Myths and Legends



Edited by Seth Rogers

TCM Teacher Created Materials

Table of Contents

The Golden Staff 4

Finn MacCool 9

The Feathered Serpent God 14

Persephone and the Seasons 18

The Emperor's Race 23

The Salmon of Knowledge 28

Book Club Questions 32

For Review Only

The Golden Staff

Long ago, at the dawn of time, the most powerful god of all, Viracocha, fashioned the first people of South America from clay.

Though he gave them voices and crops to harvest, the people had no skills. They didn't know how to make clothes or build houses. They couldn't read, write, or cook. So, for a long time, they lived like animals.

The sun god, Inti, looked down on the people, and he felt pity for them. He decided that the cleverest of his four sons and his daughter should rule over everyone and teach them how to live in a better way.

Their names were Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo.

"Teach them how to live together, and help them to build a great civilization," he told his children. "Be a father and mother to them all."



For Review Only

And he handed them a magical golden staff that shone like the sun.

"On your travels, you will find a place where this golden staff sinks deep into the ground with just one blow. There, you must build a great city. This place will be the center of your empire and home to a magnificent sun temple. It is there that the people can come and worship me," said Inti.

As the sun rose the next morning, Inti took Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo to the Isla del Sol, an island in the center of Lake Titicaca in Bolivia, where he was born. "Begin your journey here, my children."

However, Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo didn't realize their three brothers were deeply jealous of the important task they had been given. They wanted to rule the new empire all by themselves. Just as Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo set out on their journey, the brothers stepped out of a nearby cave.



For Review Only

Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo thought their siblings had come to help them, so they greeted their brothers warmly and set out together to teach the people. But they hadn't been gone long when one of their brothers, Ayar Cachi, made fun of the humans.

"What idiots!" he sneered. "Look at them. Who would want to teach such dumb beasts? What a waste of my powers! I can knock down hills with a single shot of my sling—and that's far more fun than hanging around with these fools!" And Ayar Cachi destroyed a hill with his slingshot, injuring the people who lived there.

Manco Cápac was so angered by his brother's foolishness and destruction, he used his powers to send Ayar Cachi back to the cave where he came from and sealed him inside.



Preview only

On seeing this, the second brother, Ayar Uchu, grew fearful of Manco Cápac's strength. "Perhaps I will go back to the cave and look after the people from there." And he ran back to the cave as quickly as he could. When Inti, the sun god, saw this, he turned Ayar Uchu into stone to punish him for his cowardice.

The third brother, Ayar Auca, was, by now, quaking with fear. He ran off into the forest and was never seen again!

And so, as Inti first intended, only Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo remained. The brother and sister traveled far and wide, uniting many different tribes, teaching them how to build their own homes and villages, how to farm and weave and cook, and how to read and write.



For Preview Only

A great civilization grew around them, and the people loved their leaders.

After many years of traveling and teaching, they reached a place called Cusco in a river valley in Peru. Manco Cápac tried to drive the golden staff into the soil. He had tried many times before, but this time found that it sank into the ground with great ease.

In an instant, a stunning temple to the sun god, Inti, sprang up before them. It had walls of glittering gold and a courtyard filled with golden statues. Inside, there was a golden wall with a spectacular carving of the sun, which lit up the whole temple. They called the temple the Sun House.

With Inti's temple in place, Manco Cápac and Mama Ocllo set to work building a great city around it and a palace for themselves. From there, they ruled over the city they had created and all the people around it. And that is how the Inca empire came to be.



For Review Only

Finn MacCool

Hundreds of years ago, the northern part of Ireland was home to a giant known as Finn MacCool. Despite his large size and huge strength, MacCool was a kindly giant, who enjoyed living peacefully with his wife, Oonagh.

However, he had one great rival who lived across the sea in Scotland—his name was Benandonner, the Red Man. Benandonner spent all day and night shouting insults across the waves at Finn MacCool until, one morning, MacCool decided he could take no more. He broke off some rocks and started throwing them into the sea to build a pathway across the sea to Scotland. When he had finished, he was quite exhausted, but he yelled at Benandonner to come to Ireland and fight him once and for all.

However, when mighty Finn MacCool caught sight of Benandonner in the distance, he realized that the Scottish giant was twice his size!



For Review Only