In the latter day this same Moroni, as a messenger of God, appeared to a young man named Joseph Smith. Joseph writes that on the twenty-first day of September of 1823, ***"... while I was thus in the act of calling upon God I discovered a light appearing in the room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor...He called me by name and said unto me...that God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good and evil, among all nations, kindreds, and tongues... He said that there was a book deposited written upon gold plates giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent..."***³

Three times the angel appeared to the young man that night and told him the same things on each occasion. He said that God was going to restore the true doctrine of the Church of Christ and the authority and power to represent Jesus Christ in the world once again after the long duration of the apostasy. This divine work would fulfil the prophecy of John: ***"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,"*** (Revelation 14:6)

On September 22 of 1827 Joseph, following the directions of the angel, obtained the ancient record. It would be translated, even as Mormon had written, ***"...by the gift and power of God."*** Joseph obtained the services of a scribe named Oliver Cowdery. Oliver, also a young man, had heard of the young prophet, his visions and his possession of some ancient and sacred plates. These stories had a profound impact on his mind. Wanting to know if it were true, he drew near to the Lord in prayer and obtained a firm conviction that this was a work of God.

On the fifth of April in 1829 Oliver renounced his post as a teacher and appeared at Joseph's door. Joseph received this young man as the answer to his prayers. Two days later they began the translation. While Joseph was translating the ancient plates with the help of the "interpreters" (see Mosiah 5:73-83), Oliver was writing the translation. Listen to the words of this young assistant:

"These were days never to be forgotten – to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom. Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his

mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, 'Interpreters,' the history, or record, called the 'Book of Mormon'”⁴

Young Joseph was not a learned person, nor was he well educated; nevertheless, within sixty and ninety days of actual labor, this book of 777 pages - a prodigious accomplishment - was completed in 1829. In this period of time no one remembered the ancient civilizations of Mexico or Central America, nor did they understand the history of the ancient inhabitants of this area. The world would have to wait ten more years for the explorer, John Stevens, to rediscover the ancient cities of the Americas. The marvel is that with all of today's knowledge gained by the studies of thousands of archaeologists, no one is able to repudiate this first description of the ancient civilization we find in the pages of the Book of Mormon, translated ***“by the gift and power of God.”***

After his work was concluded, Joseph Smith delivered again into the hands of the angel the plates and the interpreters. Nevertheless, the Lord did permit eleven other witnesses to see these sacred plates. The testimony of these witnesses is found on pages iv and v of the Book of Mormon. None of these witnesses, though suffering great persecution and affliction, ever renounced their testimony about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon nor their privilege to have seen these plates through the power of God. Some of them later, because of personal problems, left the church, but they always affirmed their testimony about the veracity of the Book of Mormon.

After completing the translation of the book in July of 1829, Oliver made a copy of the translation and it was sent to a printer. This book is the ancient history of some of the descendents of the tribes of Joseph and Judah that left Jerusalem before the destruction of that great city by the Babylonians. According to the plan of God, these persons were guided to the Americas. With the first printing of this sacred book we now hear their words, the prophecies and the preaching of those refugees from Jerusalem, founders of the great civilizations of ancient America. Their voice comes to our ears as a ***“voice out of the ground”***; a voice whispering ***“from the dust”*** as prophesied by Isaiah.

2. “PLATES...REVEALING THE STORY OF THE PAST.” The prophecies of the Holy Bible are full of the mysteries of God concerning His ancient people, the house of Israel. Jacob, father of the twelve tribes of Israel, spoke to his sons, one by one, about the things ***“which shall befall you in the last days”***. To his son, Joseph he prophesied in this manner:

“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.” (Genesis 49:22 and 26)

The tribe of Joseph shall be as a fruitful bough; her descendents shall multiply and extend themselves over a “wall”. What would constitute such a wall? This word, figuratively, signifies something that separates or isolates. The house of Israel was isolated from other nations of the world by the great deserts to the east and by the ocean

to the west. In order to understand what “wall” over which Joseph would pass, we turn again to the scriptures. In Psalms 80:11 we find the answer to this enigma. Once again, speaking of the tribe of Joseph (see verse one), it says, **“She sent out her boughs unto the sea...”** By this we understand that the “wall” referred to the sea, and that the descendents of Joseph would cross over the sea.

Another question immediately assails us. To what place would they travel when they crossed the sea? Jacob spoke of the **“everlasting hills.”** Ah, we have encountered another enigma. What is the significance of this expression, the everlasting hills? The prophet Moses also spoke of the house of Joseph and the land that his people would inherit:

“And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,”
(Deuteronomy 33:13-15)

Now we are able to understand that the distinguishing feature of land of Joseph would be its ancient mountains and everlasting hills. The prophets understood that great mountains are not eternal, for they are reduced by the elements and the erosion caused by them. For this reason the prophet Habakkuk wrote, **“He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.”** (Hab. 3:6)

From this we understand that the prophet was not speaking of mountains and hills that exist eternally, so his use of the word “everlasting” must have another meaning; hence, a chain of mountains and hills that ran from one end of the land to the other would distinguish the land of Joseph. In the entire world only the Americas fits this description, with a chain of mountains beginning in Alaska, to the north, and extending to the southern tip of Argentina. America, a land of everlasting mountains and filled with natural riches, shall be the inheritance of Joseph.

