

Cumorah Messenger

A Royal Marriage

By Chris Scott © 2013

In our modern times we are so fortunate to have an ancient story of a Royal ascension to a throne recorded and handed down to us by two different methods. One is carved in stone on lintels adorning doorways in the ancient city of Yaxchilan, in the state of Chiapas, Mexico. The other is recorded in the Book of Mormon, specifically the Book of Omni. The purpose of this article is to use both of these complementary recorded stories to help create the complete story of a very important match. Whether it was true love and a match made in heaven or marriage of political convenience we will never know; nonetheless it is intriguing to fill in the gaps where we can.

Often times we see historical marriages between Royals that are done to seal the relationship between two peoples and in the case we are discussing it is the daughter of King Zarahemla and the ruler of another people

named Mosiah. Six times the Book of Mormon states the fact that the authors cannot write the whole account of the history of the people.”.....yea, this book cannot contain even a hundredth part of what was done among so many people.”¹ The story of Mosiah becoming king is one of those stories that probably had some details left out. The archaeological evidence appears to make a reasonable inference that Mosiah became king through a Royal match. This evidence completes a beautiful story of a Royal Marriage between two beloved leaders in ancient America. For clarification the characters that are compared in the two stories are as follows. Lady Kook as the daughter of Zarahemla and Shield Jaguar II as Mosiah.

From Omni 1:18-34 in the Book of Mormon it says: “Behold, I am Amaleki, the son of Abinadom. Behold, I will speak unto you somewhat concerning Mosiah, who was made king over the land of

Zarahemla: For behold, he being warned of the Lord that he should flee out of the land of Nephi, and as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord, should also depart out of the land with him, into the wilderness. And it came to pass that he did according as the Lord had commanded him.and they were led by the power of his arm, through the wilderness, until they came down into the land which is called the land of Zarahemla. And they discovered a people, who were called the people of Zarahemla. Behold it came to pass that Mosiah discovered that the people of Zarahemla, came out from Jerusalem, at the time that Zedekiah, king of Judah, was carried away captive into Babylon. And they journeyed in the wilderness, and were brought by the hand of the Lord, across the great waters, into the land where Mosiah discovered them; and they had dwelt there from that

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Maya Technology: Use of Water

By Terry Scott © 2013 Part I

Water. Every person, every city, every culture requires continuous access to water. To avoid sickness, we also require clean, drinking water. The Maya were no different in their needs, but they had additional problems to overcome that many societies did not.

Mesoamerican weather patterns are divided into rainy seasons and dry seasons. During the wet half of the year, “rainfall ranges from 40 inches (1,000 mm) in the Northeast to 200 inches (5,000 mm) on the East Coast. As much as 90 percent of storm water falls during the rainy season.”¹ This overabundance of wa-

ter causes flooding, soil erosion and turns the ground into swamp-like mud. During the dry half of the year, there are few sources of water to sustain life.

The Maya tackled this problem in a variety of ways. Wherever possible they built their cities close to water sources. Sites such as Copan, Palenque, Piedras Negras, and Yaxchilan were built close to rivers. Other sites like Chichen Itza and Chinkultic were built close to ‘cenotes’.

A cenote is a large open sinkhole caused by the collapse of the limestone bedrock into an underground river below.

“Geologists have concluded that a 10-kilometer-wide bolide, or exploding meteor, collided with the earth on the northern edge of the Yucatán near the present-day town of Chicxulub” causing the “famous ring of cenotes” that outline the shock wave of the impact. “The impact triggered the K-T (Cretaceous/Tertiary)

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A Royal Marriage *continued*

time forth.....they had become exceeding numerous. And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla, and of Mosiah, did unite together; and Mosiah was appointed to be their king."

In the ancient city of Yaxchilan there are structures dedicated to a beloved queen named Lady Kook (referred to as Lady K'ab'al Xook or Xoc by some authorities). Structure 23 has four lintels that tell the story of the ascension to the throne of her husband Shield Jaguar II. The first of these lintels, lintel 23, details the lineage of her ancestors that brought her to the throne. From Omni 1:33 we read: "...Zarahemla gave a genealogy of his fathers, according to his memory: and it is written but not in these plates." Lineage is shown to be important to the people of Zarahemla, as well as, the ancestors of Lady Kook.

