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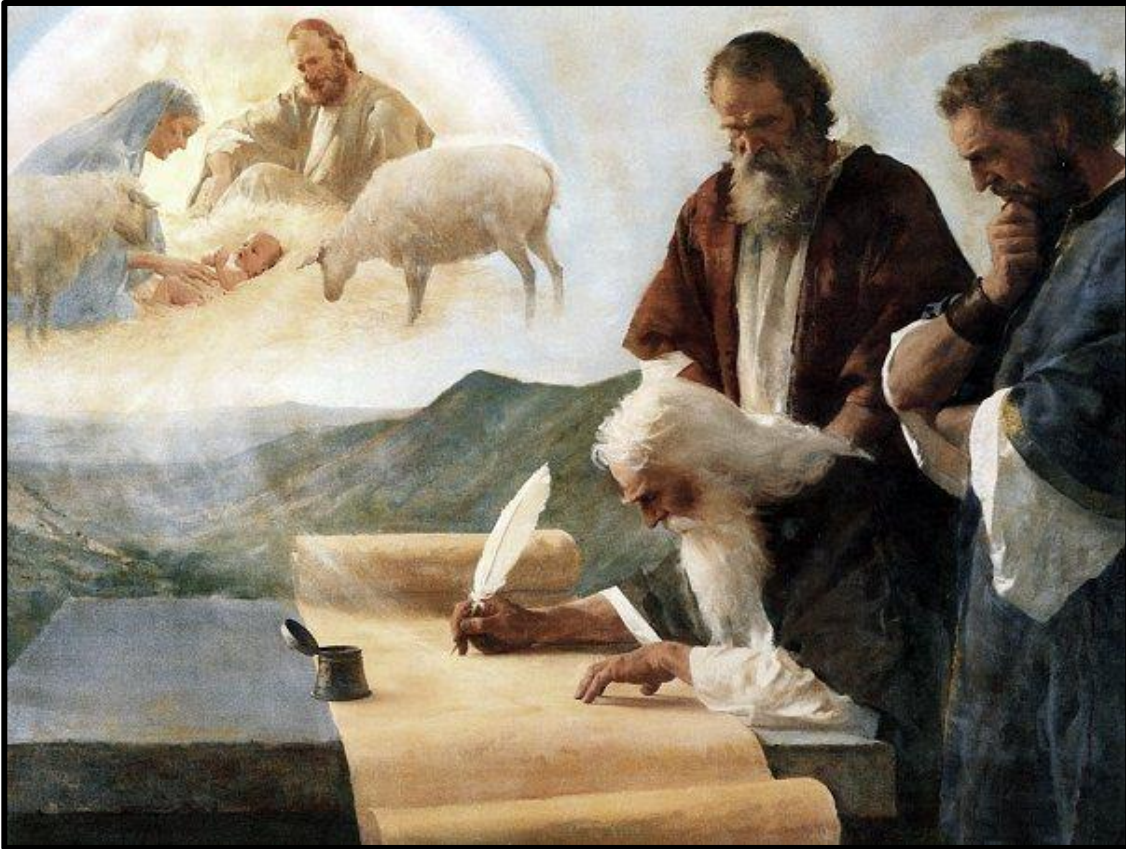
## 2 Nephi

### Chapter 11

**2 Ne 11:2-3 [Isaiah] Verily Saw My Redeemer, Even As I Have Seen Him.  
And My Brother Jacob Also Has Seen Him:**

Nephi recognized the similarities between himself, Jacob, and Isaiah. All three had been privileged to see the Savior, to witness portions of his mortal ministry, and to be given knowledge about how the house of Israel will be gathered home in the last days. Their combined witness declares that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, that the promises of the fathers given to the house of Israel will all be fulfilled, and that God lives, for they had all seen him. As Nephi declares, by the words of three, God hath said, I will establish my word.

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Isaiah writes of Christ's birth

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2 Nephi 11:2 **For he [Isaiah] verily saw my Redeemer, even as I [Nephi] have seen him (Illustration not shown):** Isaiah Writes of Christ's Birth. [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, [Gospel Art](#), #113]

2 Nephi 11:4 **All Things . . . Are the Typifying of Him [Jesus Christ]:**

According to Thomas Valletta, the Book of Mormon certifies that "all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of him [Jesus Christ]" (2 Nephi 11:4; see also Mosiah 3:15; 13:10, 31; Alma 13:16; 25:15; 33:19; 37:45). A *type* can be defined as "a person, event, or ritual with likeness to another person, event, or ritual of greater importance which is to follow. . . . True types will have noticeable points of resemblance, show evidence of divine appointment, and be prophetic of future events" (Tate, 1981). [Thomas R. Valletta, "The True Bread of Life," in [The Ensign](#), March 1999, p. 7]

2 Nephi 11:4 **All Things Which have Been Given of God from the Beginning of the World, unto Man, Are the Typifying of [Christ]:**

According to David Bokovoy, one Book of Mormon passage seems to suggest that ancient prophets recognized the connection between Isaiah's prophetic commission and the premortal council. Perhaps it is significant that Nephi specifically prefaces his citation of Isaiah chapter six with his testimonial that "all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world,

unto man, are the typifying of [Christ]" (2 Nephi 11:4). A brief survey of 2 Nephi 11-19 indicates that at least one ancient prophet viewed these opening chapters of Isaiah, including his call narrative, as typology for the Messiah.