This remnant of the house of Israel that journeyed to America was not to be forgotten by God. They were guided by the Holy Spirit and blessed throughout the ages. The Book of Mormon is the history of this ancient people of the house of Israel that left Jerusalem about 600 years before the birth of Christ and arrived here in America. It also contains the history of a group from the house of Judah that arrived in America after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans shortly after 600 BC. There is a third short history of some of the refugees from the ancient tower destroyed by God some 2000 years before the birth of Christ. The Book of Mormon informs us that these groups of pilgrims crossed the great oceans to arrive in the Americas. One of these groups crossed the Atlantic Ocean, while the other two crossed the Pacific.

Many critics of the Book of Mormon oppose this history, saying that all the ancestors of Native Americans came by way of the land bridge at the Bering Straits between Asia and North America some 10,000 years ago. They tell us that during the subsequent centuries, there occurred a gradual development and evolution of the tribes as they moved farther and farther southward. In reality, these critics do not take into

consideration the histories, nor oral traditions, of the Maya and other tribes. We also see that many times they often seem to ignore the new discoveries of other archaeologists.

Where are we going to place our confidence, in the theories of scientists that oppose the Word of God in the Holy Bible, or in the written histories of Native Americans and their ancient leaders? Let's consider a few of the records and traditions of the ancient Maya:

- a. ***"...first Ahzib Quiché, write here on this paper of the coming of our fathers and grandfathers from the other side of the sea whence the sun rises."***⁵
- b. ***"Now on the 28th of September we sign this attestation in which we have written that which by tradition our ancestors told us, who came from the other part of the sea, from Civan-Tulan, bordering on Babylonia."***⁶
- c. ***"Together these tribes came from the other part of the sea, from the East, from Pa Tulan, Pa Civan. These, then, were the three nations of the Quichés, and they came from where the sun rises, descendents of Israel, of the same language and same customs."***⁷

According to the traditions of the Maya, these people are of Israel and crossed over the sea to arrive in America. Such traditions of Native Americans are identical to the story found in the Book of Mormon. Are such traditions to be counted only as myths? This has been the case most often in the past, but perhaps a new attitude is now dawning. On December 11, 1997 the Canadian Supreme Court ruled that native claims to vast areas of Canadian territory are more valid than the current laws recognize:

"One of the most important aspects of the judges' opinion is the way it clears up a longstanding dispute over traditional claims..."

"The Supreme Court specifically rejected a lower court ruling in which native claims to land in British Columbia were denied. In the course of those proceedings, native people came to court to perform traditional ceremonies, chanting and dancing in ancient ways to relate the histories that had been passed down for untold generations about how they came to be on the land. Thursday, the justices made it clear that the lower court had erred in rejecting the oral evidence."⁸

There are also many discoveries made by men of science that provide evidence of the truthfulness of the history revealed in this ancient book. Consider this Maya tradition: ***"The Mayas claimed that their ancestors came from distant regions in two bands. The largest and most ancient immigration was from the East, across, or rather, through the ocean. The second band less in number and later in time came from the West..."***⁹ This story supports the narrative of the Book of Mormon concerning the Nephite people and the people of Zarahemla.

As we have mentioned, the critics of the Book of Mormon argue that the ancestors of the Maya and other tribes came from the north about 10,000 years ago and their cultures evolved gradually as they traveled southward. The discoveries of many archaeologists indicate something quite different, for they uphold the story as found in the Book of Mormon.

According to the noted Americanist, A. Hyatt Verrill, the coming of the Maya was, ***“an abrupt and entirely revolutionary order of things, exactly as though the laws, customs, arts, sciences, industries and social organization of the new regime had been brought, ready-made and fully developed, from another sphere or unknown land.”***¹⁰ According to the words of this archaeologist, we can see this people arrived with their civilization fully developed, not in a state of gradual evolution. This is what the Book of Mormon records. And what do the archaeologists say about their time of arrival?

“With their calendrical system already in working order the Mayas appear on the threshold of history 600 years before the Christian era...”¹¹ Here we find the same time frame identified in the beginning of the narration of the Book of Mormon.

New discoveries continue to support this time frame. Richard Hansen of UCLA, began excavations of the ancient Mayan city of Nakbé in 1989. His findings created a stir among scholars. I quote the results of his study: ***“The discovery, described by scholars as surprising and exciting, puts the emergence of an elaborate Mayan civilization with large cities back to at least 600 BC.”***¹²

Interestingly, such studies caused one scholar, David Freidel, to write, ***“Maya civilization banged into existence in its own way and time It is unsettling. For it violates the tacit rules of diffusion, and, even worse, the tacit rules of gradual evolution espoused by modern archaeology.”***¹³

For just such reasons we are able to say with all confidence, as did the poet, that the Book of Mormon contains ***“Plates of immortal wisdom,
Revealing the story of the past.”***

