

# glyph

notes

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## Their Voice Shall Have a Familiar Spirit: Part 2

By Sherrie Kline Smith

*Parts 1 and 1a in this series of articles examined some reasons why I believe the Lord is moving steadily towards the fulfillment of one of the purposes of The Book of Mormon. That purpose—and promise—*

is that, in the latter days, the book shall be carried forth to descendants of the people in The Book of Mormon so that they might come to the knowledge of a Savior “through the testimony of their fathers” (D&C 2:6a-b). That promise has yet to be fulfilled, but the foundation has been and is being laid for the accomplishment of that great commission revealed to Joseph Smith in 1828 (D&C 2:6).

As stated in Part 1, Nephi’s prophecy concerning the promise has some curious language structure which bears repeating here.

The words of the righteous shall be written, and the prayers of the faithful shall be heard, and all those who have dwindled in unbelief, shall not be forgotten; For those who shall be destroyed shall *speak* unto them out of the ground, and their *speech* shall be low out of the dust, and their *voice* shall be as one that hath a *familiar spirit* . . . and their *speech* shall whisper out of the dust (2 Nephi 11:83-85 [LDS 26:15-16]).

This series of articles is an attempt to explain how the Lord has been preparing the way for the fulfillment of this promise that “those who shall be destroyed shall *speak*” with a *familiar spirit*.

Part 1 discussed the recognition in the 1980s of the Hebraic literary structures used in The Book of Mormon that parallel those found in the Bible and other

Middle Eastern languages.

Decipherment of the Maya writing system also began to explode in the late 1970s and ‘80s. About the same time, a few scholars—among them, anthropologist J. Kathryn Josserand and her husband Nicholas A. Hopkins, a Mayan linguist—began analyzing the hieroglyphic texts beyond the simple meaning or grammar of each glyph. In their analyses of these inscriptions, they began

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*These articles are an attempt to explain how the Lord has been preparing the way for the fulfillment of this promise that “those who shall be destroyed shall speak” with a familiar spirit.*



*Ceremony performed before the first Congress of Maya Epigraphers in Valladolid, Yucatan, held on the campus of the Universidad de Oriente. More than 100 Maya students and teachers attended beginners and advanced classes learning how to read the ancient inscriptions. Used with permission from Nicholas A. Hopkins.*

## Familiar Spirit (Cont. from Page 1)

to see certain patterns. These patterns or language structures identified by them are the same as Hebraic literary structures. In Part 1, only a few Hebraisms were selected to illustrate how the Bible, The Book of Mormon, Maya inscriptions (circa 300-800), and Maya sixteenth-century documents all incorporate these same language structures. Examples included parallelisms or couplets, chiasmus, word pairs, and the frequent use of the phrase “and it came to pass.”

Part 2 moves into these latter days to see if Hebraic language structures are still being used by the Maya. Part 2 relies heavily on works by Hopkins, but similar material can be found in the anthology *Parallel Worlds: Genre, Discourse, and Poetics in Contemporary, Colonial, and Classic Maya Literature* edited by Kerry M. Hull and Michael D. Carrasco.

### Contemporary Maya Speech

In October 2013, Hopkins gave a presentation to the Maya Society of Minnesota called “Continuity and Change in Maya Poetics and Storytelling.” This paper, along with his other one discussed in Part 1 (“The Art of the Scribes: A Style Sheet for Classic Inscriptions”), addressed the poetic structure used by the Maya not only in the ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions but also today in their formal and sacred speech. Hopkins has been studying Mayan languages since the 1960s and observed that “We have known for a long time that Maya societies have a keen sense of language” (Hopkins 2012:2, 2013:[3]).

Gary H. Gossen also began a study of Mayan linguistics in the late 1960s. His work was among the Tzotzil Maya community of San Juan Chamula, Chiapas, Mexico. He identified that the Tzotzil Maya’s oral tradition has three main levels of speech—each having sub-levels—that range “from the least structured (conversation) to the most structured (prayer), that is from the least sacred to the most sacred” (Hopkins 2012:2; Gossen 1974:46-55).

The defining element of the Chamula Maya’s speech is its dimension of “heat,” a metaphor for sanctity or holiness. In other words, the three levels of speech move from least heated to most heated. In conversation they “can say pretty much anything, any way that appeals to them,” but in the sacred, “the speaker constructs the dialogue carefully, with attention to the traditional patterns that define Maya poetics” (Hopkins 2013:3). These *traditional patterns are some of the same ones as those used in ancient Hebrew and The Book of Mormon*, including parallelisms (couplets), chiasmus, merismus (word pairs), and repetition.



