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The Great White God Was a Reality

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Abstract: This article is a discussion of the Great White God of ancient America—he was known by various names, provided teachings that contained elements similar to Christian religion, and may have been Jesus Christ who visited the Nephites of Bountiful.

The Great White God Was a Reality

By Elder Mark E. Petersen
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● The Great White God of ancient America still lives!

In the discoveries and writings of archaeologists and historians, he now stands out as an unassailable reality. The mystery that so long veiled the puzzling traditions of the natives is swept aside by modern research and newly found but centuries old documents that open a widely expanded view of this divinity and his labors in the western hemisphere.

There was such a God!

He did come to America, long before the time of Columbus.

He taught the ancients his true religion, raised some of their dead, healed many of their sick, taught new and more productive methods of agriculture, and established a government of equality and peace.

He came suddenly and left suddenly in a supernatural manner.

The ancients regarded him as the Creator, come to earth in bodily form.

Who can doubt evidence that now mounts so high?

That he was a Christian divinity none can successfully deny.

That his teachings were akin to the Bible is now readily admitted by many.

And that he promised to return in a second coming is an acknowledged, scriptural fact, well attested by subsequent historical accounts.

The tradition of a White God in ancient America was preserved through generations of Indians from Chile to Alaska, and has been significantly persistent likewise among the Polynesians from Hawaii to New Zealand.

In their main details all such traditions agree. They differ in name and in minor details from island to island and from country to country, but the overall outline remains the same—there was a Great White God. He came among their forefathers, ministered for a while, and then left again. Some say he ascended to heaven.

Of such veracity is the information now available concerning him that Paul Herrmann was induced to say in his book *The Conquest of Man*:

“Carefully considered this leaves no conclusion open than that the Light God Quetzalcoatl was a real person, that he was neither an invention of Spanish propaganda nor a legendary figment of Indian imagination.” (P. 72.),

This being was known as Quetzalcoatl in parts of

Mexico, primarily in the Cholula area. He was Votan in Chiapas and Wixepechocha in Oaxaca, Gucumatz in Guatemala, Viracocha and Hyustus in Peru, Sume in Brazil, and Bochica in Colombia.

To the Peruvians he also was known as Con-tici or Illa-Tici, Tici meaning both Creator and the Light. To the Mayans he was principally known as Kukulcan.

In the Polynesian Islands he was Lono, Kana, Kane, or Kon, and sometimes Kanaloa—the Great Light or Great Brightness. He also was known as Kane-Akea, the Great Progenitor, or Tanga-roa, the god of ocean and sun.

What did he look like, this Great White God?

He was described as a tall, white man, bearded, and with blue eyes. He wore loose, flowing robes. He came from heaven, and went back to heaven.

And what did he do when he came? He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cured the lame, and raised some of the dead. He taught a better life, telling the people to do unto others as they would be done by, to love their neighbors as themselves, and to always show kindness and charity.

He seemed to be a person of great authority and unmeasured kindness. He had power to make hills into plains and plains into high mountains. He could bring fountains of water from the solid rock.

In addition to giving them rules on how to live peacefully together, he urged them to greater learning, and also taught them improved methods of agriculture.

One of the remarkable things about his coming was that he appeared after a period of darkness in all the land, during which the people had prayed for a return of the sun. While the darkness yet prevailed, "they suffered great hardship and made great prayers and vows to those they held to be their gods imploring of them the light that had failed." As the light returned, then came this "white man of large stature whose air and person aroused great respect and veneration. . . . And when they saw his power, they called him the Maker of all things, their Beginner, Father of the sun." (Pedro de Cieza de Leon, *The Incas*.)

This personage, as he taught his religion, also urged the people to build great temples for worship, and his followers became very devout. (Pierre Honore, *In Quest of the White God*, p. 16.) As he left them, he promised his second coming, which caused the natives to look for his return even as the Jews look for their promised Messiah.

This faith led to disaster, however, when the Spaniards came to America and when Captain Cook sailed to the Hawaiian Islands. But these tragedies served only to reinforce the evidence of his reality.