3. “TO UNITE IN JOY THE HOUSES OF JOSEPH AND JUDAH.” From the time of the death of King Solomon there would be neither peace nor cooperation between the house of Judah and the house of Joseph. Judah lived to the south and her capital was Jerusalem. Joseph, in large part, lived to the north and her capital was Samaria. Between the two nations there existed a strong enmity. But the Holy Bible predicts this enmity shall be abolished at a future time. ***“The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.”*** (Isaiah 11:13)

Within the narrative of the Book of Mormon we find a notable instance of the reconciliation of the houses of Joseph and Judah. It serves as a type of that great future reconciliation to come, as prophesied by Isaiah. After the captivity of Jerusalem, a remnant of Judah under the leadership of Mulek, a surviving son of King Zedekiah, was guided to these American shores. Arriving with no written history or scripture both their language and religion became corrupted. How joyful they were when into their midst came King Mosiah and his followers, descendents of Joseph. They were to be one unified people from that time forward. What a wonderful thing for Israel to anticipate.

Again, the history and traditions of the ancient Maya lend credence to this story found in the Book of Mormon. In the colonial chronicles of the Maya from the mountainous areas of Guatemala (our theoretical Nephite people of the house of Joseph) the people to the north of them (the followers of Mulek) were ***“...foreigners who speak our tongue brokenly.”***¹⁴ Other studies show that the converse of this is equally true. ***“...Kaufman describes a linguistic influence in the eastern Central***

Depression of Chiapas which he believes came in about 300 B.C. He describes the influence as coming from 'refugees from Kaminaljuyu (thought by many to be the City of Nephi – dem).'"¹⁵ Both the geographical setting and the time coincide with the beautiful story one reads in the Book of Mormon.

Critics of the Book of Mormon object to this story on the grounds that the Bible states all the sons of King Zedekiah were slain by the Babylonian army. However, a closer examination of this event as recorded in 2 Kings 25: 1 –7 reveals that those sons of the king who were captured and executed before his eyes belonged to ***"the men of war"*** (verse 4) who fled Jerusalem in the night. The custom of these people was that the children remained with the women of the family until they reached the age of five years when they ***"...began to learn the arts and duties of life under the care of their fathers..."***¹⁶ Jeremiah relates that the women of Zedekiah were escaped to Mizpah.(Jeremiah 41:10).

There is another prophecy in the Bible that speaks of these two nations. In this prophecy, the prophet Ezekiel refers to a "stick". We know that in Ezekiel's day the Hebrews wrote on scrolls of paper or leather. This material was then fastened at each end to a stick in order to roll and unroll it. So we believe that Ezekiel was prophesying about two books, one for the house of Joseph and the other for the house of Judah.

"The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." (Ezekiel 37:15-22)

In this beautiful prophecy there are three aspects of the future of Israel that are very important. In verses 20 through 22 the prophet speaks of the restoration of all Israel in the latter days. The lost sheep of Israel shall be gathered together once again by the power of God. Verses 15 through 19 tell us that the two major divisions of Israel, Judah and Joseph, shall each have a book in their hands. The book of Judah is the Holy Bible and the Book of Joseph is the Book of Mormon. The two books shall be one in the hand of God to complete His work of the latter day. The third part of this important prophecy speaks of a king over the house of Israel. This king shall be our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to our Lord, we have in the Book of Mormon another witness of Jesus Christ which tells of His resurrection, His appearance to His people here in America and

that He lives today and is at the right hand of the Father. This book of Joseph teaches us that Jesus is the Messiah, the Only Begotten Son of God and that He promised to return to earth and receive His bride, the church. This faithful witness of Jesus Christ teaches us that the words of the apostles written in the Holy Bible are true.

“And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles, unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren; And after it had come forth unto them, I beheld other books which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles, and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true. And the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb;” (1 Nephi 3:190-191, 195)

How valuable is this added witness to the understanding of the divinity of the Holy Bible? To the ordinary believer it should become increasingly of greater worth as liberal Protestant and Catholic clergy adhere to ***“...the prevailing judgment of biblical scholars and mainstream theological schools that the gospels of the New Testament, like the rest of the Holy Scriptures, are a mixture of historical fact and mythological truths....”***¹⁷

Finally, having every reason for confidence in Book of Mormon prophecies, we can look forward to the day when the Lord shall raise up a special witness to assist in this reconciliation of Joseph and Judah that will make them one people:

“And there shall raise up one mighty among them, who shall do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith. To work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God, unto the bringing to pass much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren. (2 Nephi 2:46-47).”

4. “HISTORY OF AMERICA, TOLD IN RADIANT BRILLIANCE.” As our poet has written, the history of ancient America shines forth from the pages of the Book of Mormon with a radiant brilliance. What is the source of that brilliance? The answer to this question is found in the inspired words of the Apostle John. ***“In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”*** (John 1:4-5) Certainly Christ is the light of this dark world and Christ is the central theme of the Book of Mormon.