Lyle Smith

Maya shamans prepare offerings for a ceremony at the ruins of Tikal that will be conducted in “heated” speech, or formal/ritual language.

The principal element that gives a discourse its formality, its “heat” or holiness, is the use of the couplet [parallelism], a pair of lines that differs minimally. These occur in conversation when one speaker repeats another, but the density of couplets increases through heated speech, including court language, and reaches its maximum in sacred speech, prayer, where virtually the entire discourse is coupleted. It is clear that the language used in formal speech is not ordinary language (Hopkins 2012:2; Gossen 1974:161).

The structure of Maya formal speech is not limited to simple couplets or parallelisms but can be quite complex.

There are many elaborations on the simple couplet. Some of the common ones are the “alternating couplets,” where two couplets are intertwined, AA BB becoming ABAB. “Nested couplets,” also called “chiasmus,” places one couplet inside another, AA BB becoming ABBA. The couplet can be extended to a triplet. And there are further manipulations of this basic structure (Hopkins 2012:3).

Repetitious language, another prime marker of Maya formal speech (Hopkins 2013:[11]), is also prevalent in The Book of Mormon (Parry 2007:xxxiv-xliv). All these traditional patterns used in heated speech, including the use of merismus or word pairs as metaphors and metonyms, “render formal speech

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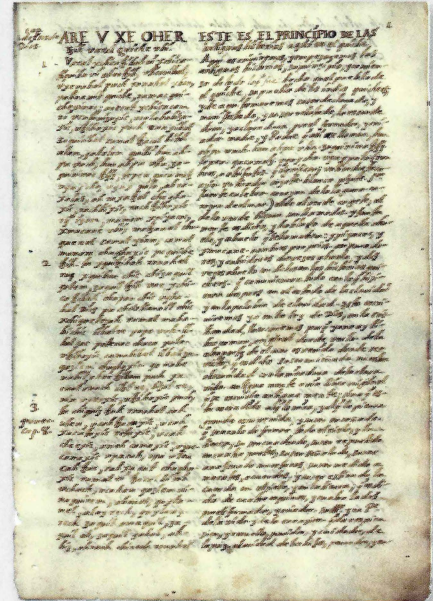
## Heated (Holy/Sacred) Speech: Prayers

### Contemporary Maya

This complex traditional prayer, offered by daykeepers when reading the Popol Vuh (Tedlock 1996:18-19), has been reformatted to make the parallelisms more apparent. It excludes the chiasmus and additional word pairs, all of which are part of the prayer.

- A **Make my guilt vanish,**
- B **Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth;** do me a favor,
- C **give me strength** . . .
- D and may **this reading** of the Popol Vuh come out clear as dawn,
- E and may the sifting of ancient times be complete **in my heart, in my head;**
- A and **make my guilt vanish** . . . you who speak with the
- B **Heart of Sky and Earth,**
- C may all of you together **give strength**
- D to **the reading** I have undertaken.

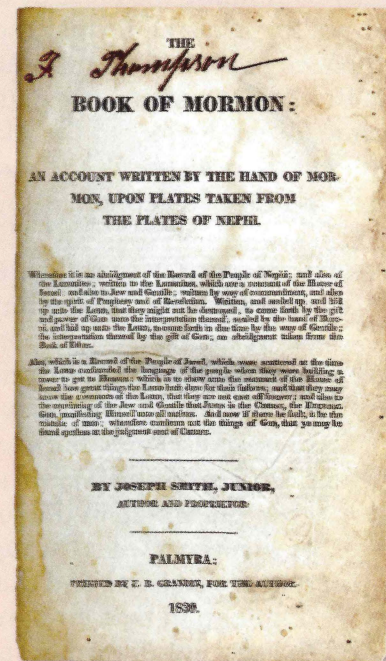
The Popol Vuh, commonly called the Maya Bible, was written around 1558 by “anonymous members of the Quiché[K’iche’]-Maya nobility... [who] wrote that the contents were based on an ancient book from across the sea” (Christensen 2003: 26 and 32). What happened to the document after its creation is not known, but in AD 1701, the Spanish priest, Francisco Ximénez, found the original manuscript in the Santo Tomás convent in Chichicastenango, Guatemala. Ximénez copied the K’iche’ from the original manuscript (now lost) and then wrote the Spanish translation next to it. A page from this copy, which eventually ended up at the Newberry Library in Chicago, Illinois, is shown here.