When the Spanish Conquistadores reached South America, one of Pizarro's lieutenants strode ashore wearing his helmet and breastplate and carrying a shining musket. He made an impressive appearance.

Natives on the shore watched him in amazement. He was a white man! As Pedro de Candia strode toward them, they knelt before him and began to say "Viracocha, Viracocha." It puzzled the gallant Pedro. The natives drew nearer, surrounding him. Somewhat fearful himself, he fired his gun into the air, expecting to frighten the natives away. But they did not move. Instead they whispered, "Illa Tiki, Illa Tiki," meaning, "the god of lightning."

The Indians thought he was their returning white god Viracocha, and that with his gun he controlled both thunder and lightning.

Hernando Cortez was likewise believed to be the returning White God as he came to Mexico in 1520. When the coastal natives saw that he was white, a leader among his men, and that he came in a large ship with white sails, they ran hurriedly to their ruler Montezuma and announced that the Great White God had arrived.

This had a striking effect upon Montezuma. He remembered that when he was crowned as emperor, the priests of the Aztec cult reminded him: "This is not your throne; it is only lent you and will one day be returned to the One to whom it is due." (Pierre Honore, *op. cit.*, p. 66.)

Montezuma immediately made plans to greet Cortez with all the respect he owed to the White God whom his Aztec religion had taught him to expect. Precious gifts were brought to Cortez; the riches of the realm were opened to him. He was honored as a deity indeed. But his treachery soon changed that, and warfare resulted. Montezuma lost his throne and his life. But the tradition remained.

When Captain James Cook sailed into the peaceful waters of the Hawaiian Islands, he too was mistaken for the White God. The natives there, like their relatives in America, had long expected the second coming of their Great White God.

Seeing Captain Cook, a white man of high command, sailing in a large ship with great white sails such as the natives had never before seen, the naive Hawaiians received and worshiped him as their long-

looked-for golden-haired god Lono.

Remarkably, Captain Cook had landed during the Makahiki Festival, the celebration that kept alive the traditions of the White God Lono. King Kalaniopuu welcomed him and his party, and the native priests led him with high ceremony to the great stone truncated pyramid that was Lono's temple. In amazement, the redoubtable British explorer accepted their obeisance, quite willing to receive any honors they were willing to bestow upon him.

But his men were anything but angelic, and through their depredations they brought down upon the entire Cook party the wrath of the natives. In the battle that ensued, Cook lost his life.

But once again—the tradition persisted.

Not only have the oft-told stories of the White God continued through the ages, but his teachings are also still dear to the hearts of the natives.

For years, because men went to war and often were killed, women were the keepers of the traditions and genealogies. They told these stories to their children and their children's children.

One of the remarkable survivals is that recounted in Stephen's *Incidents of Travel in Central America*. The author quotes what Fuentes, chronicler of the ancient kingdom of Guatemala and of the Toltecan Indians, said of the origin of these people.

They were Israelites, he said, released by Moses from the tyranny of the Pharaohs. After crossing the Red Sea, they became idolaters because of the influence of the local peoples; and to escape the reproofs of Moses, they strayed away. Under the leadership of a man named Tanub, they drifted from continent to continent until finally they came to a place they called the Seven Caverns, a part of the kingdom of Mexico, where they founded the city of Tula. The story recounts that from Tanub, their leader, sprang the families of the Tula and the Quiche.

Other traditions tell of four brothers who led their families from far distant lands to the east, over the oceans, to the new world where they settled and built cities.

Popul Vuh, the sacred book of the ancient Quiche Maya (published by the University of Oklahoma Press), reveals that the early Americans believed in a trinity of deities. They believed also in a heavenly father and a heavenly mother, and that the Eternal Father and his Beloved Son were the creators of heaven and earth. The trinity are known as Caculha Huracan, Chipi-Caculha, and Rexa-Caculha. They were called the Heart of Heaven.