“For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophecy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins. And now behold I say unto you, that the right way is to believe in Christ, and deny him not; and Christ is the Holy One of Israel:” (2 Nephi 11: 43, 48, 55)

Certainly the prophets of ancient America prophesied about the mission of our Savior, Jesus Christ. But this is not all because, after His resurrection, Christ came to America and walked among the ancient inhabitants of the land. While Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees in Jerusalem, He told them, **“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”** (John 10:16)

The Pharisees of that day did not understand His words, and many wise men today do not understand them either. Many people today believe that Christ was referring to the Gentiles, but this was not the intent of His words. Jesus always spoke with clarity and He said, **“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”** (Matthew 15:24) It is true that after His rejection by the Jews, Christ sent His disciples to the Gentiles, according to the great plan of God. But it is also true that the Gentiles never heard His voice, except through the ministering of the Holy Ghost. No, Christ was referring to His ministry among the lost sheep of Israel, those that had been scattered over the face of the earth and the isles of the sea during the Diaspora. As the Good Shepherd of Israel the resurrected Jesus came to America to preach the good news of salvation to the remnant of Joseph and Judah in this land.

The historian, K. S. Latourette, wrote, **“Jesus is the most influential life ever lived on this planet.”** It is true that the world has been changed completely by His presence. In this same manner, if Christ appeared here in the Americas, we should expect to encounter His influence among the nations of the Native Americans. And so we do; the anthropologist, Laurette Sejourné, calls the White God of the Native Americans, **“...the greatest figure in the history of the New World.”**¹⁸

We are able to trace the footsteps of Christ in the traditions of the tribes of Native Americans. Almost all of the prophecies in the Book of Mormon relating to Christ and all the stories told of His ministry in America are found in their ancient traditions. Beginning with the prophecy of His birth, the anthropologist, Karena Shields, writes of the tradition of the Maya: **“We are the Maya. We came from the east, we came out of the morning... Hunab Ku, the All-God, was the only one who knew. He saw, and sent Itzamná his son to earth to teach man... Itzamná was made into child and then man, with a hand that blessed, and in turn the earth blessed him.”**¹⁹

Samuel, a Lamanite prophet in the Book of Mormon, prophesied about some of the signs of the birth of Christ on the other side of the great sea. **“And behold there shall be a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you.”** (Helaman 5:59) The anthropologist, L. Taylor Hansen, writes of a tradition of the indigenous people of the state of Oklahoma. The God of the Americas **“...told them that He was born across the ocean, in a land where all men were bearded. In this land He was born of a virgin on a night when a bright star came out of the heavens and stood over His city. Here, too, the heavens opened and down came winged beings singing chants of exquisite beauty.”**²⁰

In the Book of Mormon, Alma prophesied about the life of the savior who should come into the world: **“And he shall go forth, suffering pains, and afflictions, and temptations of every kind; And he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities.”** (Alma 5:20 and 22) Rudolfo Anaya, a professor at the University of New Mexico, wrote

of the traditions of the God of his ancestors in old Mexico. ***“He knew he would be tempted many times while he lived in the body of a man. He knew the path he followed in the heavens, far away from the realm of man. He had come to Tollán to understand the flesh.”***²¹

The Book of Mormon tells us that when Christ made His first appearance among the people of America, ministering to them, He told them, ***“My bowels are filled with mercy; for I perceive that ye desire that I should shew unto you what I have done unto your brethren at Jerusalem, for I see that your faith is sufficient, that I should heal you. And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude, with one accord, did go forth, with their sick, and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and with all they that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him;”*** (3 Nephi 8:8 and 9) All the great tribes of Central America and South America have their traditions which tell of the God of miracles who walked among the inhabitants of the land. The Maya say that there were presented before Itzamná ***“...the sick, the halt, and the dead, and he healed and restored them all to life by the touch of his hand...”***²²

When Christ established His church here in the New World, He began by choosing twelve disciples the same way He had chosen twelve apostles in Israel. In 3 Nephi 5:44, we read, ***“And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto Nephi, and to those who had been called, (now the number of them who had been called and received power and authority to baptize, were twelve,)”*** The Book of Mormon always refers to these twelve as disciples. In the traditions of ancient Mexico, we read about the time when their God was about to depart: ***“The ultimate signs of His departure began to crowd upon them. He had chosen one of the Priesthood (from the favored Twelve who were always around Him) to be His successor.”***²³

The prophet Samuel spoke of the birth of the Christ child and the signs that would accompany that birth as we have previously read. He also prophesied about the death of Christ and of His resurrection after three days. We can read this prophecy in the fifth chapter of the Book of Helaman. During the Conquest of Mexico the Bishop of Chiapas, in the land of the Maya, wrote of their tradition: ***“About the Son, they say he was killed and lashed and a crown of thorns put on him, and that he was placed on a timber with his arms stretched out. They did not understand that he was nailed, but rather they thought that he had been tied, and there he died. And he was dead for three days, and on the third day he came to life and went up to heaven, and that he is there with his father.”***²⁴

We conclude this section concerning the traditions that relate to Christ in ancient America with a marvelous promise. In the Bible we have many beautiful promises made by the Lord, but none of them gives us more hope than the promise that He will once again return to the earth. Christ said, ***“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”*** (John 14:3) Some of the last words of Christ to His disciples here in America contain the same promise: ***“...even until all things shall be fulfilled, according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory, with the powers of heaven;”*** (3 Nephi 13:18)

Throughout the ages every believer has hoped to see the fulfillment of this promise during his or her lifetime. But in the last few years there has appeared a notable change, Today there are many, including Protestant ministers, Catholic priests, students of the Bible and professors of religion who no longer believe in this promise. Many think these words were the creation of the apostles and that Christ never promised to return. In truth, many of these persons do not believe that Christ was even resurrected from the dead. For just such reasons God has caused the Book of Mormon to come to us as another witness to the truth.