Indeed, as the Lord himself declared, the words of the prophet Isaiah are truly great. This pre-Exilic servant of God received a sacred commission to testify of Jesus Christ. Yet not only did Isaiah fulfill this assignment through his spoken words, he also bore witness of the Savior with the unique events that happened in his life. When Isaiah describes the details of his call narrative, he did so in a manner that reflected various literary motifs well established in antiquity. Isaiah's prophetic commission, as presented in the sixth chapter of his book, demonstrates the importance of his mission in the latter-day restoration of doctrinal truths taught by the prophets of old. With the additional insights provided by modern revelation and recent textual discoveries, Latter-day Saints can easily recognize the connection between Isaiah's call and the election of Jehovah in the premortal council.

[David E. Bokovoy, "The Calling of Isaiah," in Covenants Prophecies and Hymns of the Old Testament, pp. 136-137]

#### **2 Nephi 11:4 All Things Which Have Been Given of God . . . Are the Typifying of Him:**

For Christians, the Law of Moses is often looked to as a type to teach us of Christ. As Paul said, it is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ (Gal 3:24). It teaches of things which are holy and things which are not holy, that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean (Lev 10:10). It teaches about the nature of the sacrifice of the Only-Begotten, i.e. firstborn, male, without blemish, etc.

But there are other events which may not be directly related to the Law of Moses which are a type of Christ:

- 1) The most obvious, as taught in the Book of Mormon, is the serpent raised in the wilderness. The serpent was to represent Christ so that those who were to look upon it should not die though bitten by poisonous serpents. See 2 Ne 25:20.
- 2) The offering of Isaac by Abraham is also a symbol for the sacrifice of the Savior. Abraham, through offering his only son, learned about what God the Father must have had to go through when witnessing the suffering of His Only-Begotten, perfect Son.
- 3) There was an ancient Jewish tradition, which apparently began with Moses, that the firstborn was to be holy and dedicated to the Lord. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine (Ex 13:1-2).
- 4) The events of the Passover, when all the firstborn sons of Egypt were killed by a plague from the Lord, use symbols to teach us many things about the mission of Christ:
  - a) A sacrificial lamb, without blemish is offered (Ex 12:5,21)

- b) The lamb is killed in the evening and had no broken bones (Ex 12:6,46)
- c) The lamb is to be eaten (Ex 12:8); the Savior said, Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you (Jn 6:53).
- d) No stranger is allowed to eat of the Lamb (Ex 12:43), the unworthy are not allowed to take the sacrament (1 Cor 11:29)
- e) The blood of the lamb, placed upon the doorposts, saved the children of Israel from destruction (Ex 12:8), the blood of Jesus Christ, shed in Gesthemane and on Calvary, saves all mankind from physical and spiritual death.
- f) The time of the year was the same for both the Passover and the crucifixion, for the last meal that Jesus was to enjoy on earth was the celebration of the Passover.

Many other examples could be used. Suffice it to say that the value of the Law of Moses and the other events which point us to Christ is that they help us more fully understand the meaning, implications, depth, and power of the mission and atonement of Jesus Christ.

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**2 Nephi 11:8 These Are the Words [of Isaiah] and Ye May Liken Them unto You and unto All Men:**

Gospel principles do not tarnish with time, nor do they apply with greater effect in one day than in another. The Lord has said, ‘What I say unto one I say unto all’ (D&C 93:49). The art of gospel teaching is to make timeless principles timely. Nephi did this by taking those prophecies that were made to the entire house of Israel and specifically applying them to his own family, who are part of the house of Israel.

[McConkie and Millet, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, vol. 1, p. 149]

[Note\* The following biblical scriptures seem to reinforce the idea that it is important that we liken the words of the Lord unto ourselves:

Matt. 7: 24, 26

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man,

Lamentations 2: 13

13 What thing shall I take to witness for thee? what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?

Matthew 11: 16

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation?

Luke 13: 20

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

Matt. 18: 23

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king

Alan Miner Personal Notes]



## Chapter 12

### 2 Nephi 12-24 (Why Isaiah?):

In 2 Nephi 11:8, Nephi mentions that he will "write some of the words of Isaiah." Previously, Nephi declared, "I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah, for my soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people, and I will send them forth unto *all* my children, for he verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him" (2 Nephi 11:2). Previously, Nephi had recorded his father's blessing to Jacob in which Lehi had declared to Jacob:

Wherefore, thy soul shall be blessed, and thou shalt dwell safely with thy brother, Nephi . . . I know that thou art redeemed, because of the righteousness of thy Redeemer; for thou hast beheld that in the fulness of time he cometh to bring salvation unto men. And thou hast beheld in thy youth his glory; wherefore, thou art blessed even as they unto whom he shall minister in the flesh; for the Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free.

So here at the close of Nephi's life, Nephi and Jacob use the greatest scriptures at their disposal, the words of Isaiah, to lay a message before our eyes, and in doing so put their whole life's work into perspective.