Lady Kook has been referred to by archaeologists as a queen consort or a regent. The definition of a queen consort is one who has equal rank to her husband's monarchical title. A regent is a temporary acting head of state due to his or her position in a line of succession in the Royal house. In this case Lady Kook was in power at Yaxchilan and acted as a regent to bring her husband, Itzamnaaj B'alam II, or Shield Jaguar II to the throne.

The next three lintels 24, 25 and 26 tell of Shield Jaguar II's ascension to the throne and Lady Kook's role. Interpretation of these glyphs might not be very obvious, but with the help of the scriptures that we have available, they take on a spiritual and sym-



Figure 1

bolic nature that help us understand more clearly what they are trying to convey. "...the ancient Maya conveyed layered and complex meanings involving time and identity, offering much more than first meets the eye."²

Lintel 24 shows a sacrifice on the part of Lady Kook (see Figure 1). She is running a thread of thorns through her tongue which indicates that she is bridling her tongue from idle gossip and words that can hurt other people. It is an act of repentance. From Proverbs 15:4 we read "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach of the Spirit." The promise that God gives when we repent is found in III Nephi 4:50 "Whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost." We see in this glyph, Shield Jaguar II conferring the Holy Spirit of promise upon Lady Kook.

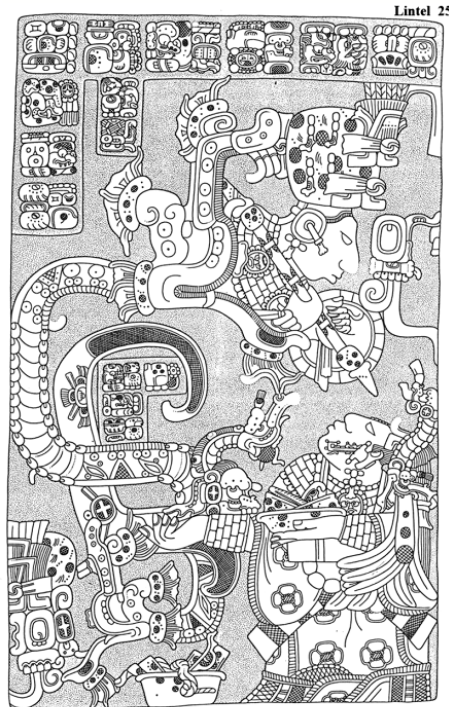


Figure 2

In lintel 25 we see a large serpent with the head a warrior ancestor coming out of the mouth (see Figure 2). The "Vision Serpent" was an important part of Mayan rituals. In the case of our story of Lady Kook and Shield Jaguar II it was part of ceremony of the ascendancy to the throne.

In this scene she is attired in Royal garb and holding a sacrificial bowl with a protruding stingray spine. Then a large serpent emerges with the head of her warrior ancestor coming out of the head of the serpent. Several spiritual meanings could be taken

from this. One is the sacrifice of blood symbolically meaning life. She gives of her life freely for the benefit of her people. The barb of the stingray could be symbolic of the barbs and criticisms that are always part of being in a leadership role. We see parallels to the bible in Luke 22:44, referring to Jesus, "And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly; and he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." This glyph portrays drops of blood falling onto the scrolls in a basket at her feet.

The Vision Serpent goes back to earlier Maya conceptions, and lies at the center of the world as they conceived it. "It is the center axis atop the World Tree. Essentially the World Tree and the Vision Serpent, representing the king, created the center axis into existence in the temples and create a doorway to the spiritual world and with it power."³

The serpent has been associated with expressions of duality; good and evil, life and death, healing or vengefulness, etc. The glyphs portray their message through symbolism. As the serpent swallows its prey whole, so death takes us whole. Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent, the most revered serpent in Mesoamerican culture, to us represents Christ. He is swallowed whole in death, but returns as a feathered serpent, resurrected again. "The double symbolism used in its name is considered allegoric to the dual nature of the deity, where being feathered represents its divine nature or ability to fly to reach the skies and being a serpent represents its human nature or ability to creep on the ground among other



Figure 3

A Royal Marriage *continued*

animals of the Earth, a dualism very common in Mesoamerican deities."⁴

Just as our spiritual disciplines of prayer, meditation and fasting are a sacrifice and offering to our creator, Lady Kook's offering opened a doorway to a spiritual discernment. She had a vision that her ancestor approved of her handing over the kingship to Shield Jaguar II. Signs and wonders shall follow those that believe.