When Isaiah, in chapter 29, prophesied about the Book of Mormon, God had in mind just this modern attitude of skepticism by the scholarly. ***“Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.”*** (Isaiah 29:14)

We are grateful to our Lord that we have another witness of such truths. We have yet a third witness of this marvelous promise of Jesus Christ. This third witness is found in the traditions of indigenous peoples. If Christ walked in America and made such statements, surely the ancient cultural wisdom of the Native Americans would reflect this promise.

a. The anthropologist, Honoré, wrote, ***“Everywhere in the Indian states of Central and South America the legend of the White God is known, and it always ends in the same way: the White God left his people with a solemn promise that he would one day come back.”***²⁵

b. Professor Anaya, in his description of the ministry of Quetzalcoatl, ends his narration in the following manner: ***“His story is still told by the people, they keep it in their hearts. A vital part of that story are the remembered words of the resurrected Quetzalcoatl: ‘...one day I will return to you.’”***²⁶

c. A very respected anthropologist is Frank Waters. He writes of Quetzalcoatl, ***“...a god who manifested himself as a white, bearded man, taught the people all the arts and sciences of civilization, and then disappeared with the promise to return some day in the year of his birth, Ce Acatl.”***²⁷

5. “THE DOCTRINES WHICH THE PROPHETS SPOKE.” Just as the Bible, the Book of Mormon is full of wonderful prophecy, but there is a notable difference between the two books. The majority of the prophecies in the Book of Mormon relate to the inhabitants of the Americas and their future. So this book becomes a very important book to those who dwell in this land. Some of these prophecies are directed to the indigenous peoples, while others speak to the Gentiles who arrived much later from European nations. Each prophecy, as does all God’s Word, has great relevance to us and to our children.

A powerful witness to the divinity of this book is that it contains many prophecies that have already been fulfilled. Let’s consider some facts we can now read in the pages of history that have been fulfilled according to the words of Book of Mormon prophets. Nephi prophesied of the discovery of this land in later years by an individual who would be led by ***“...the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land.”*** (1 Nephi 3: 147) Of course, this unnamed explorer is known to us as Christopher Columbus.

Critics could proclaim that Joseph Smith certainly knew about the discovery of America by Columbus, and they would be correct. However, it has not been written in our histories that he was a man inspired by the Holy Spirit in his quest as the prophet had stated. Now comes a chronicle written by Columbus himself: ***“It was the Lord who put into my mind (I could feel his hand upon me) the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit...”***²⁸ Do the biographers of Columbus indicate that he was a man who would be apt to receive inspiration from the Almighty? Let’s examine the literature:

- a. ***“He looked upon himself as in the hand of God, chosen from among men for the accomplishment of his high purpose. He supposed that he saw foretold in the Holy Writ his contemplated discovery, shadowed forth in the revelations of the prophets.”***²⁹
- b. ***“In the end he looked past the geographers, astronomers and philosophers and sought interlocutors among the prophets. The Bible came to his aid.”***³⁰

The history of America is rooted in this beautiful prophecy of Nephi. ***“And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles; that they did prosper, and obtain the land for their inheritance;”*** (1 Nephi 3:151) Anyone seeing the little band of Pilgrims referred to in this prophecy would laugh at the prospect of their prosperity. The spring of 1621 found only five men left alive, strong enough to work and defend the little colony. Almost half the original colonists had died, leaving but five of the original eighteen wives among the living. One day a lone Indian, named Tisquantum, entered the compound. Who was he, why was he here and from where had he come?

He arrived in the camp by way of a tortuous journey. Twice kidnapped and carried to Europe; once to be sold on the auction block of slavery, he spent more than fourteen years away from America while in England and Spain. When finally returned home by Captain John Smith, he found himself the lone survivor of his people, who probably had been exterminated by some white man’s disease. Like young Joseph so long before, in his sufferings he was a special man prepared by God for His purposes.

Tisquantum, an English speaking Christian, now showed the men of this starving colony how to fish for eels for an immediate food supply, how to plant and fertilize corn for next winter’s food and how to trap beaver for a future commodity of sale; in short, how to prosper in this new land to which God had led them. One year later, while on a trip with Governor Bradford, Tisquantum became ill and died. He was prepared and present in that moment necessary to fulfill prophecy.