The reader should keep in mind that Nephi possibly represented the last surviving personal witness to his people of not only the results of the destruction and captivity of the ten tribes of Israel, but the wickedness of the people of Judah which led up to the destruction of Jerusalem. Lehi and Sariah had died. Laman and Lemuel had been left behind in the land of First Inheritance, along with the sons of Ishmael and their wives—the daughters of Lehi and Sariah. Sam was possibly too young at that time they left Jerusalem to recognize the signs of destruction that would follow. Jacob and Joseph had not been born when Lehi and Sariah left Jerusalem with their family.

In the writings of Isaiah which Nephi uses here in 2 Nephi, the prophet Isaiah, who lived many years before Nephi, had prophesied concerning the future of Judah and Jerusalem (see 2 Nephi 12, 13, 14). Isaiah had also prophesied about the future scattering of the children of Judah (see 2 Nephi 15) Isaiah had recorded his visionary calling by the Lord himself (2 Nephi 16). Isaiah had prophesied about the destruction and captivity of the northern 10 tribes (2 Nephi 17-19), sandwiching within these words a marvelous prophecy of "The Prince of Peace" (2 Nephi 19). Isaiah had reminded the people in prophecy that as Israel went, so would go Judah (2 Nephi 20). But in the final four chapters, (2 Nephi 21-24) Isaiah had given to all the covenant children of Israel a promise of a future restoration, a promise of future gathering. Thus, Nephi will include these writings of Isaiah in his record as a testament to what happened, as a testament to covenants--

broken and kept, as a testament to the Lord, as a welding together of truth concerning the past, present, and future of God's children under Christ.

Once Nephi concludes these chapters of Isaiah (12-24), he will finish his writings with his own prophetic words concerning his people and the covenants they have taken upon themselves (2 Nephi 25-30). Indeed, Nephi seems to have the same purpose in writing as Mormon & Moroni; that is, to show unto his people, "the remnant of the House of Israel, what great things the Lord has done for their fathers; . . . that *they may know the covenants of the Lord*, that they are not cast off forever"; "to the convincing of [his people] that *Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God*, manifesting himself unto all nations" (see the Title Page of the Book of Mormon).

Nephi will end his writings with a stark warning:

And you that will not partake of the goodness of God, and respect the words of the Jews, and also my words, and the words which shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the Lamb of God, behold, I bid you an everlasting farewell, for these words shall condemn you at the last day. For what I seal on earth, shall be brought against you at the judgment bar; for thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey. Amen

[Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes] [See the commentary on the Title Page]

## 2 Nephi 12-24 (**Nephi Quotes Isaiah 2-14**):

Why did the Book of Mormon prophets quote so frequently from the writings of Isaiah? Why should Nephi and Jacob take the time (and precious space on the small plates) for the words of Isaiah? What is there in the writings of an eighth-century B.C. prophet--one, in fact, whose words are often extremely difficult to comprehend and appreciate--that would be of such worth to the Nephites and latter-day Israel?

According to Joseph McConkie and Robert Millet, a number of reasons suggest themselves. First, Isaiah was a relatively recent prophet. Many scholars place the dates of Isaiah's ministry around 742-701 B.C., only 100 to 150 years removed from the days of Nephi and Jacob. Isaiah's words would have been viewed by the Nephites much as the Latter-day Saints today view the sermons and writings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.

Second, one of Isaiah's central themes was the destiny of the house of Israel, of which the Nephites were an important branch (2 Nephi 6:5).

Third, Isaiah spoke frequently of the status of the house of Israel in the last days; the Book of Mormon is a record prepared and preserved for the people of the latter days (2 Nephi 25:7-8). Fourth, Isaiah spoke repeatedly of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah (1 Nephi 19:23).



In addition it might be noted that in the Lord's recorded instructions to the Nephites he twice endorsed the writings of Isaiah (3 Nephi 20:11; 23:1). In the second instance, after having quoted Isaiah 54, Jesus declared: "Ye ought to search these things. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah."

[Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, pp. 273-274]

## 2 Nephi 12-24 (**Nephi Quotes Isaiah**):

Concerning our need to understand Isaiah as Nephi did, Elder McConkie said: "It just may be that my salvation (and yours also!) does in fact depend upon our ability to understand the writings of Isaiah as fully and truly as Nephi understood them" ("Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah," p. 78).

1. Pay the price in study and effort.
2. Have the "Spirit of Prophecy," which is the "testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 19:10) which comes by the power of the Holy Ghost.
3. Understand the manner of prophesying of the Jews.
  - a. The law of Moses.
  - b. Imagery and figurative language (metaphors, similes, analogies, parables, types, and shadows).
  - c. Dualism (writings that apply to more than one situation and that may be fulfilled at more than one time).
  - d. Esoteric terms (religious terms or concepts only fully understood by those who have the proper religious background).
4. Become familiar with the geography of the Holy Land and the regions which surround it.
5. Learn of the judgments of God and the fulfillment of his prophecies
6. Understand the historical setting of Isaiah's writings.
7. Use the Book of Mormon.
8. Study all scriptures and learn them thoroughly.
9. Use the current LDS scriptures.