### The Book of Mormon

Nephi’s prayer exhibits many of the characteristics of “heated speech” (2 Nephi 3:31-66 [LDS 4:17-35]). This excerpt—the last portion of the prayer— includes parallelisms (couplets) and repetition of words and phrases.

- A O Lord, I have **trusted in thee,**
- B and I will **trust in thee** for ever.
- C I will not **put my trust** in the **arm of flesh;**
- A for I know that **cursed is he**
- B that **putteth his trust** in the **arm of flesh.**
- A Yea, **cursed is he**
- B that **putteth his trust** in man, or maketh **flesh his arm.**
- A Yea, I know that **God will give** liberally to him that asketh.
- B Yea, my **God will give** me, if I ask not amiss:
- A therefore **I will lift up my voice unto thee;** yea, I will cry unto thee,
- B **my God, the rock** of my righteousness.
- A Behold, **my voice shall for ever ascend up unto thee,**
- B **my rock** and mine everlasting **God.** Amen.



## Familiar Spirit (Cont. from Page 2)

difficult to understand for someone not versed in the [oral] tradition” (Hopkins 2013:3).

### The Book of Mormon

Hopkins’ reference above to formal speech patterns being used in court language made me think of royal courts. The Book of Mormon has several instances of recorded conversation between kings and others. Did these passages employ the same poetic patterns as those used in Maya formal/ritual speech?

The first conversation examined bore fruit! The account of Gideon’s approach to King Limhi to suggest a way for their people to escape the tyranny of the Lamanites (Mosiah 10:6 [LDS 22:4]) begins with a chiasm. God’s spirit swept over me, confirming that the Hebrew authors of The Book of Mormon employed the same structures that are evident in Maya formal court and sacred speech.

This called to my remembrance an article by Michael D. Walker in *Quetzal Codex* where he explored the concept of Hebraic thought and speech patterns in The Book of Mormon. Walker chose passages from Alma, Moroni, and Nephi to illustrate Hebraic language structures, like chiasmus and couplets, employed in dialogue. His first example was a conversation between a king and another person, in this case Ammon—albeit not in the palace (Alma 12:212-213[LDS 20:26-27]).

By combining the ideas presented by Hopkins and Walker—heated formal and sacred language evidenced in both contemporary Maya speech and The Book of Mormon—we glimpse an exciting avenue for witnessing to the Maya about The Book of Mormon. Both speak the same way. Both use the same language structures.

### Preservation of Maya Poetics

These patterns [chiasmus, parallelisms/couplets, etc.] are as pervasive in [Maya] Classic literature [inscriptions] as they are in *modern formal speech*. *It is nothing short of amazing the degree to which this poetic tradition has survived over the ages*, preserved in the folk tradition even as the Maya went through first internal transformations and then conquest and domination by a foreign culture. While the content of formal speech and prayer may have changed, *the poetic structure of the discourse has survived intact* (emphasis added; Hopkins 2013:[5]).



Don Beebe

*Semana Santa (Holy Week) in Antigua, Guatemala, commemorates the passion of Christ. Several weeks before Easter, solemn processions move through the streets of Antigua. The large anda (platform) with its life-size image of Christ carrying the cross weighs about three tons and requires 80 men to carry it. (See glyph notes, March/April 2005, page 8.)*

What is even more astonishing about the preservation of the language structures is that for more than 500 years the majority of the Maya have been unable to read or write their own languages. Contrast this with the language of the Mulekites that had become corrupted 400 years after arriving in the Land of Promise (Omni 30-33 [LDS 17-18]). Few Maya in the late 1970s and early ‘80s were literate in their native tongue (Christenson 2003:23), and most still are not able to read or write their own language today. This was not always the case.

Five hundred years ago the Maya were the most literate people in the Americas, preserving their history and culture with a sophisticated hieroglyphic script in hundreds of folded screen books. The Spanish conquest in the early sixteenth century was a devastating blow to Maya literacy in Mexico and Guatemala (Christenson 2003:15).

The Maya maintained their sacred language structure solely through an oral tradition.\* One reason, I believe, that these poetic structures manifested in their speech have survived intact for over 2000 years—a true phenomenon for any

*Cont. on Page 6*

\* Hopkins commented that there appears to be a danger that these distinctive language structures will be lost. See the sidebar article about the Mayas learning to read and write their own spoken language as well as their ancient inscriptions on page 9.