In his beautiful prophecy about America, Nephi was caused to know that these colonists God had brought to this new land would be delivered out of captivity because they ***“...did humble themselves before the Lord, and the power of the Lord was with them;”*** (1 Nephi 3:152). The pages of history record the validity of this prophecy:

John Hancock, President of the Provincial Congress, declared to them, ***“We think it is incumbent upon this people to humble themselves before God on account of their sins, for He hath been pleased in His righteous judgment to suffer a great calamity to befall us.... And also to implore the Divine Blessing upon us, that by the assistance of His grace, we may be enabled to reform whatever is amiss among us”***³¹ (Wouldn’t you love to hear such words fall from the lips of our

political leaders today? Or see them written in a child's history book?) Heeding his counsel, the Congress declared May 17, 1775 as a day of national fasting, prayer and humiliation.

We shall continue with a prophecy found in 2 Nephi 7:17-19: ***“But behold, this land, saith God, shall be a land of thine inheritance; and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land. And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles: and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles. And I will fortify this land against all other nations;”*** This prophecy was given about 550 years before the birth of Christ. The only inhabitants of the land known to the prophet were of the house of Israel. The Gentile peoples of Europe had yet to discover this land, but upon the arrival of Columbus in 1492, the door was opened and a flood of conquerors sailed in to establish their empires.

In North America the Gentiles were governed by the powerful king of England while the king of Spain, the king of Portugal, the king of France and the emperor of Russia governed other parts of the Americas.. But the prophecy in 2 Nephi 7 said, ***“there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.”*** Let's return to the prophecy in 1 Nephi 3:153-155. Nephi saw that the Gentiles to the north ***“were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations.”*** He was prophesying of the Revolutionary War of 1776 when the United States gained her liberty. After this historical revolution, all the nations of the Americas began their struggle for independence. Mexico was liberated in 1810, Venezuela in 1817, Columbia in 1819, Peru in 1822, etc. By the time the Book of Mormon appeared, just as recorded in Jacob's prophecy, the era of foreign dominion was coming to a close in America. What begins as prophecy, ends on the pages of history books.

The marvel is that during the course of our lives we have seen with our own eyes the fulfillment of many of those prophecies. Let's use, as an example, the prophecy about the gathering of Israel in the latter days. Seventy years after the birth of Christ the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, and from that time forth Israel has been scattered among the nations of the world. But God had given a promise to them through prophecy:

“And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; And the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance. Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers;” (2 Nephi 7:13-15)

Through the leadership of the United States and Great Britain, leaders among the Gentile nations, the United Nations made, in 1948, a mandate making the state of Israel a free nation for the first time in nearly 2000 years. It was an action that no one thought possible, but with God all things are possible. Our generation has seen the fulfillment of this marvelous prophecy. The only thing that detracted from the joy of the Jewish people was the fact that they still had no free access to the city of Jerusalem.

When Christ arrived in the first Christian century among the ancestors of Native Americans in Mexico, there is a great deal of evidence that He appeared in the area near Chiapas or Tabasco where the Mayan people lived. Some of the inhabitants of this area later moved to the Yucatan Peninsula. While Christ was teaching the multitudes He

revealed to them many important things that would take place in future generations. An example of this is found in 3 Nephi 9:85 – ***“Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people, be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance.”***

In verse 87 of this passage Jesus continued, ***“And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign...”*** The Master explained what the sign would be for this marvelous event. Then in verse 88 He told them that the Gentiles would receive these writings now known as the Book of Mormon. This part of His prophecy was fulfilled in 1829 when the book was translated and printed. His promise continued in verse 89 when He told them that some day the Gentiles would return these writings to the descendents of those hearing His prophecy that day. This was to be the sign that the liberation of Jerusalem was about to be accomplished.

This prophecy was fulfilled in 1951 when Apostle Clarence Wheaton came to Yucatan with the Gospel of Christ and the Book of Mormon. With the baptism of the first believers in 1953 and the calling and ordination of the priesthood among them, the Church of Christ really commenced among the Maya, descendents of those original hearers of the prophecy. The sign for the deliverance of Jerusalem had appeared. Fourteen years later, as a result of the Six-Day War in 1967, Jerusalem was liberated for the first time in nearly 2000 years. This is one of the great prophecies fulfilled in our day, and a definite proof of the divinity and dependability of Book of Mormon prophecy.

In like manner there are many other important prophecies that shall be fulfilled. When illuminated by the light of day, this natural world appears as the beautiful creation of our God. In the same way, the life of man shall appear a beautiful creation when illuminated by the revealed word of God. Certainly the inhabitants of America should give attention to the prophecies of this sacred book. Of great importance is a prophecy found in the Book of Ether: ***“And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fullness of his wrath shall come upon them.”*** (Ether 1:31)

6. “THOU ART INSPIRATION OF THE LEARNED AND POETS.” The Old Testament of the Bible is a book filled with poetic writings. One scholar, David Freedman ³² explained in his text that in ancient times in Asia Minor, poetry was the traditional manner of expressing one’s religious experiences. Many times the poetic forms of the Bible are not recognized because the poetic style of the Hebrews is different from that of other peoples. Hebraic poetry doesn’t have the type of rhyme to which we are accustomed. It has a rhyme of thoughts, not words.