10. Understand "line upon line."

[Outline taken from a more extensive treatment in Student Manual for Religion 302 Old Testament: 1 Kings-Malachi, pp. 131-135]

#### 2 Nephi 12-24 **(Nephi Quotes Isaiah 2-14):**

Cleon Skousen points out that one of the questions frequently raised by readers of the Book of Mormon is why Nephi would quote so many chapters from Isaiah. The chapters themselves answer the question. Nephi was extremely anxious to have those who received the Book of Mormon in the latter days appreciate the potential magnificence of their place in history and not betray their opportunity to serve God faithfully as he prepares to usher in his Millennial reign. Nephi had seen all of these events in vision and he therefore readily identified in the writings of Isaiah the things which he, himself, thoroughly understood and knew to be true. . . . It will be observed that in each instance Nephi selected those chapters which related to one of these four major subjects: the dispersion of Israel (both the northern Ten Tribes and the Jews), the great gathering of Israel in the latter days, the restoration of the Gospel, and the ushering in of the Millennial reign. Nephi also included two chapters authenticating the calling of Isaiah as a true prophet. [W. Cleon Skousen, Treasures from the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 1346]

#### 2 Nephi 12-24 **(Isaiah Passages Plagiarized?)**

According to Michael Hickenbotham, some have questioned why the Book of Mormon Isaiah passages often contain the exact wording of the King James Bible, including italicized words. The italicized King James words found in Isaiah passages were inserted by scholars for clarification of the meaning in the English translation but were not in the original Hebrew text.

In the translation process Joseph Smith apparently made changes to Isaiah and other passages with biblical parallels only by exception (i.e. where clarification was needed), though witnesses and internal evidence indicate that Joseph Smith did not have a Bible with him as he translated (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 5, p. 51; vol. 6, pp. 100-01, 127-30). It only stands to reason that Joseph Smith would not remove or change the King James words which clarify the meaning unless they were misleading or in error. Examples of this are found in 2 Nephi 12:2 (compare Isaiah 2:2); 2 Nephi 12:6 (compare Isaiah 2:6); 2 Nephi 12:12-14 (compare Isaiah 2:12-14); and 2 Nephi 12:20 (compare Isaiah 2:20).

We should note that in the first chapter here where Book of Mormon passages parallel Isaiah's record (2 Nephi 12-Isaiah 2), eight verses contained italicized words and six of them were modified. The two verses left unchanged would have been confusing without the italicized words they included. Although the passages may not be representative of all Isaiah passages, the types

of changes cited above are. Indeed, Book of Mormon chapter summaries in the present edition encourage the reader to compare the related Isaiah passages. When this is done without bias, the changes found in the Nephite record testify to the authenticity of this work and the inspiration involved in its production (see John A. Tvedtnes, *Preliminary Report of the Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon*, FARMS, p. 136).

[Michael W. Hickenbotham, *Answering Challenging Mormon Questions*, p. 196]

## 2 Nephi 12-24 (The Writings of Isaiah--Plagiarized?):

Specific language found in the King James Bible was obviously used in many cases when Joseph translated passages that quoted the Old Testament (several Isaiah chapters, for example) or translated passages that expressed ideas nearly identical to passages of the Bible. The objection is also made that King James English is modern, while the Book of Mormon is ancient, so the Book of Mormon must be a fraud to contain modern language. After all, what is language from a book published in 1611 doing in a book allegedly dating to 400 A.D. and earlier?

Jeff Lindsay responds to such concerns by noting that King James English is not from the original Book of Mormon engravings--it is the vehicle that was used to translate ancient writings into English. A logical explanation is that King James language and phraseology was used as an effective and widely recognized medium for a sacred text, and exact words and phrases found in the King James Version were sometimes used when they adequately matched the meaning of the Nephite record or when Old Testament sources were being quoted.

Some LDS people believe that when Joseph Smith encountered a passage similar to one already existing in the Bible, the printed King James text was used as an aid when that text adequately conveyed the meaning of the passage being translated. The difficulty of this approach is that the multiple accounts of those who witnessed him translate never suggest use of the Bible and sometimes seem to rule out that possibility.

Interestingly, New Testament writers quote the Old Testament in the language of the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament that came long after the original Hebrew scriptures. This point is important to understand:

When Jesus and the Apostles and, for that matter, the Angel Gabriel quote the [Hebrew] scriptures in the New Testament, do they recite from some mysterious Urtext? Do they quote the prophets of old in the ultimate original? . . . No, they do not. They quote the Septuagint, a Greek version of the Old Testament prepared in the third century B.C. Why so? Because that happened to be the received standard version of the Bible accepted by the readers of the Greek New Testament. (Hugh W. Nibley, "Literary Style Used in the Book of Mormon Insured Accurate Translation," in *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*, Volume 8, p. 215.)

As an example of how often New Testament writers borrowed from the Old Testament ("plagiarized" would be the words anti-Mormon-like critics might use), consider the case of John's Book of Revelation. D. C. Pyle has communicated to this writer that The Interpreter's Bible (12:358) states that:

John was thoroughly acquainted with the Old Testament, and quoted or alludes to it throughout his book. It has been estimated that 278 verses out of a total of 404 contain references of one kind or another to the Old Testament. . . . yet in no case does he specifically mention a book of the Jewish scripture, and seldom does he quote verbatim.

If New Testament prophets, apostles, and angels were allowed to quote what was then an accepted modern version of ancient scripture, we shouldn't be outraged that Joseph Smith would do the same or be guided to do the same in translating the Book of Mormon.