## Heated Speech: Formal, Ritual, and Court Language

### *Contemporary Maya*

This excerpt is from a narration by Bernardo Pérez Martínez, of Tila, Chiapas, June 5, 1995, explaining the festival of Santa Cruz: The Feast of the Holy Cross. The English translation by Josserand has been reformatted to show the envelope chiasm, couplets, words pairs, and repetition of words.

This story that I'm going to tell today is about

how we **celebrate the day of the Holy Cross**  
here in our land of Tila.

- A We do it just as in the **olden days**, according to  
**the customs of our fathers and mothers, our grandfathers and grandmothers.**
- B **They celebrated the festival of the cross,**  
C because **the cross, our ancestors** say,  
D **is where our Holy Father came down long ago.**
- a That's why it was the **custom for our parents**  
b to **celebrate the festival of the cross.**
- a **Our ancestors**  
b **celebrated the day of the cross** on the third day in May.
- a They gathered together in our land.  
b not just here below (in the town);  
c there (at the mountain cave shrine),
- D' **where our Holy Father showed himself long ago.**  
C' We call that **the high cross**. All **our people** come together;  
B' **they celebrate the festival** right there.  
A' That was **the custom of our grandfathers and grandmothers long ago.**

(Josserand and Hopkins 1996:59)

### *The Book of Mormon*

Gideon begins his speech to King Limhi with a chiasm.

- A And now O king, if thou hast not found me to be an unprofitable **servant**,  
B or if **thou hast hitherto listened to my words** in any degree,  
C and they have been of service to thee,  
B' even so I desire that **thou wouldst listen to my words** at this time,  
A' and I will be thy **servant**, and deliver this people out of bondage.

Mosiah 10:6 [LDS 22:4]

King Limhi requests Ammon to explain who he is.

- A **Behold I am Limhi, the son of Noah....**  
B for this cause **have I suffered that ye should be preserved . . .**  
C or else I should have caused that my guards  
**should have put you to death. Ye are permitted to speak.**

Ammon responds by repeating King Limhi's words and concepts in reverse order, thus creating a chiasm.

- C' O king, I am very thankful before God this day, that  
**I am yet alive, and am permitted to speak . . .**  
B' for I am assured that if ye had known me,  
**ye would not have suffered that I should have worn these bands.**  
A' **For I am Ammon, and am a descendant of Zarahemla....**

Mosiah 5:12-17 [LDS 7:9-13]

## Familiar Spirit (Cont. from Page 4)

language—is to fulfill Nephi’s prophecy. Nephi wrote, “For those who shall be destroyed shall *spea*k unto them out of the ground . . .and their *voic*e shall be as one that hath *a familiar spirit* . . . and their *spee*ch shall whisper out of the dust (2 Nephi 11:84-85 [LDS 26:16]).

Therefore, language patterns and the spoken word are key components in this movement towards fulfilling the promise. In latter-day revelation, members of the church were counseled to “study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with *languages, tongues, and people*” (D&C 87:5b) for a very good reason. (See also D&C 85:21 and 90:12.)

### Fulfilling the Promise

Armed with a sensitivity and understanding of the Maya’s reverence for the spoken and written word of their ancestors will make possible a more

effective missionary effort. Alan Christenson, in the preface to his translation of the Popol Vuh, portrays so beautifully the relationship the Maya have with the spoken word. I can’t do justice to Christenson’s account and recognize the limitation of even quoting a few of his comments, but the Maya believe that

When the words of the ancestors are read, or spoken aloud, it is as if that person had returned from death to speak again....

For the Maya each ancient word, whether read or spoken aloud, is life-giving in its power to reach across the centuries.

The Maya people can understand the preciousness of such documents in ways that we who have never been denied literacy can hardly imagine (Christenson 2003:17, 23).

As the years have come and gone, I believe we have become complacent—and that includes me—

### The Phenomenon of the 1980s

While working on Part 2 of this series of articles, it became apparent that many key events occurred in the 1980s. Listed here are a few of these events. The implications—if any—of this phenomenon are not yet clear.