A scholar of Hebrew poetry, Angela Crowell ³³, wrote a treatise, comparing the poetry of the Bible and that of the Book of Mormon. In her article she described more than twenty-five poetic forms found in the Holy Bible which appear also in the Book of Mormon. Many of these forms had not been identified until after the Book of Mormon had been translated. Neither Joseph Smith, nor any other person of that day, knew about these ancient poetic styles. So how did such forms appear in the Book of Mormon? There is only one plausible answer to this query: It is because the Book of Mormon is an ancient book written by Hebrew people who understood such poetic styles.

We shall use Angela Crowell's study to demonstrate a few of these ancient poetic styles. The first form is called Synonymous Parallelism. This type of parallelism occurs when the second part of the couplet repeats the first line, but uses different words.

From the Old Testament (Psalms 34:3)
"O **magnify** the Lord with me,
And let us **exalt** his name together."

From the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 1:14)
"For his **soul** did rejoice,
and his whole **heart** was filled."

Another type of parallelism is called Antithetic Parallelism. This type of parallelism occurs when the second part of a verse contrasts with the first portion.

From the Old Testament (Psalms 1:6)
"For the Lord knoweth the way of the **righteous**,
But the way of the **ungodly** shall perish."

From the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 5:144)
"Ye are **swift** to do iniquity,
but **slow** to remember the Lord your God."

Another poetic form used by the Hebrews was the Simile. A simile is a comparison which uses the words, "like" or "as". This poetic form was often used to introduce or to close a discourse.

From the Old Testament (Isaiah 1:8)
"And the daughter of Zion is left
as a cottage in a vineyard,
as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,
as a besieged city."

From the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 6:25-26)
"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments;
Then had thy peace been **as** a river,
And thy righteousness **as** the waves of the sea,
Thy seed also had been **as** the sand;
The offering of thy bowels **like** the gravel thereof."

Another poetic form of the ancient Hebrews is called the "chiasm". This literary style is not common, nor easy to use, but it was used a great deal by the ancient Jews. A noted authority on this ancient style of writing, John Welch, stated, "**Chiasmus remained a common literary form in the Hebrew world until the first century after Christ, when it and most Jewish institutions were destroyed.**"³⁴ This poetic form was not even recognized in the time when the Book of Mormon was revealed and translated; nevertheless, there are many beautiful examples of chiasmus found in the Book of Mormon. Everyone, including critics of the Book of Mormon, recognizes that young Joseph Smith did not invent this very difficult form of writing. It is another

evidence that the Book of Mormon was an ancient book written by skilled writers of the house of Israel.

This poetic form of writing contains a sequence of words or thoughts. Arriving at some central point, the same words or ideas are repeated, but in reverse order.

From the Old Testament (Exodus 9:31)

- A “And the **flax**
- B and the **barley** were smitten;
- B₁ for the **barley** was in the ear,
- A₁ and the **flax** was in bud.”

From the New Testament (Matthew 19:30)

- A “but many that are **first**
- B shall be **last**,
- B₁ and the **last**
- A₁ shall be **first**.”

From the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 7:3-4)

- A. “Behold, they were made manifest unto the **prophet**,
- B by the voice of the **Spirit**:
- B₁ For by the **Spirit**
- A₁ are all things made known unto the **prophets**,”

The Book of Mormon is full of this ancient poetic form. This causes me to greatly enjoy the introduction to *The Companion Bible*. The editors of this work discuss these poetic forms which their Bible beautifully displays. They write that these forms are “...seen to be one of the most important evidences of the Divine Inspiration of its words. For these Structures constitute a remarkable phenomenon peculiar to Divine Revelation; and are not found outside it in any other form of known literature.”³⁵ Believers in the Book of Mormon wholeheartedly welcome this endorsement of its inclusion in the “Divine Revelation” of the Lord.

Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon often has many parts, showing us the artistic skill of these ancient writers. The Hebrews used such forms of poetry to help them memorize the scripture. A good example of a complex chiasm is found in the Third Book of Nephi. This chiasm is not a sequence of words, but of large concepts.

- A the Gentiles shall be trodden under foot (3 Nephi 7:40)
- B Isaiah 52 and Zion (7:42)
- C the sick restored (8:4-26)
- D the communion (8:28-43)
- E prayer (8:47-57)
- F baptism (8:62)
- G the ascension of Jesus (8:73-75)
- F₁ baptism (9:4-16)
- E₁ prayer (9:17-39)
- D₁ the communion (9:40-45)
- C₁ the restoration of Israel (9:46-69)
- B₁ Isaiah 52 and Zion (9:70-73)
- A₁ the Gentiles shall be trodden down (9:99-106)

7. “OH, BOOK OF ETERNAL AND SIMPLE TRUTHS.” The Book of Mormon, just as the Bible, is a book of great value, and these two books shall exist together for eternity. As we have read in the prophecy of Ezekiel, in the latter day they shall be one in the hand of the Lord. The beautiful words of the Apostle Peter explain the reason for their eternal nature:

***“For all flesh is as grass,
and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.
The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:
But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.”***