Lintel 26 then shows Lady Kook handing a jaguar helmet to Shield Jaguar II (see figure 3). The jaguar to the Mayan was a powerful symbol associated with God and kingship. This glyph completes the story of Shield Jaguar II becoming king, thus sealing a relationship between two groups of people coming together." *Yaxchilan*

reached the peak of its power during the reign of Bird Jaguar III's son, Itzamnaaj Balam II,"⁵(or Shield Jaguar II).

Whether this marriage was the ultimate conclusion to a love affair, or due to the Royal nature of the two family lines it was the logical step in uniting two peoples, it did accomplish many great things. First, it provided the foundation to place Mosiah and a people with a historical written language at the center of a burgeoning culture.

Second, it produced an offspring that we later understand to be King Benjamin. The loving, healing nature of his sermon is even more poignant in light of the newfound history of the two royal lines.

Third, their union provided the socio-political and cultural environment for the

introduction of the gospel and the establishment of the church through Alma. This eventually resulted in the conversion of the Lamanites and a huge cultural shift in Mesoamerican history.

This truly was a match made in Heaven.

Footnotes:

1. III Nephi 2:92
2. David Stuart report: Tonina's curious ballgame June 11, 2013.
3. Schele, L., & D. A. Friedel, 1990, *A Forest of Kings*, New York, p.68.
4. The Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Culture.
5. Sharer, Robert J., & Loa P. Traxler, 2006, *The Ancient Maya*, Stanford, p. 434

A Royal Marriage; Part Deux By David B. Brown © 2013

The implication of a blending of Hebrew royal lines in the Americas is truly intriguing. Through the Book of Mormon we are given two very important pieces of information concerning tribes; first, once Lehi had obtained the Brass Plates and read through the lineage he was surprised to discover that he was from the tribe of Manasseh—a fact that was previously unknown to him. Manasseh was one of the sons of Joseph who received the promise that his children would be blessed in abundance. Eventually, the Northern Kingdom of Israel would be considered the "ten lost tribes" and their principle leadership was the tribe of Joseph.

Second, Judah was promised that his children would sit upon the throne until Shiloh comes. "Shiloh" is considered to be a blending of two Hebrew words that expresses "until rule returns to him whose right it is to wield it."¹ So, until one comes that has the right to rule, the tribe of Judah will sit upon the throne as a "placeholder" so-to-speak. The Jewish kings ruled in the Southern Kingdom of Israel and were thought to be the only true "royals" of the Hebrew tribes.

Therefore, Judah received the scepter—the right to sit on the throne until one should come who is worthy to be king. Joseph, however, received the birthright and the fullness of Jacob's blessings who even extended those blessings to Joseph's two sons Ephraim and Manasseh.

Now, when Mosiah carried the Brass Plates, their language and history into the land of Zarahemla, he brought the record of who they were, of the promises and

prophecies, and in essence he carried their Hebrew birthright. Zarahemla was a descendant of Mulek, who was a son of King Zedekiah. The Book of Mormon states that he escaped from Jerusalem at the time of the siege in 586 BC. Therefore, the Mulekites were a people who carried the throne of Judah—the blessing of the right to sit upon the throne until one should come who is worthy to be king.

How did Mosiah, leader of the Nephites, walk into the land of Zarahemla and find himself "appointed" king from a lineage of people who had the right to the throne? Archaeology answers this question at Yaxchilan. Here we find Shield Jaguar II who enters into Yaxchilan from the Maya Highlands. Chinkultic is in the Highlands at an elevation about 5,500 feet above Yaxchilan, and Chinkultic is where we find strong evidence for the City of Nephi. Apparently, the arrival of Shield Jaguar II was very opportune because King Knot-Eye Jaguar (Zarahemla) had no sons to receive his kingship. His daughter was available and so Shield Jaguar II (Mosiah) marries Lady Kook. This brings together the scepter (daughter of King Zarahemla) and the birthright (Mosiah from the tribe of Joseph). The marriage of these two "heals" the breach of the Israelite Kingdom when they split into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms after the reign of King Solomon. The Israelite throne is finally unified.