- 1) Recognition of the Hebraic language structures in The Book of Mormon began to blossom, even though many Hebraisms had already been noted prior to this time.
- 2) Decipherment of the ancient Maya writing system, called hieroglyphs, began to advance rapidly.
- 3) Discourse analysis of the Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions led to the recognition of distinctive poetic patterns that were like those in Hebrew.
- 4) The Maya began to learn how to read their ancestors words recorded in the inscriptions written 1,000 years ago. (See photo at right.)
- 5) Instruction in reading and writing Mayan languages began in some Guatemalan public schools.
- 6) Thousands of Maya were massacred in a civil war referred to by their “leaders today . . . as the ‘third holocaust’” (Minority Rights Group International 2008).
- 7) A major exodus of the Maya from Guatemala to Mexico and the U.S. occurred as a result of the civil war.
- 8) The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints experienced major changes and a great upheaval.



about the Hebraic nature of The Book of Mormon. The Mayan languages also exhibit ancient Hebraic language structures, but as far as I know, the Maya are unaware of this. Hopkins wrote, “There is not so much contrast between traditional [Maya] prayer and Christian prayer. The Psalms, for instance, show many of the same rhetorical structures (like chiasmus), and liturgies in the two traditions are not dissimilar” (2013:[12]). When comparing the Psalms

to Maya prayers, Hopkins and Josserand also have commented that “*It is apparent that the language from which this text [Psalm 29] is translated had a couplet rhyming tradition like that of the Maya*” (emphasis added; Josserand and Hopkins 2011:18).

Twenty years ago I wrote the following words—except for a few editorial changes—for the column we call “glyph quotes.”

*Cont. on Page 8*

## What about the Language of Other Indigenous People in the Americas?

In this series of articles, only the ancient Maya writings and contemporary Maya speech have been examined. One reason is because more than 2000 years of documentation is available for comparison. Additionally, excellent convincing archeological

evidence exists to support the belief that the Maya are direct descendants of people in The Book of Mormon. It is certainly possible, though, that these Hebraic language structures are found in the languages of other Native Americans. The Aztecs, whose origins are unknown, appear to

have used these patterns in their Nahuatl language. (Interestingly, the Nahuatl language is also experiencing a renaissance. See *In the Language of Kings*, León-Portilla and Shorris, eds., chapter 10.) Perhaps some other tribes also employ the same Hebraic language structures.

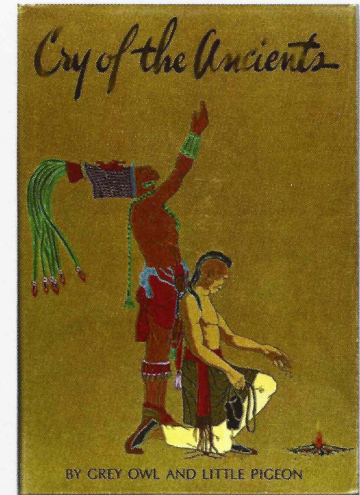
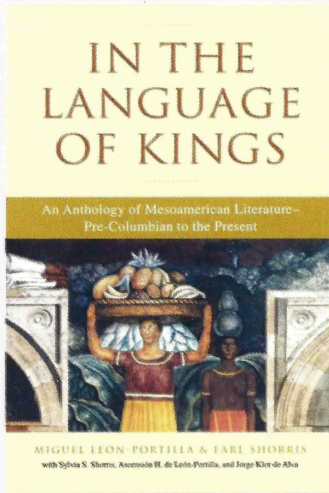
Beginning around 54 B.C., many Nephites/Mulekites and former Lamanites (people of Ammon) migrated northward from their homeland, which now encompasses parts of Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and parts of Honduras (Alma 30:6-13, Helaman 2:3-11[LDS Alma 63:5-9, Helaman 3:3-12]). After the migration of these groups, no further mention is made of them in The Book of Mormon record. These migrations might provide light on the phrase “land of Missouri, unto the borders of the Lamanites” (D&C 27:3d, 54:2b). At the time this was given, September 1830, Missouri was the westernmost border of the

United States and next to Kansas Territory where many Indian groups had been relocated from their homes east of the Mississippi. Some of these Indians may have been descendants of those who had migrated northward around 54 B.C.

Little Pigeon wrote in *Cry of the Ancients*, “The Indian knows that there is no such thing as an ‘Indian race.’ We are several races, and not all of us came from the same place or at the same time” (Grey Owl and Little Pigeon 1974:72).

Lehi’s prophecy about the Land of Promise being for his posterity and “*all those who should be led out of other countries, by the hand of the Lord*” (2 Nephi 1:8-11[LDS 1:5-7]) and the parable of the olive tree by the prophet Zenos (Jacob 3:30-153[LDS 5:1-77]) add insight to the fact that all Indians are not Lamanites. Therefore these Hebraic language structures may not be evident in the oral traditions of other Indians.

