

Deuteronomy 19:14 (Frances Smith) 89624

Stories of the Grace of God in Bolivia, Thou Shalt Not Remove Thy Neighbor's Landmark (19:14)

In Bolivia there are large areas of land granted to the Inca Indians which are marked out by what is called in Spanish, "mojones," or "landmarks." Greedy Spanish Americans or "patrones" came to Bolivia long after the Incas were there and were continually breaking through these hedges (landmarks) by removal of the stones.

One day five hundred Indians led by their Chief, all mounted on mules, stopped outside the little home of the missionary. When the missionary asked him where they were going, the Chief said they were going to kill every one who had removed their "mojones" or had advanced into Indian property. The missionary warned him of the danger of doing such a thing because the Government would punish them for injuring anyone or even fighting with them.

The Chief had become very friendly with the missionary. Holding out a roll of papers in his hand, he said, "These are the titles of our property, and the landmarks have been moved." He handed them to the missionary, saying, "Will you kindly read these titles, and define the old landmarks carefully for me, and let me know where the real landmarks are?" Dismissing his armed men, he confided in the missionary, "I trust you with these papers, but I would never trust anyone else. I know you will tell me the truth."

It was not too difficult to decipher the titles, for the landmarks were distinctly built on the top of the Inner Andes, called in Latin, EL DIVORCIO AQUORAM, that is, the division of the head streams. The land nourished by the waters flowing to the West was Indian property, whereas the land nourished by the waters flowing to the East was the white man's. Huge stones built in the year 1600 marked this.

The missionary took the Chief personally to show him the old landmarks. It was a trip of several days. Together then they visited the patrones in that district to discuss the problem with them and show them where the landmarks should have been. The missionary explained to the patrones that he had stopped the Chief and his tribe from coming to kill them because of this infringement on their ancestral property rights.

The missionary and the Chief made the following agreement with the whites: the old landmarks would be respected from now on; if Indian cattle, goats or other livestock passed over into the patrones' property, they would be moved back again and the Indians would be notified. The Indians would do the same if animals belonging to the Patrones passed over onto Indian property. This worked marvelously and continues to this day; thus, a massacre because of the "mojones" was averted. Friendships were recovered and the landmarks were not broken through, for which we praise the Lord.

One of the patrones, as well as his youngest daughter, was brought to trust in the Lord as Savior through this. Both are now with the Lord. They were friends with the Indians until the last.

Another of the patrones, though unsaved, invited the missionary to preach the Gospel to his servants who lived on his property. At a certain time every day he gathered them together for the missionary to speak to them. Only eternity will reveal the results.

There were twenty-six families in all. Several were saved, including some of their children. Today there are two assemblies there, one with seventy in fellowship, remembering the Lord until He come. There are ten in the other assembly.

Love never fails-truth in love and love in truth. Such is irresistible, beloved. May we ever be faithful in all things!