This unified throne is then received by their son Yoatt B'alam II (King Benjamin), who is named after the first king on their king list. Then it is passed on to

Shield Jaguar III (Mosiah the younger). It is at this point that the king list becomes vague. Why? Because it is here that the Maya kingship is replaced by judges.²

The Book of Mormon tells us that the leadership of the Nephite nation is then determined by popular vote, but it is the spiritual leadership that is conferred apart from popularity. We therefore make the assumption that the spiritual leadership is also somehow connected with the rulership of the unified throne (Lintel 24).

At Palenque we have many glyphs that speak of a ruler who received his conferral when he was very young. We also have glyphs that talk about gifts being given to a baby god—gifts of sacredness (priesthood) and rulership (throne). We have stone panels that illustrate three men in kingly robes offering gifts to one who sits on a throne and offers life in his kingdom to those who come after him. Is this why three men traveled half a world away to present gifts to a baby? Was it the gift of priesthood and rulership that was conferred on the young ruler? Had the designated heirs to the unified Israelite throne finally found the one who was worthy to receive the kingship?

These are all questions that have yet to find definitive answers, but we are certain that the Book of Mormon has provided the clues to discover that Jesus of Nazareth was literally King of Kings.

1. <http://www.studylight.org/ls/ds/index.cgi?a=461>
2. Private communication, Mario Perez-Campa. Deceased Archaeologist for INAH.

Maya Technology: Use of Water *Continued*

extinction of the majority of the planet's animal life, most notably the dinosaur."¹

Most Maya cities did not have permanent water sources. They had to find ways to store the rain water to survive. Maya engineers came up with a variety of ways to control and retain rain water. They built 'chultuns' (underground cisterns or holding tanks) and reservoirs to collect rain water. A chultune was an underground chamber about 12 feet deep and 9 feet square. It was lined with cut stone and cement and tapered at the top to reduce evaporation. The interior surface was covered with a waterproof stucco to prevent leaking. "In some cities, more than 100 chultunes served the needs of the city."¹

The Maya engineers landscaped the ground around their cities and sloped the roofs of their buildings and paved courtyards and elevated roads and walkways to direct water into these chultuns and reservoirs. (see Figures 1 & 2) They also terraced their hillsides to control erosion and

water the crops grown there.

"During the Classic Period, the world's largest cities, like Tikal (Figure 2), Calakmul, and Edzná" built their large cities "on the summit of hills and ridges."¹

"The water-management system at Tikal had a series of 13 reservoirs with a total capacity of 147,631,068 liters. Calculations indicate that this total volume would sustain the city for 18 months. This provided a six-month supply for typical rainfall and a 12-month supply for water shortage situations."¹ (The population density at Tikal, Guatemala was on par with the density of modern Los Angeles.)¹ Stucco sealed concrete and stone or clay was used to line the reservoirs to prevent leakage. At Tonina, their reservoir doubled as a defensive mote.

The city of Palenque was originally named Lakamba, meaning "big water," because of the nine streams that run



Figure 3

through it.¹ The heavy rains caused the streams to overflow and flood the city. Maya engineers solved the flooding problems by "constructing subterranean cast-in-place concrete aqueducts to...collect water upstream of the city center, and transfer the water under the city center and into the Otulum River downstream of the city."¹ (see Figure 3)

"It is apparent that Palenque engineers understood the principles of hydraulic engineering. The aqueduct was constructed with a steeper grade when approaching the palace in order to increase the speed of water flow. The shape and area of the aqueduct was reduced at a point underneath the palace. The reduction of area in a conduit will increase the velocity and pressure of the water in the smaller conduit downstream."¹

"Water pressure systems were previously thought to have entered the New World with the arrival of the Spanish," the researchers said in a recent issue of the Journal of Archaeological Science. "Yet, archaeological data, seasonal climate conditions, geomorphic setting and simple hydraulic theory clearly show that the Maya of Palenque in Chiapas, Mexico, had empirical knowledge of closed channel water pressure predating the arrival of Europeans."²

This increase in water pressure allowed the water to be raised almost 20 feet, more than enough to supply water to the fountains and toilets in the palace at Palenque.¹ "Ceramic tubes, suitable for piping, have been encountered at other Maya cities, including Edzná"¹ and Comalcalco.