It has not been my purpose to discuss any efforts to take The Book of Mormon to the “Lamanites” since the coming forth of that sacred record. The following two highly recommended articles, though, may provide a perspective on this matter: “Times of the Gentiles” by Vivian Sorenson (reference on page 12) and “Who Are the Lamanites?” by Frank Evan Frye (reference on page 9). If you would like copies of these two articles, contact the editor. Many questions still remain. They will be answered in time. God’s promises are sure.



## Familiar Spirit (Cont. from Page 7)

The knowledge that not only the ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions but also present-day Mayan languages incorporate the same Hebraic literary devices found in The Book of Mormon, such as couplets and chiasms, gives flesh to the scripture about the “familiar spirit.” The Maya will recognize this “familiar spirit” in The Book of Mormon when they read it and will exclaim, “This is a Mayan book!” It will speak to them in the same poetic ways their own formal literature [and sacred speech] does and will bring to

them not only the knowledge of their ancestors but also the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ.

The Lord promised the prophets in The Book of Mormon that their words would come to their descendants in the latter days. But how will this happen when they not only do not speak English but also, in many cases, do not speak Spanish? The Lord needs workers to help with this task!

The new scholarly understanding and light coming forth about the Maya hieroglyphs and languages witness that the Lord has set the timing for translating The Book of Mormon into Mayan languages while *keeping the poetic structures*. The time is now! Who will accomplish this great task? Who will help the present-day Maya hear their ancestors’ speech out of the dust which “shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit”? (Smith 1995b:4).

My goal in this series of articles has been to convey a message of great hope—a message of encouragement. Regardless of any discouragement among our people of ever being “one” and establishing the cause of Zion, I believe that *God is on the move!* I believe that he is in the process of laying the foundation for the great missionary effort to take the testimony of those who have written The Book of Mormon to their descendants in the latter days. Strengthened by the knowledge of all that has occurred, we can begin anew to catch the vision. God’s promises are sure!

### Scriptures Relevant to the Promise

- 2 Nephi 1:8-11 [LDS 1:5-7]
- 2 Nephi 2:17-23 [LDS 3:11-12]
- 2 Nephi 11:40, 81-85, 125-144 [LDS 25:21; 26:15-16; 27:6-22]
- 2 Nephi 12:2, 43, 80-87 [LDS 28:2; 29:2; 30:3-8]
- Jacob 3:30-153 [LDS 5:1-77]
- Enos 1:19-28 [LDS 1:13-18]
- Alma 30:6-13 [LDS 63:5-9]
- Helaman 2:3-11 [LDS 3:3-12]
- 3 Nephi 10:4-8 [LDS 21:25-29]
- Mormon 4:98 [LDS 9:32].
- Isaiah 29
- D&C 2:6; 3:10:d-e; 18:3c; 27:3, 5; 29:2; 31; 49:5; 85:21; 87:5b; 90:12

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## Mayas Learn to Read and Write Their Ancient Writings

In 1987, some indigenous Maya attending a hieroglyphic workshop held for North Americans in Antigua, Guatemala, realized the hieroglyphs could be read and requested that Kathryn Josserand and others teach them how to read their ancestors words. This is not just happening in Guatemala. "Last year, the Mayanist organization MAM sponsored the first Congress of Maya Epigraphers in Valladolid, Yucatán [Mexico]." More than 100 Maya students and teachers attended beginners and advanced classes on reading the hieroglyphs (Hopkins 2013:[13]).

The history of this exciting movement can be read in the article "Friends of the Maya (March/April 2010 *glyph notes*). (The web address noted there has changed to [discovermam.org/history](http://discovermam.org/history).) Also, Bruce Love explains the history and goals of the organization in a six-minute video that is well worth watching ([tinyurl.com/pp77h85](http://tinyurl.com/pp77h85)).

Other efforts have been made in regards to Maya literacy. Until recently, instruction in Guatemalan schools has been only in Spanish, yet many Maya did not speak or read Spanish. A movement began in 1988 to change this when "Mayan scholars and educators in Guatemala established the Academia de las Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala." The Academy's long-range goals included the introduction of instruction in the reading and writing of Mayan languages, not just Spanish, in the public schools of Guatemala (Tedlock 1996:17). "Guatemalan Maya trained in linguistics [who] have some influence over national education . . . have negotiated a series of reforms.... Many school teachers have begun to introduce Maya math and calendrics, as well as the basics of the writing system, into their curricula" (Hopkins 2013:13).

