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## The Peace Pipe and the Book of Mormon

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**Abstract:** The Indian legend concerning the peace pipe is one of great significance to the Book of Mormon. The pipe was a symbol of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. The account of Jesus' visit to the Americas might help to explain this legend more fully.

# The Peace Pipe

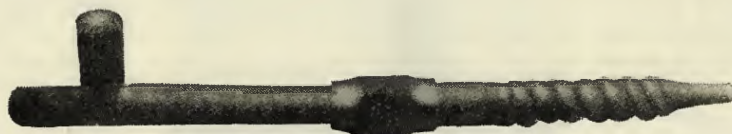
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## BOOK of MORMON



By

Pearl Spencer



THERE is no Indian legend more interesting nor significant in view of Book of Mormon history than that of the origin of the peace pipe. The use of the peace pipe is a custom common to almost every tribe, and its origin is recalled in the legend which is always told visitors to the famous pipestone quarries at Pipestone, Minnesota, and which is recalled so vividly in "Hiawatha." For there, the story goes, the Great Spirit descended in ancient days, and there called the Indian nations together.

There, standing on the precipice of red rock, with all the awed and silent tribes before him, he talked long to them. Then he broke off a piece of rock, from which he made a huge pipe. This he smoked over them, telling them that the pipe stone was red, even as his flesh and theirs—that it belonged to them all and that it should be to them a symbol of Him and of peace with one another—that the war club and scalping knife should no more be used upon this holy ground.

WITH the last whiff of his pipe, his head disappeared into a cloud, and the whole surface of the rock for several miles was glazed; two great ovens were opened beneath and two women (guardian spirits of the place) entered them and are there yet to answer the invocations of the medicine men who still come to this sacred place to consult them.

Now recall the story of Christ's appearance to the Nephites as re-

corded in the Third Book of Nephi. You remember how the multitude gathered before Him, sat at His feet, listened, and partook of bread and wine in memory of Him



*Here is a bit of speculation which may or may not be interesting—according to the bent of the reader's mind. People generally are prone to set too much store by evidence which seems to support a favored belief. However, speculation is an interesting and not very dangerous pastime so long as one recognizes it as speculation.—Ed.*



and His commandments. "And this ye shall always observe to do." He said, "in remembrance of My body . . . and ye shall always have my Spirit to be with you . . . and blessed are you if ye have no disputations among you," and so on through those awe-inspiring words, until there came a cloud . . . and while they were overshadowed He ascended into heaven."

And the next day, the record tells, as the disciples were baptizing, "they were encircled about as if it were by fire . . . and angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them."

THE process by which the first long and beautiful record has become condensed into the legend of the peace pipe surely follows exactly the process of dramatization and coloring which can be traced in every legend whose origin we know. Surprisingly accurate is the cloud which covered the Great Spirit's head; what more natural than that the ring of fire should become the phenomenon of the molten rock; the apostles, especially the three who were not to taste of death, the guardian spirits who still guard the quarries and inspire; the bread and water changed through these thousand years, to the pipe, never more to the Indians than a sacred ceremonial of peace and brotherly love.

Surely, He whom the world has known as the Prince of Peace, left his message deeply impressed upon this continent, even though he spent but a few days upon it. And when we think of the wars which have torn the Christian nations, who have fought against each other in His name with His plainly written Word in one hand and a sword in the other, we feel that these Lamanites, without records for a thousand years, have not illy crystallized His message in the beautiful old record of the peace pipe, nor even, so far as their knowledge has gone, been far behind us in the observance of its spirit. And certainly they have carried down to us in sacred legend, one of our most striking, convincing corroborations of their early, sacred history, The Book of Mormon.