Popul Vuh also speaks of the creation as having been accomplished by this trinity—three deities—creators and makers of all. These early Americans,

now found to have been highly cultured in many ways, and deeply religious, did not believe in any sexless, formless, phantom-like god. To them the trinity were real persons, who had sex and personality. And there was a mother in heaven.

These early Americans, as shown in this same volume, believed in a preexistence, and in a devil who also lived in that pre-earth life where he boasted of his brilliance and power, saying "my eyes are of silver, bright, resplendent as precious stones, as emeralds, my teeth shine like perfect stones, like the face of the sky. . . . So then I am the sun, I am the moon, for all mankind."

This evil being sought to usurp the glory of God, but failed. "His only ambition was to exalt himself and to dominate."

The manuscript from ancient Indian sources explains that at this point "neither our first mother nor our first father had yet been created."

There is also the story of the woman being tempted to eat the fruit of a tree and asking, "Must I die? Shall I be lost if I pick one of this fruit?"

The story of the great flood (Noah's) is recounted among the early Americans and Polynesians.

Traditions in northern Mexico, principally among the Yaqui Indians, tell of the survival of a council of 12 holy men who ministered religiously among the people. They also tell of a form of sacrament of the Lord's supper, wherein the natives eat and drink sacred emblems amid signs of great sadness, in remembrance of their deity.

Religion was a vital part of the lives of these ancient Americans, as it was with the Polynesians, who, it is believed, brought their religion with them in their migrations from America. Volumes have been written about it.

Who was this Great White God?

As Jesus Christ ministered in mortality among the Jews, he spoke of another body of believers—his other sheep. (See John 10.) He promised to go to them and minister among them. This he did—in America.

In ancient America also prophets ministered, even as others did in Palestine, and during the same period of time.

These western prophets wrote their sacred history, even as did their Palestinian counterparts, and in this manner another volume of scripture was prepared. Known as the Book of Mormon, it tells of God's dealings with ancient America, as the Bible relates the sacred history of the Old World.

The Book of Mormon tells the facts about the coming of the White God, an event that occurred in America following his resurrection in Palestine. Millions of people lived in America then. Some believed

in the coming of Christ to their land. Others scoffed. The believers served the Lord; the scoffers followed every evil path.

When the crucifixion took place and the earthquakes shook Palestine, even worse quakes, tempests, and conflagrations swept over the western hemisphere. The Book of Mormon tells the story:

“And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.

“And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.

“And there were exceeding sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land.

“And the city of Zarahemla did take fire.” (3 Ne. 8:5-8.)

According to the account, the damage was immense. Highways were broken up, cities were sunk, many persons were slain, and the whole face of the land was changed—all this in the space of about three hours.

Then, “. . . it came to pass that there was thick darkness upon all the face of the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof who had not fallen could feel the vapor of darkness.” (3 Ne. 8:20.)

After this condition, which lasted for three days, there came a voice, “. . . and all the people did hear, and did witness of it saying:

“O ye people of these great cities which have fallen, who are descendants of Jacob, yea, who are of the house of Israel, how oft have I gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and have nourished you. . . .

“. . . how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not.” (3 Ne. 10:3-5.)

Some days later, a great multitude gathered together about the temple in the land Bountiful, and there came a voice three times:

“And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them:

“Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him.

“And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what

it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them.

“And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people, saying:

“Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

“And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.

“And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth; for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should show himself unto them after his ascension into heaven.

“And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying:

“Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.

“And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come.

“And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying:

“Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him.” (3 Ne. 11:6-17.)

In the days that followed, this same divine visitor introduced the blessing of the bread and wine as a sacrament; he called forth all their sick, afflicted, lame, blind, and dumb, and healed them; he organized an administration to teach and baptize in his name, and he counseled these leaders and the multitudes about his doctrine. And after many days, “. . . there came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus.

“And while they were overshadowed he departed from them, and ascended into heaven. And the disciples saw and did bear record that he ascended again into heaven.” (3 Ne. 18:38-39.)

This is the true story of the Great White God. He is Jesus the Christ, the Savior of all mankind. ○