The Maya made the most of water whenever they could. They reclaimed

Continued on Page 7

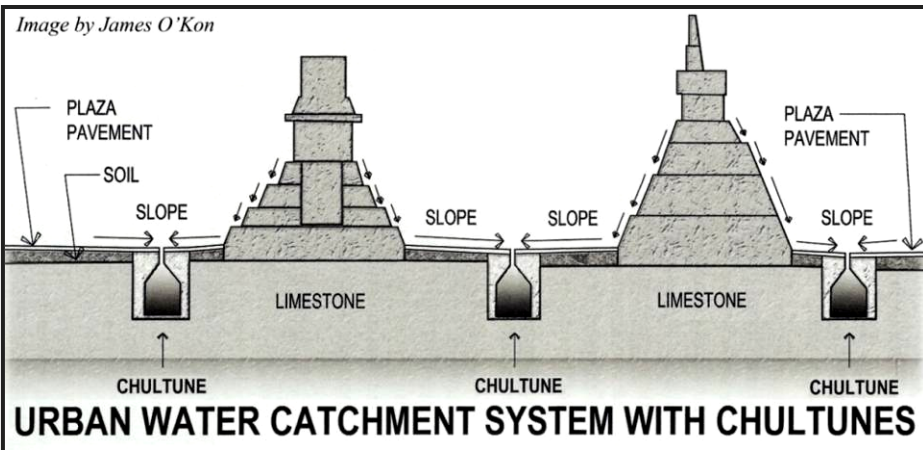


Figure 1

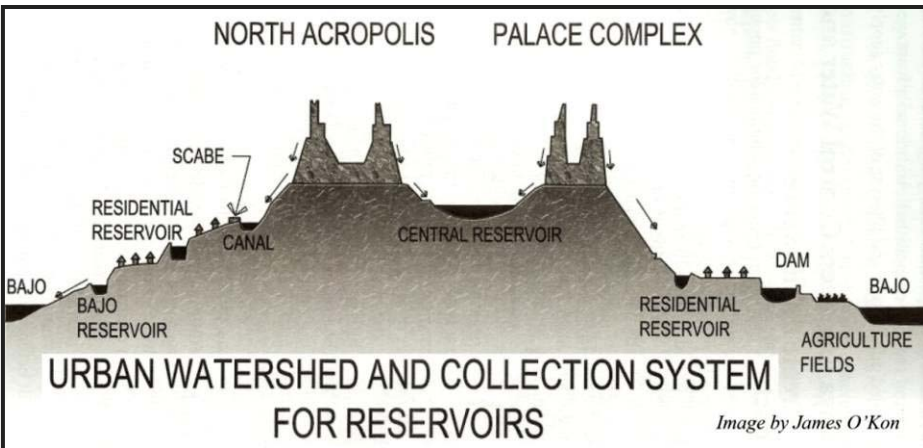


Figure 2

Adventures In Scriptures

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Limhi's Pass

Limhi was a leader of the Nephite people living in the Land of Nephi. The people of Limhi were surrounded by Lamanites and were in bondage to them. Their lives were very difficult and they wanted to return to the Land of Zarahemla, where their people had come from.

Limhi sent a search party to find the Land of Zarahemla, but they could not find it. Instead they found a land of dry bones. They also found a record of the people that had lived there. This record was engraven on plates of ore. The search party returned with the plates to Limhi, but no one knew how to read the language they were written in.

Ammon, from Zarahemla, had been searching for the people of Limhi. He found them shortly after the search party had returned with the plates. Ammon could lead them to Zarahemla.

