



“Wiĉhayunini Wahokuŋwiĉhakhiya,” A Letter by Black Elk in Iapi Oaye

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Word Carrier: Please allow me to share a word with you, that is why I write this to you. There is something that I am thinking about, that is why I say this. Way back when this teaching (law) was growing, God told the people about something that I remember. This is when the earth shook and God taught the people on earth by disturbing (their lives). I believe this to be so. Also we saw a star here and there differently. I saw this as another one. We also have seen a strong wind and experienced it in a terrible way. I consider this as another one. Then the earth broke into pieces so there were a lot of cliffs that developed. I consider this another one. Then many people spoke different languages. I consider this another one. Then for a while women did not have good pregnancies. I consider this another one. And that is why, my relatives, those of you who see this book (Bible) whose relatives do not abide by these laws God taught the people on earth by disturbing (their lives). In the same manner, it is necessary to have the people follow the laws closely. Life on earth is very close now (the end) I believe, and that is why.

Black Elk, He le iyaksapa [He who gives counsel)].

Original

Iapi Oaye (Iyapi O'aye): Itho iyapi waŋži onah'uŋ ĉhiyiŋ kta waĉhiŋ, ĉha he'uŋ wowapi ĉiĉ'u welo. Taku waŋži awaĉhamiŋ yuŋkhaŋ he 'uŋ hephe yelo. Hekta makħa akaŋ wo'ophe ki le iĉhaġe ĉiŋ hehaŋ Wakħaŋthaŋka oyate ki taku waŋži iwahowiwĉhaye k'uŋ he weksuya. Yuŋkhaŋ makħa ki nahuŋhuŋzahaŋ, yuŋkhaŋ he Wakħaŋthaŋka oyate makħa akaŋ uŋ pi ki wiĉhayunini wahokuŋwiĉhakhiya seĉeĉha wala. Nakuŋ wiĉaŋpi waŋzigži thoĉeĉa waŋ'uŋyaŋkapi , yuŋkhaŋ he nakuŋ waŋži wala. Nakuŋ thaŋe waŋzigži thehika waŋ'uŋyaŋka pi yuŋkhaŋ he nakuŋ waŋži wala. Hehaŋl nakuŋ makħa ki blebleĉahaŋ ĉhaŋkhe lehaŋl maya ota, yuŋkhaŋ he waŋži wala. Hehaŋl wiĉhaša ki ota oyate thoĉeĉa iyapi. He nakuŋ waŋži wala. Hehaŋl nakuŋ hehaŋ wiŋyaŋ ki tuweni zaniya ĉhiŋĉathuŋ ŋni, yuŋkhaŋ he nakuŋ waŋži wala. Yuŋkhaŋ he'uŋ mitakuyepi wowapi ki le tona walakapi ki nitakuyepi tona wo'ophe awaĉhiŋ ŋni ki hena Wakħaŋthaŋka wiĉhaša wiĉhayunini wahokuŋwiĉhakhiya seĉeĉha, iyeĉhel nitakuyepi ki wo'ophe ki lila eĉuŋ wiĉkhiya pi iyeĉheĉa wala. Wana makħa akaŋ wiĉho'iĉhaġe ki khiyela seĉeĉha wala, ĉha he'uŋ hepheho.

Black Elk, He le iyaksapa

Translated by Deacon Ben Black Bear, Jr., St. Francis, Rosebud Indian Reservation, South Dakota, October 2015; requested by the Marquette University Archives.