[Jeff Lindsay, "Did Joseph Smith Plagiarize from the King James Bible?," Book of Mormon Commentary, [www.jefflindsay.com](http://www.jefflindsay.com), pp. 1-2] [See Vol. 6, Appendix C]

#### 2 Nephi 12:1 **The Word That Isaiah . . . Saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:**

According to Victor Ludlow, one interesting point in 2 Nephi 12:1 is that Isaiah "saw" the word he delivered. It is difficult to know how he "saw the word," whether he saw it written out on an actual scroll or in a vision of a heavenly book (as Lehi did; 1 Nephi 1:11-14).

Interestingly, the first words Isaiah records in verses 2-4, ("And it shall come to pass in the last days, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it"), are also found with only slight variations in Micah 4:1-4. It may be that Isaiah "saw" the words of Micah or that he "saw" his own vision and Micah borrowed his words. Or, both prophets may have read the prophecy of some earlier prophet. Scholars differ in their opinions on which of these possibilities best explains the textual similarities. There is yet a fourth possibility, however, that seems plausible, particularly to Latter-day Saints: Isaiah and Micah, by virtue of their prophetic callings, each "saw" the same heavenly vision and were inspired to record it in essentially the same words. Since Isaiah and Micah were contemporaries dealing with the same people and problems, it seems likely that they would share similar spiritual manifestations. Precedents for this explanation exist elsewhere in the scriptures, because several prophets far distant from each other have recorded the same inspired messages: compare the "charity" sermon in 1 Corinthians 13 with Moroni 7, and the discourse on gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12 with Moroni 10 and Doctrine and Covenants section 46.

Certainly it is possible for two prophets to use the same vocabulary in recording revelations if, as the Lord said, "these words are not of men, nor of man, but of me." (D&C 18:34)

[Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, pp. 85-86]



Isaiah

[bookofmormononline.net](http://bookofmormononline.net)

2 Nephi 12:1 **The word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem (Illustration):**

Isaiah. The prophet Isaiah saw many events that would take place in the latter days. Nephi included some of Isaiah's prophecies in his own record and encouraged readers to "liken them unto [themselves] and unto all men." Artist: Robert T. Barrett. [Thomas R. Valletta ed., The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families, 1999, p. 102]

2 Nephi 12:2-3 **In the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains**

Before discussing the meaning of this phrase, it is useful to review Isaiah's use of prophetic dualism. Prophetic dualism means that a scripture is fulfilled in more than just one event. Usually events in Isaiah's day are used as a type of things yet to come. However, sometimes the events described are both in the future. One of the best examples of this is Isaiah's statement, 'Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me' (Isa 29:13). When we hear this

phrase, we think of the words given to Joseph Smith during the First Vision. Certainly, this phrase accurately described Joseph's day. However, the same phrase is used to describe the scribes and Pharisees in the days of the Savior (Matt 15:8). Both interpretations are correct. The events of Isaiah's prophecy occurred twice, in the days of Jesus Christ and again in the days of Joseph Smith. Such prophetic dualism is commonly encountered when one interprets Isaiah.

The term "mountain of the Lord's house" refers to the temple. But which temple is Isaiah speaking about? Many of the brethren have interpreted this passage as having reference to the building of temples amongst the Rocky Mountains, specifically, the Salt Lake Temple. Certainly, many have come to Salt Lake from all over the world to learn of His ways and walk in His paths. Elder LeGrand Richards, while speaking of this prophecy said, "Can you go anywhere in the world and find a record of the fulfillment of that promise of Isaiah except in the gathering of the Latter-day Saints here to these valleys of the mountains?" (BYU Speeches of the Year, Feb, 10, 1960, p. 9) If this statement is true regarding the Salt Lake Temple, it must also refer to the many other temples now in use.

The gathering of people to the Salt Lake Temple does not completely fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah. Here is where prophetic dualism comes in. The scripture also has reference to the temples which will be built in Zion and in Jerusalem (v. 3). If Isaiah were speaking only of the temple in Salt Lake, he could have used the phrase, "the Lord's house shall be established in the valley amongst the top of the mountains." Isaiah is making reference to the mountain of the Lord's house. That means that these temples will be built on a hill or mountain to represent the spiritual journey toward God. As Hugh Nibley stated, "And the temple in Jerusalem was on the temple mountain, on Mt. Moriah. We find all the sacred places are the mountains, and they are very important here as the place of pilgrimage." (Ancient Documents and the Pearl of Great Price, Lecture 16, p. 3)