The Maya, on a limited scale, are once more learning how to read and write their own native spoken words, although obstacles still exist. Unfortunately, the government has not followed through with the reforms passed into law that calls for bilingual instruction in the schools. Additionally, even though there is an effort to preserve Mayan narratives and poetry, when editors translate these works into "good Spanish," the distinctive Mayan language structures vanish. Because of this, there appears to be a danger that their distinctive language structures—so like ancient Hebrew—will be lost.



*In Campeche, two-time congreso attendee Nehemias Chí Canché has implemented the introduction of glyphs to students 6 to 12 years old at the Centro de Extensión del Instituto Politécnico Nacional based in Campeche, Mexico.*

# glyphnotes

By Eric English

*"They were expressly repugnant to the commandments of God."* — Mosiah 13:52 [LDS 29:36]

There aren't many things in this world that smell worse than old, rotten, moldy food. My wife recently discovered some potatoes hidden in the back of our pantry that we had forgotten about. Wow! They were disgusting—turning black and dripping with nasty juices. And oh—the smell. It was just gross. My wife quickly disposed of them in the kitchen trash can and informed me that the trash definitely needed to be emptied as soon as I got home. As I was carrying the bag out of the house, the word repugnant came to mind. This trash was most offensive to our senses.

As King Mosiah II neared the end of his life, he began to make preparations to transition his responsibilities to the next generation. In one of the most political passages in The Book of Mormon, Mosiah shares his thoughts regarding the political structure of his kingdom "in a written word sent among the people" (Mosiah 13:6 [LDS 29:4]). He advises that they move to a government regulated by the voice of the people to elect judges according to their laws. He shares also about the extreme trials that come upon a people when they have an unrighteous king. He closes his letter by detailing many of the sins that such a king could force upon his people, such as war and

bloodshed, stealing, committing whoredoms, and others. Then Mosiah uses a very curious phrase when he tells them that these things should not be and that this kind of wickedness is "expressly repugnant to the commandments of God."

What a powerful and emotional description of what our view as Saints should be towards sin as well. Some synonyms of repugnant are offensive, abhorrent, revolting, disgusting, foul, and nauseating. Do we look at sin that way in our own lives? Do we consider our sins to be offensive and nauseating, or have we grown so accustomed to the filth and sin around us that we don't even notice it anymore?

God didn't create us to exist in repugnant situations such as this. But because of the rebellion of our first parents and the continued rebellion throughout the centuries, even down to our own selves, we see the consequences of sin manifested. We have, however, the ability to choose. God has blessed us with agency, and we can elect to "take out the trash" in our lives. As we reflect back, there are surely sins that we have overlooked or ignored that we need to throw out. Let us return to the point of viewing sin as repugnant and seek to become more holy, even as the Lord is holy. ☪



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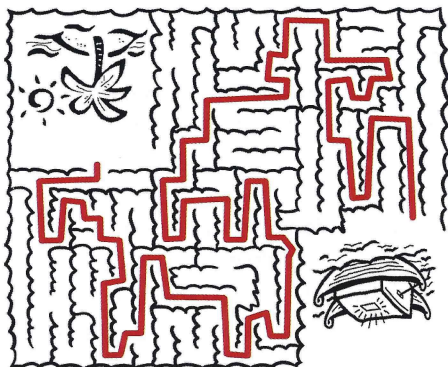
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Answer to God's Safety Light maze from page 11

*We continue to be excited about the opportunity to share the good news about The Book of Mormon. Your financial assistance is appreciated and necessary. Please continue to partner with us in this great work. You may use the envelope enclosed with this issue. Thank you.*

**Lyle Smith, President**

# Glyph Dwellers

Dwellers - to live and have a home in a particular place

## The Adventures of Beezrom

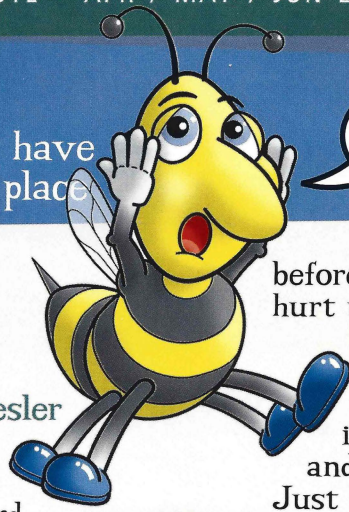
By Mindy Mulheron  
Illustrations by Aaron Presler

So last time I told you that I learned about this other group of people I had never heard of before, and now I know their name! They were called the Jaredites because they were the people who followed Jared and his brother. Remember that I told you the Brother of Jared talked with God? That's not all he did. This guy was awesome!