- 1 Peter 1:24-25

In the words of our brother and poet, Elder Renan Chuc, the Book of Mormon contains eternal and simple truths. Our brother expresses himself as did the first author of this ancient book:

“But I give unto you a prophecy, according to the spirit which is in me; wherefore I shall prophesy according to the plainness which hath been with me from the time that I came out of Jerusalem with my father. For behold, my soul delighteth in plainness unto my people, that they may learn;” (2 Nephi 11:6-7)

Both Nephi and his brother, Jacob, used the words of the Prophet Isaiah many times to teach important aspects of prophecy that related to that people and/or their descendents. However, the response they often heard was, ***“What meaneth these things which ye have read?”*** (1 Nephi 7:1) So each time we find a lengthy portion of the biblical prophets being read to their brethren, it is followed by a careful, yet plain and simple, explanation of the prophecy in terms that related to the lives of their listeners. A wonderful sidelight is that this explanation often relates to their future progeny as well; hence, it speaks also to our time and generation.

An evidence of the plainness of Book of Mormon scriptures is borne to my mind as I am permitted to see that many of our older members among the Maya, people who never learned to read, are able to understand and apply these scriptures to their lives. Many of these non-readers have a simple, but powerful, testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon teaches the same doctrine of salvation that we find in the Holy Bible. Many times, due either to the authorship or possibly the translation, the words of this book are couched in simpler, more easily understood terms. There is little possibility for the variation of belief and practice one finds so commonly among the Christian denominations. As a good example, let us consider the subject of repentance, one of the fundamental teachings of the Gospel of salvation.

In the Book of Mormon we read this simple statement about the atoning grace of Jesus Christ: ***“And since man had fallen, he could not merit anything of himself; but the sufferings and death of Christ atoneth for their sins, through faith and repentance,”*** (Alma 13:46). It is evident that salvation can be attained only with the exercise of one’s faith, coupled with repentance (an act of contrition and change).

The Biblical record also shows with certainty that Jesus taught the necessity of repentance. He began His ministry with a call to repentance (see Matthew 4:17) and He ended His earthly ministry with a commission to His disciples to teach repentance (see Luke 24:47). But often the absolute necessity of true repentance is camouflaged in the Biblical text by exhortations of His disciples as they strive to make another point, according to the needs of those being addressed. Consider the following example:

The frightened heathen jailer cried out, ***“Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*** (Acts 16:30, 31) This has become the basic dogma of many concerning the attainment of one’s salvation – simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. A simple reading of the next verse would show that the disciples then taught all ***“the word of the Lord”*** to both the jailer and his household. Now the time was ripe for the apostles to explain to this man and his family the necessity of repentance, baptism, obedience, endurance of faith, etc. In many Book of Mormon passages these principles are made so clear that none could stumble.

I believe there are two scriptural explanations for the greater clarity and plainness of the Book of Mormon. Let us consider a prophecy given to Nephi that revealed many events that would come to pass. One of his notable views of the future was ***“...the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches;”*** (1 Nephi 3:167). The next two verses demonstrate one of the primary reasons this church was identified as being abominable. ***“For behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; And also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.”*** This leads us to the understanding that many parts of the Holy Bible which were plain and precious (valuable for our salvation) were altered or removed as the original manuscripts passed through the hands of this abominable church. This is a statement that will offend some while others will find it difficult to believe, but many Biblical authorities substantiate the validity of it. We refer to but a few:

a. ***“Still we fail to understand our Bible of today if we do not take full account of the many passages where, in spite of all the care of the scribes – rather, should we say, occasionally because of such care? – changes did find their way into the text. For the astonishing fact is that in some cases deliberately and with full knowledge they altered the text they had received.”***³⁶

b. ***“In the late first and early second century, the oral traditions and the written word existed side by side with equal status – especially with respect to the material of the Gospels. Often, the text was changed by scribes attempting to conform the written message to the oral tradition.... Other scribes, however, felt free to make ‘improvements’ in the text – either in the interest of doctrine or harmonization or due to the influence of a competitive oral tradition.”***³⁷

How could God permit such a travesty of righteousness to take place? The Apostle Paul wrote about the coming apostasy that would be brought into existence as that “great and abominable church” grew into prominence. He stated succinctly, ***“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:***

That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thessalonians 2: 11 and 12)

This identical thought can be seen in the reply of Jesus to His disciples when asked why He taught in difficult parables. He responded, ***“For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”*** (Matthew 13:15)

In the Book of Mormon we find Jacob warning his brethren here in America of what befell the stiff-necked people of Israel in the Old World. ***“For God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they can not understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it, God hath done it, that they may stumble.”*** (Jacob 3: 24 & 25) Jacob's prophetic comment has a basis in God's revealed Word found in such passages as Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 14.

So the Book of Mormon with its clear and simple doctrines and teaching, when used with the Holy Bible has come to the world with a special purpose: ***“And that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, Unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, And bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days; And also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.”*** (2 Nephi 2:20-23)

Reader, the last author of this sacred book, he who hid it in the earth according to the purpose of the Lord, has included a dependable promise to you:

“Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam, even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts. And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; And if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things.” (Moroni 10:3-5)

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