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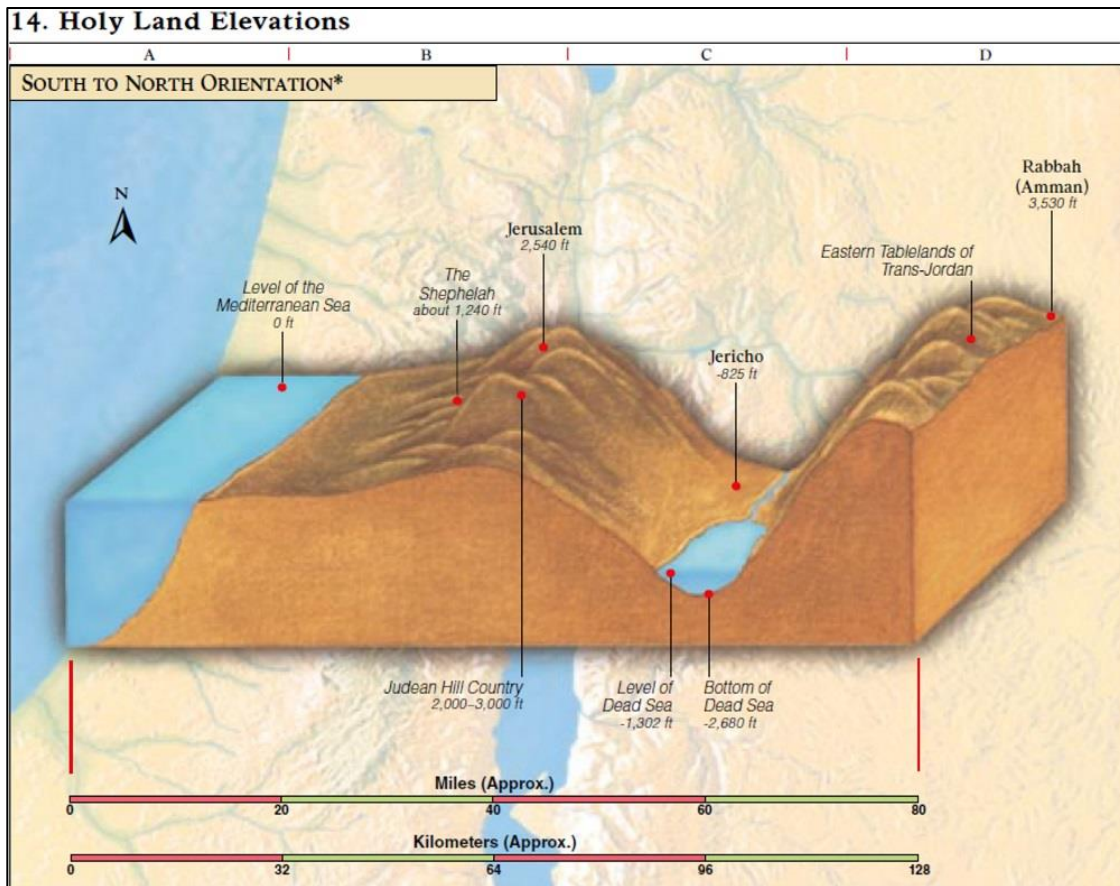
The Salt Lake Temple in the tops of the Wasatch Mountains

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2 Nephi 12:2-3 **In the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains (Illustration not shown):** The Salt Lake temple stands near the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains. Its soaring pinnacles and peaks recall the holy mountains of ancient times. This great temple, which hundreds of thousands have visited, partially fulfills Isaiah's prophecy that "all nations shall flow" to "the mountain of the Lord's house." [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 98]

2 Nephi 12:3 **Out of Zion Shall Go Forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem:**

Jerusalem is situated high on the hill country of eastern Israel and physically looks down on the surrounding terrain.

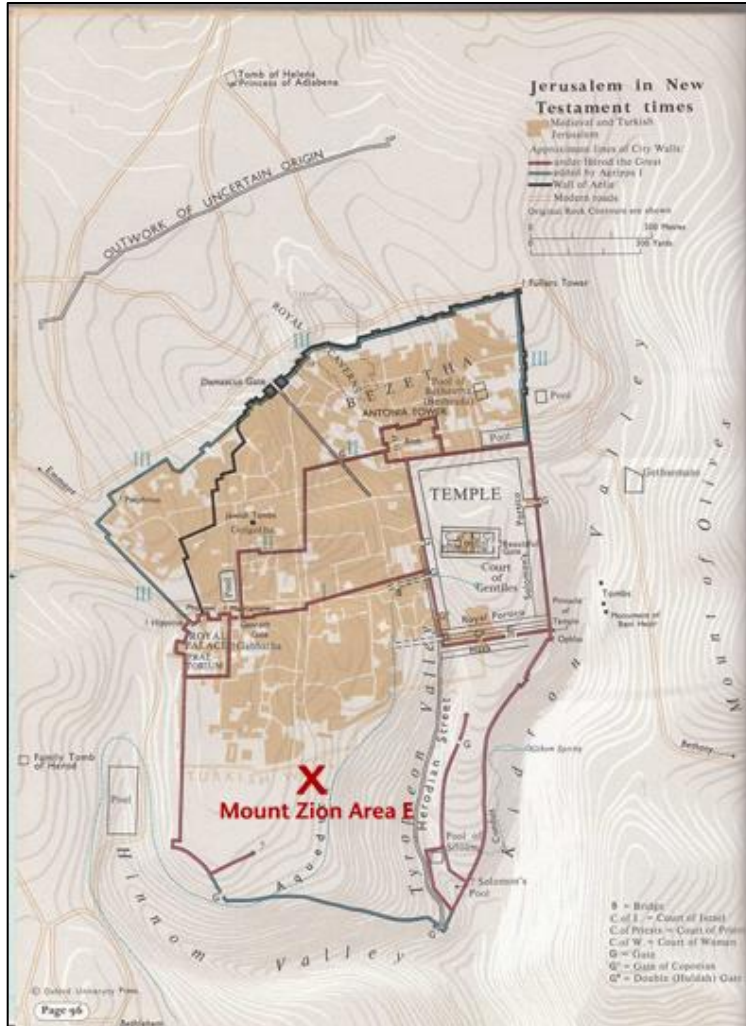


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Visitors had to go up to visit it and within it had to climb even more to get to the temple, which overlooked the rest of the city from Mount Moriah.