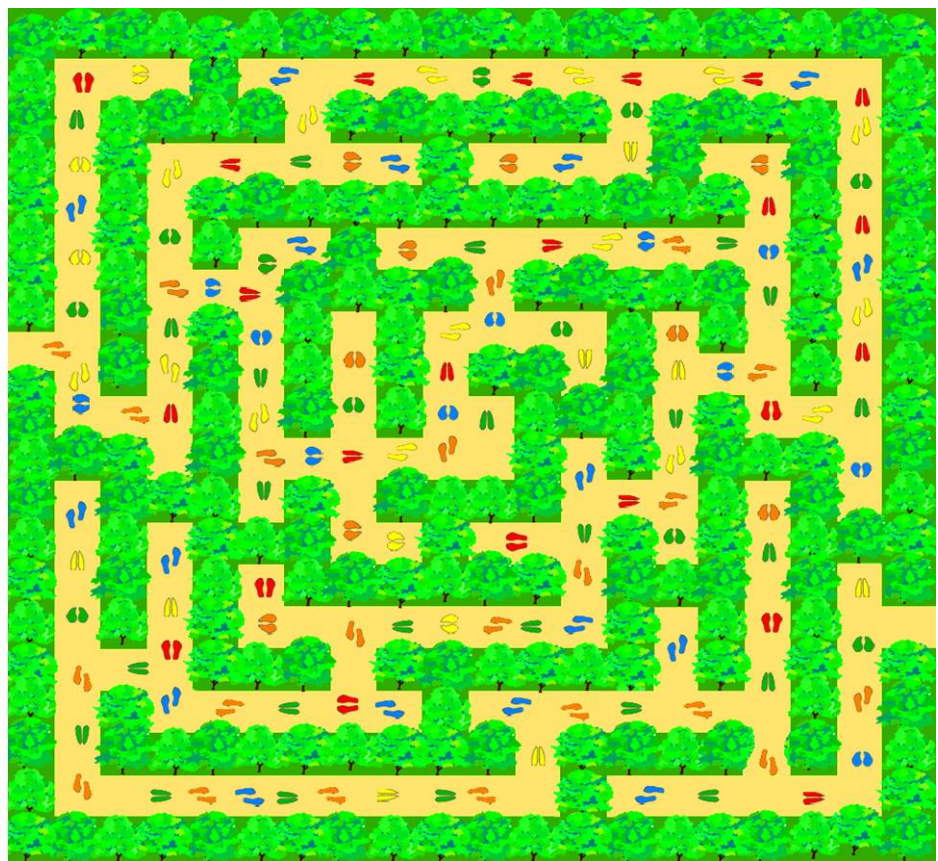
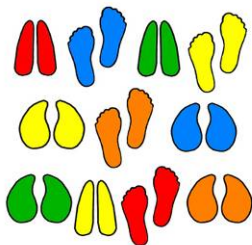
Limhi then asked his people to help come up with a plan to escape the City of Nephi and the Lamanites. Gideon, Limhi's captain, said they could all leave through a hidden pass behind the city. They gathered their flocks, herds, their precious things, food and provisions that they would need to survive in the wilderness. Then strong drink was given to the Lamanite guards and when they were drunk, the people of Limhi left the city through the hidden pass behind the city at night.. After the Lamanites had pursued them for two days, they could no longer follow their tracks.

The Lord protected the people of Limhi in the wilderness because they had cried out to him for help. He helped them escape from being in bondage to the Lamanites.

