

FIRST VOICES

“ . . . in the land of their first inheritance . . . ”

“I speak unto you as the voice of one crying from the dust . . . ”

-prophetic words from the past-



RUNNING FOR PEACE

And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order.

Benjamin, Native American King, about 124 BC (Mosiah 4:27).

On a beautiful autumn day I found myself driving home from a ministerial meeting. As I live about 50 miles from the church building where we had the meeting, I had an hour's drive home. I decided to avoid the interstate highways and took the back roads. I opened my sunroof of my car and enjoyed the slightly cooler air and sunshine. In the ministerial meeting I had just left, we discussed

outreaches to those in our neighborhood, especially Native Americans.

About 20 minutes into my drive I saw a young man jogging on my side of the road. As I passed him I saw that he appeared to be Native American and he was carrying a long staff with feathers attached to the top end. I watched him in my rear view mirror and decided I should go back to see him again. I turned my car around as soon as I could and headed back the way I came. There he was, still jogging along.

I again turned my car around and passed him one more time, looking for a place to pull over so I could meet him. I parked my car and got out, waiting for the young man to reach me. As he approached I realized he had two staffs. I asked him what he was doing and he said, "I am running for peace." He

explained that one staff was his way of representing the Native American people and the other for peace.

He explained that the run was important to him and his people, especially considering their history and the events yet to come. I shared with him our beliefs that we publish in this journal and on our website.

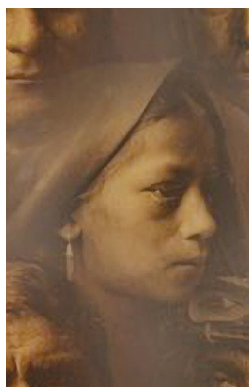
Although it was autumn, it was still quite warm to be jogging. Fortunately I had a couple of bottles of water in my car (Matthew 10:42), which I gave him, along with some outreach material. I told him I would pray for him and his people. He was appreciative of the water, the message and the prayers. He then continued his run.

I have thought about this man often – and still pray for him and his people. Recently, I performed an Internet search and was

Chief Joseph, whose famous quote is "I will fight no more forever."



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amazed at the number of sites that referred to 'running for peace,' especially Shimon Peres Center for Peace, named in honor of the martyred prime minister of the State of Israel. But there is something more, much more, when it comes to real peace.

Let's start with scriptural references to peace, such as, "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." (Psalm 34:14) Or, "Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." (1 Peter 3:11) It is a noble and godly thing to seek peace. But there are other scriptural references that tell us peace will be elusive. "Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none." (Ezekiel 7:25) And, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matthew 10:34)

So what shall we do? That question has plagued people for centuries. Among the Native Americans there were the likes of Deganawidah, who was known as the Great Peacemaker. Or Chief Joseph, whose famous quote

is "I will fight no more forever." And there were and are many others.

Near the end of World War II, a minister from our church was stationed in the Philippines. One day he was in the peace conference room and saw an empty arm chair. As he wondered who the chair belonged to, God spoke to him and said, "How can they bring peace to the world when the Prince of Peace is absent from their conference." We know the Prince of Peace is Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 9:6)

So how do we seek peace today? First, we invite the Prince of Peace into our lives. Second, in honor of those who were and are peacemakers, we run to and fro with the message of peace, sharing it wherever we can. (Zechariah 1:10, 11; 1 Nephi 13:37) Third, we prepare the way for a holy man of God, who shall be a deliverer for the Native Americans (see next article) and the House of Israel. When he comes, this "American Indian Moses," it will be like two nations running together. (2 Nephi 29:8) Yes, it is not requisite that we should run faster than we have strength, but run we must!

A PROPHET AMONG US

We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knows how long. (Psalm 74:9)

And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying that," a great prophet is risen up among us" and, "God hath visited his people." And this rumor of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about. (Luke 7:16-17)

Throughout the years among the Native Americans there have been those who were called prophets, holy men, medicine men or deliverers of sweet medicine; with each nation and tribe having their own titles and descriptions. Some of these "prophets" included Deganawidah, Handsome Lake, Skaquaw, Sam Isaacs (Kithla), Kennekuk, Cornplanter, Wovoka, Neolin, and Tenskwatawa, just to name a few. There were many more, some among the Navajo, Hopi, Chumash, and Okanagan.

Many of the prophets denounced alcoholism, witchcraft, polygamy, and

sexual promiscuity and said that the Great Spirit also called for Indian unity.

Ira Kennedy in her article about Native American prophets noted that, "There is a remarkable difference between Western prophecies and those of native peoples. When Western prophets see into the future they envision Armageddon. The end of the world. When native prophets look down that same path they see the completion of a great cycle. A change of worlds." That difference of interpretation was vividly seen with the end of the Mayan calendar, which many of the Western people saw as the end of time, not understanding the end of a cycle and the start of a new one.

She continued, "The reason for these vastly different views is found in the way time is experienced. In the West time is history. There is a past, a present, and a future; a beginning, a middle, and an end. Like a stick. Native peoples experience time as a cycle. There are four stages, such as the seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Like a hoop. Each

stage is a preparation for the next. At the center of the hoop is a still timelessness, like that of meditation; the eternal present around which the cycles revolve. The visions of native prophets occur at that center point from where the cycles of change can be seen. There is no end."

Interestingly, an Ancient Native American Record (written between 600 BC and 420 AD), includes the following phrases: (1) the course of the Lord is one eternal round. (1 Nephi 10:19) (2) [Great Spirit] cannot walk in crooked paths; neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; neither hath he a shadow of turning from the right to the left, or from that which is right to that which is wrong; therefore, his course is one eternal round. (Alma 7:20) (3) [God] does counsel in wisdom over all his works, and his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round. (Alma 37:12) One of the ancient writers noted, "All is as one day with God, and time only is measured unto men." (Alma 40:8)

So the recent prophets see things as did their ancient ancestors. But not only regarding the cycle of time but the need for a spiritual unifier, a spiritual deliverer – a Moses – an American Indian Moses. The Apostle Paul, when writing to the church in Rome, said, "For out of Zion shall come the deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Romans 11:26; Genesis 49:24) Some people believe the verse refers to Jesus Christ. But a check of the Greek word for deliverer reveals that it was the same word applied to Moses and not to Jesus, who is our Savior and Redeemer, which are much higher callings. (Luke 1:74, Acts 7:25)

The Ancient Native American Record mentioned earlier also prophecies of a Native American prophet and seer that will soon come. The words were spoken by a prophet named Lehi, quoting his ancestor, Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel).

"Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit

of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless, to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light – yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom. For Joseph truly testified, saying: A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins. Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers. And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command

him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work. And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel." (2 Nephi 3:5-9)

Which Nation or Tribe will he come from? We do not know. When exactly will he come? We do not know. What do we know? He will be a seer, a deliverer, a holy man, dedicated to doing only the will and commandments of God in recovering God's Ancient Covenant People, beginning with the Native American and then the whole House of Israel. As the Apostle Paul said, "And so all Israel shall be saved." (Romans 11:26)

The timing, well, we leave that to God and we echo the words of the Apostle Peter, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any [of the Gentiles] should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:19)

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shall come the
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*...in preparing the
way for the fulfilling
of his covenants,
which he hath made
to his people who are
of the house of Israel.*

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