The city of Jerusalem was also associated by Isaiah with another mount upon which it was built--Mount Zion





Mount Zion area in Jerusalem

[bibleinterp.com](http://bibleinterp.com)

Joseph Fielding Smith writes: "There are many references in the Bible to Zion, a land or place separate and distinct from Jerusalem. Two such passages are found in the 2nd chapter of Isaiah and the 4th chapter of Micah. It would be foolish to say that these references to Zion were to the hill in Jerusalem where David dwelt." (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 3, pp. 66-72)

Thus Isaiah's prophecies apparently transcend time and deal heavily in symbolism. And so Nephi could read Isaiah's writings to his people about "Jerusalem" and "Zion" while they were residing in the New World in the city of Nephi and "liken it to them." And Nephi could also include Isaiah's writings on his metal plates that were intended to be read by people in our time so that we could "liken it to us." The concept of "Zion" is both specific and broad. Joseph Smith declared the whole of the American continent (both South America and North America) to be Zion. But before that Joseph referred to Kirtland, Ohio as Zion, and Nauvoo, Illinois as Zion. Essentially Zion is a location where people can raise their families while enjoying the covenant fruits of the gospel of Christ, and having the Lord's temple in their midst so that they can make the covenants needed to

help them progress in the way of the Lord. As headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in these "latter-days," Salt Lake City and the Salt Lake Temple also symbolize Zion and this location has also been referred to as Zion many times by the Church leaders. Joseph Smith also declared that in the Millennium there would be a temple and a "New Jerusalem" located in what is now Independence, Missouri.

Significantly, from the time of Moses, there was another mountain, "Horeb" (Sinai) that was also known as "the mountain of God." It was considered "holy" and this is where Moses was ministered to and received the covenant law. Mount Horeb was also visited by the Prophet Elijah where he was ministered to and fasted 40 days. Jesus also fasted 40 days in the "wilderness" in preparation for his earthly ministry. As the temple in Jerusalem was somewhat occupied and polluted, Jesus could well have traveled to Mount Horeb in the same symbolic manner as Elijah to be ministered to. Mount Horeb was in Arabia, and after Paul had been called by the Lord on the road to Damascus, he says he went into Arabia to prepare for his ministry. Paul could also have gone to Mount Horeb. When Lehi departed from Jerusalem he went down by the Red Sea into Midian, which is part of Arabia. Nephi also went up on a mountain to prepare for his ministry. Perhaps Nephi also went to Mount Horeb.

The point to be made here is that "Zion" was—and is-- associated with "holy ground" and is also associated with mountain tops and temples and covenants and the Lord through all generations of time.

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

## 2 Nephi 12:4 **And He Shall Judge among the Nations, and Shall Rebuke Many People:**

When the Savior comes again, the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished. Isaiah has prophesied elsewhere, 'But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked' (Isaiah 11:4). The judgment upon the wicked will take more than one form and will be accomplished through wars, destructions, earthquakes, famines, etc. The scriptures refer to this as the destruction of Babylon, the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked. However, this verse seems to also apply to events after the wicked have already been destroyed, but why would people need to be rebuked after the Second Coming?

A common misconception is that everything will be perfect as soon as the Lord comes. The truth is that outside of Zion and Jerusalem, there will still be many who don't believe. Not everyone will immediately join the church. Others will commit sin, even without the temptations of Satan. The glory and order of Zion will not prevail over the entire earth. The heathen nations will need direction, and that direction will come from Zion and Jerusalem. '...then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations, the house of Joseph, of the gospel of their salvation.

For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power' (D & C 90:10-11). Those who reject the Lord and his messengers during the Millenium will be judged and rebuked according to the word of Isaiah.

According to Joseph Smith:

“There will be wicked men on the earth during the thousand years. The heathen nations who will not come up to worship will be visited with the judgments of God, and must eventually be destroyed from the earth.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p 268.)

[[josephsmith.com.2Nephi](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)]

#### **2 Nephi 12:4 They Shall Beat Their Swords into Plow-Shares and Their Spears into Pruning-Hooks:**

What are plow-shares and pruninghooks (2 Nephi 12:4)? According to Donald Parry, plowshares are the cutting blade of a plow, and the pruninghook is a tool with a hooked blade for pruning plants. In the parallelism, "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks" (Isaiah 2:4; 2 Nephi 12:4), the two agricultural instruments may have been chosen as symmetrical counterparts of swords and spears because all four instruments have blades--two of the blades are used in warfare, and the other two blades are useful, constructive, and conducive to the work ethic and eventual prosperity. Plowshares and pruninghooks, therefore, represent instruments of peace and prosperity.