There they were, Jared, his brother, and their friends packing up and leaving everything they'd ever known. They were probably a little scared and a little worried, or maybe even a lot worried because not knowing where you're going is a pretty big deal—even if you trust that your friend has talked with God and you have faith that God will never lead you anywhere that's not good for you. They knew they needed to leave. They knew God would be with them. But I'm sure they were still anxious.

Now you and I know that God is always there in the scary times, but when you're in one of those times, it's always nice to have a little extra assurance. And God's always happy to reward his faithful children. God knew that one of the biggest fears of Jared and his friends was that they were going to travel across the ocean, in tiny boats—in the DARK. (Yeah, now you understand why they were a little scared!) But this is how amazing and loving our God is: he provided a way for them to have light! And you're never going to guess how he did it! The Brother of Jared took stones to our Lord, and God TOUCHED them and made them GLOW! Isn't that amazing?! Now the people could cross the ocean without fear—they would have light and the added reassurance that God was watching over them. Always.

Isn't that a cool story?! It reminds me that God is always willing to go to the dark places with us, and he'll always provide a light. There are times in life when the darkness, or the hard times, seem too dark; God seems far away and we get scared. But here's the promise: he has shown us, over and over, that he will ALWAYS provide a light, a way out. Because he IS light. He is our refuge and our strength. He goes



Hi guys! Have you ever been scared? I read about these people who were about to start a long journey across the stormy ocean. Talk about scary!

before us. He fights for us. No one can ever hurt us when he is by our side. Because even if the worst happens here, in this life, we are guaranteed a life with him forever—where the light never ends. Where there is no darkness. And then we will see him and talk with him and hold his hand. Forever. Just like the Brother of Jared did.

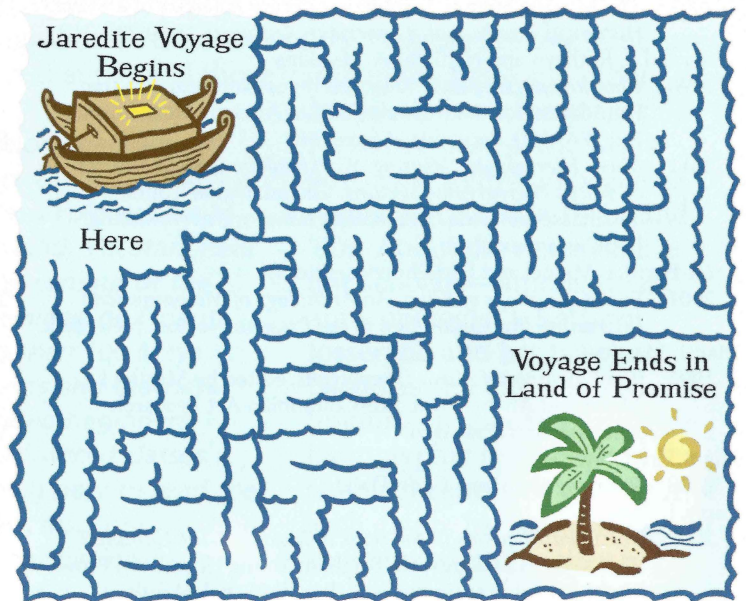
There's so much to look forward to friends! In this life, you may be asked to do some hard things. Maybe you'll have to move. Maybe someone you love will leave. Maybe a friend will hurt your feelings. But never forget: even when you're scared or worried, God is still there. He will provide light if you ask for it. He'll never leave you in darkness. Never. That's what keeps me going guys. My God loves me and is with me always. What do I have to fear? Go forward in that faith today. Know that you are infinitely worthy and valuable in the eyes of your Heavenly Father. His love and care isn't just for cool people we learn about, it's for you too. YOU!

Alright, I gotta run. I still have to tell you how they ended up here where I live, but I'll save that for next time. Take care! See you then!

Scriptural Reference: Ether 3:1-3 [LDS 6:1-3] ☺

### God's Safety Light Maze

God gave the Jaredites light for their boats and promised safety for their voyage. Help the Jaredites finish their scary trip! Are you ever scared like they were? Talk to God about it. He hears your prayers!



Answer to God's Safety Light Maze on page 10

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