Based on Mosiah 9:15-10:19

Find a way through the forest

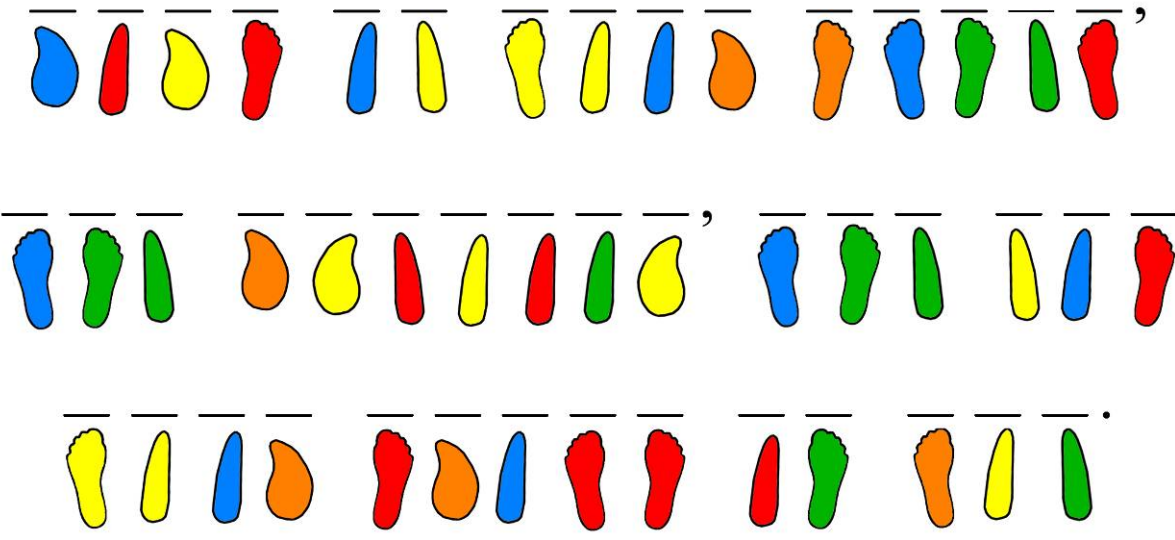
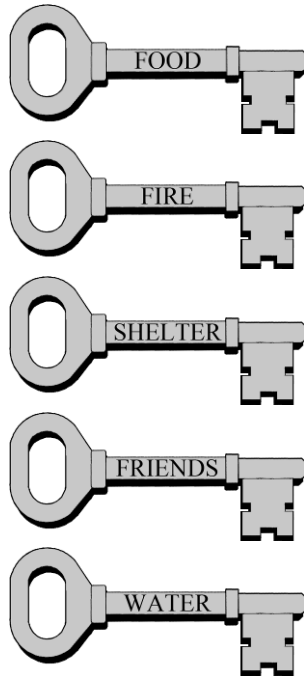
One of the 11 sets of footprints below made it all the way through the forest. Can you follow the right tracks and make it all the way through the forest too?



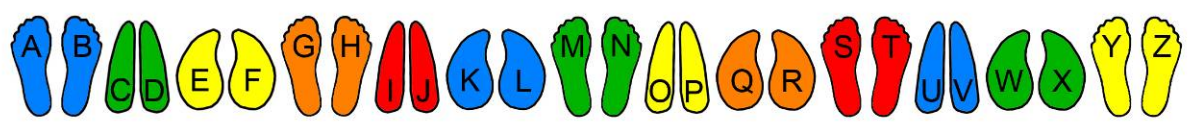
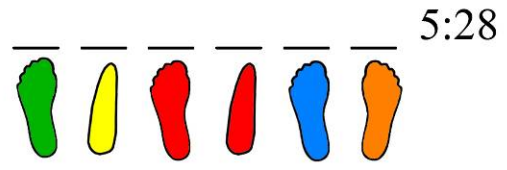
MATCHING

FIVE KEYS TO WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

Draw a line from the correct survival key to the correct survival problem.



Use the key below to find out what the scriptures says and where it can be found.



Maya Technology: Use of Water *Continued*

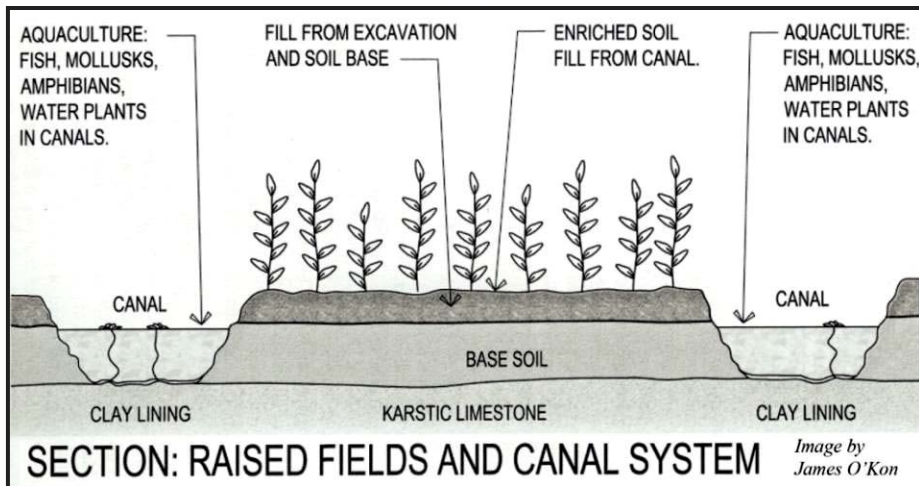


Figure 4

marshy areas for agriculture. They laid out farming and irrigation canals in a grid pattern. To build the canals, they removed earth down to the limestone layer and lined them with clay to prevent water leakage. The removed soil was piled onto the unexcavated areas, raising them above water level. The flow of water into the irrigation canals was controlled by a series of gates which was a great place to hold excess rain water from the rainy season. With this ground water control system in place they now had planting areas dry enough to grow crops with a constant water supply. The canals were big enough for canoes to travel through-

Figure 5



Excavation of Platform of Venus at Chichen Itza shows stacks of Limestone water filters.

out the grids to tend to the farming. (see Figure 4)

“With the aid of satellite imagery and remote sensing, researchers from George Mason University and the Geological Society of America have discovered a vast area of raised fields in northern Belize. The satellite images indicate a massive grid of raised fields more than 100 kilometers in width. Research has indicated that raised field agriculture was widespread, with 40 square kilometers identified in Quintana Roo.”¹

Once the problem was address regarding the shortages of water during the dry season, the final problem was clean drinking water. Water running across the ground into the chultunes would accumu-

late dirt, bird dropping and other undesirable debris that contaminated the drinking water. Letting it stagnate for six months or more would not improve the taste.

The Maya developed ways to purify the water stored in their chultunes and reservoirs. They were using microfiltration long before the Brita© company existed. They used limestone shaped into cylinders or cones to filter the water from the chultunes. Karstic limestone is up to 40% porous and can filter out particles from 6.0 to 0.20 microns.¹ The water filter system in my house only filter down to 5.0 microns! *“Tests of the limestone water filters indicate that 1 to 2 liters per hour can be processed by a single filter. Each filter would yield 24 to 48 liters per 24-hour period.”¹*

“The stem and root system of the water lily recycled organic waste; these plants produce and enrich dissolved oxygen into the stored water. They provide a microenvironment for numerous invertebrates that ensure extensive natural purification..”

Piles of limestone filters have been discovered at Chichen Itza where the water from the nearby cenotes is notoriously noxious to drink. (see Figure 5)

In 1889 Alfred Maudslay photographed “mound 14” at Chichen Itza. (nicknamed “platform of cones” and later called Platform of Venus) *“The facade of the Venus platform displays bas-relief carvings of the diving god “Venus,” as well as a number of water-related motifs including the water lily, turtles, and fish. It would appear that the platform had a strong relationship to water...”¹*

The other method of water purification was an organic solution; water lilies. The wide leaf of the water lily shades the water to prevent algae growth and reduce evaporation. (see Figure 6) But wait, there’s more!

“The stem and root system of the water lily recycled organic waste; these plants produce and enrich dissolved oxygen into the stored water. They provide a microenvironment for numerous inverte-

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Maya Technology: Use of Water *Continued*

brates that ensure extensive natural purification. The stem and leaves in the water plants prevent sedimentation and provide a substrate for the growth of beneficial microorganisms. Frogs, dragonflies, and salamanders that control mosquito larvae will multiply naturally. The animals, insects, and water lilies integrate to form the natural biological treatment center engineered by Maya technology.”¹

This natural plant was the perfect solution to filter the volume of water needed by a large city. “The use of water plants in natural, biological water treatment centers has been introduced into contemporary water-treatment centers. The concept is now being used for cities with populations of 100,000. Modern water-treatment plants use aquatic plants for their ability to absorb pathogens, metals, and other contaminants from water. It



Figure 6

appears that Maya technology applied a system that contemporary environmental engineers have discovered is economical and environmentally suitable.”¹ Water lilies were also used on the canals in their grid farming.

The more we discover about the Maya, the more we realize just how many technologies they mastered long before they were rediscovered by later cultures. “The natural environment deprived them (the Maya) of a dependable supply of water from rainfall for the aquifer. The verdant and torrid environment of the Yucatán manifested serious natural liabilities that challenged the survival of the Maya; they faced the constant specter of thirst. Maya water-management technology solved the dilemma and provided a dependable water supply that enabled the civilization to survive and prosper.”¹

Footnotes:

1. O’Kon, James A, *The Lost Secrets of Maya Technology: Chapter 8 Survival in the Seasonal Desert*, The Career Press, Pompton Plains, NJ, 2012.
2. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/>