[Donald W. Parry, "Isaiah, Prophecies of Jesus Christ, Zion, and the Millennium," (Part 2), F.A.R.M.S., p. 5] [See also [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 118]



Late Bronze Age spear heads

Todd Bolen [bibleplaces.com](http://bibleplaces.com)

2 Nephi 12:4 **They shall beat their swords into plow-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks**

**(Illustration):** Late Bronze Age spear heads David W. Baker, *Isaiah: Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, p. 17]



2 Nephi 12:4 **Plowshares (Illustration):** Plowshares without the plow, Neot Kedumim, a biblical landscape reserve. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 118]



2 Nephi 12:4 **Pruninghooks (Illustration):** A pruning hook is a knifelike instrument with a short, broad blade used for pruning vines and harvesting grapes. Isaiah describes the pruning process: "For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, . . . he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches" (Isaiah 18:5). Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 118]

#### 2 Nephi 12:5 **For Ye Have All Gone Astray, Every One To His Wicked Ways:**

John Tvedtnes writes that in comparing the Isaiah text from the King James Bible with the Book of Mormon, we find at the end of 2 Nephi 12:5 (compare Isaiah 2:5) a phrase is added. The verse reads: "O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord; *yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways.*" (added phrase in italics) This additional phrase is also found in Isaiah 53:6 and is hence the kind of thing that Isaiah would be expected to say. There is evidence to indicate that the Massoretic Hebrew Text deleted this portion by haplography because of its resemblance to words around it. An earlier Hebrew scribe can therefore be credited with this accidental deletion.

[John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," FARMS, p. 22]

#### 2 Nephi 12:4 **They Shall Beat Their Swords into Plow-shares:**

Isaiah is a Millennialist. He often prophesies of the great and peaceful state of affairs during the Millennium as if he had personally seen it, and maybe he had. After the Lord comes to slay the wicked and fight Israel's battles, peace will be established on the earth. There will be no more war for 1000 years, 'neither shall they learn war anymore.' This is in great contrast to the wars which will directly precede the Second Coming.

One of the tragedies of war, other than the loss of life, is the remarkable waste of resources. We might ask, "what if we took all the money used to make swords and used it to make plowshares instead?"

"Give me the money that has been spent on war ,and I will clothe every man, woman, and child in an attire of which kings and queens would be proud. I will build a schoolhouse in every valley over the whole earth. I will crown every hillside with a place of worship, consecrated to the gospel of peace." (Charles Sumner, as quoted by Gordon B. Hinckley, Ensign, Mar. 1971, 20)"

If Isaiah was allowed to see into the future, and allowed to see the good accomplished with the resources normally allocated to war, no wonder Isaiah spoke of the Millennium.

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

#### 2 Nephi 12:5 **For Ye Have All Gone Astray, Every One to His Wicked Ways:**

The verses in 2 Nephi 12 (Isaiah 2) deal with the ushering in of the millennial era and the changes that will accompany it. The writings of Isaiah as found in the Book of Mormon show the following additional phrase in verse 5: "Yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways" (2 Nephi 12:5). This verse indicates a widespread apostasy in Israel and the return of Israel to the Lord before the Second Coming. [ [Student Manual for Religion 302 Old Testament: 1 Kings-Malachi](#), p. 139]

#### 2 Nephi 12:6 **They *Please* Themselves in the Children of Strangers:**

The Hebrew word for *please* here means, literally, to strike or shake hands. In the context of Isaiah's rebuke, it probably speaks of how the children of Israel . . . turned their backs on the God of Israel to make covenants with nonbelievers. [ Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., [Isaiah Plain & Simple](#), p. 16]

#### 2 Nephi 12:6 **Philistines:**

The Philistines (2 Nephi 12:6) occupied the territory which was known as "the land of the Philistines" (*'eres p listim*) or Philistia (*p leset*). It is from these that the modern name "Palestine" derives.

When the Israelites left Egypt the Philistines were extensively settled along the coastal strip between Egypt and Gaza, and the Israelites were obliged to detour inland to avoid "the way of the land of the Philistines" (Exodus 13:17).



Philistia in the Old Testament [generationword.com](http://generationword.com)

There were five main cities of the Philistines: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath (Joshua 13:2-3). From the time of Joshua and for many generations, the Philistines were used by God to chastise the Israelites (Judges 3:2-3). The Philistines continued to cause trouble throughout the Monarchy and were still aggressive in the time of Ahaz (Isaiah 9:8-12). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 1218-1222] [See 2 Nephi 19:12; 21:14]

2 Nephi 12:6 **Philistines (Illustration-not shown):** The cities of the Philistines and their neighbours. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 1219]

2 Nephi 12:7 **Horses . . . Chariots:**

Horses and chariots were weapons of war. Military chariots required iron technology to provide strapping for the wheels, since wooden ones easily shattered. Although no mention of Philistine chariots, Assyrian chariots are described as being pulled by one or two horses, and carrying two or more passengers--the driver, an archer or spearman, and often a shield bearer.

Horses were emblematic not only of power but also of wealth, since they were expensive. They needed special care to protect the huge economic and military investment.

[David W. Baker, "Isaiah" Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, p. 18]



2 Nephi 12:7 **Their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots (Illustration):** Chariot with three occupants from the Balawat gate Michael Greenhalgh/ArtServe, courtesy of the British Museum. David W. Baker, "Isaiah" Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, p. 18]



Horses and Chariots

bible-archaeology.info

2 Nephi 12:7 **Their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots (Illustration)**



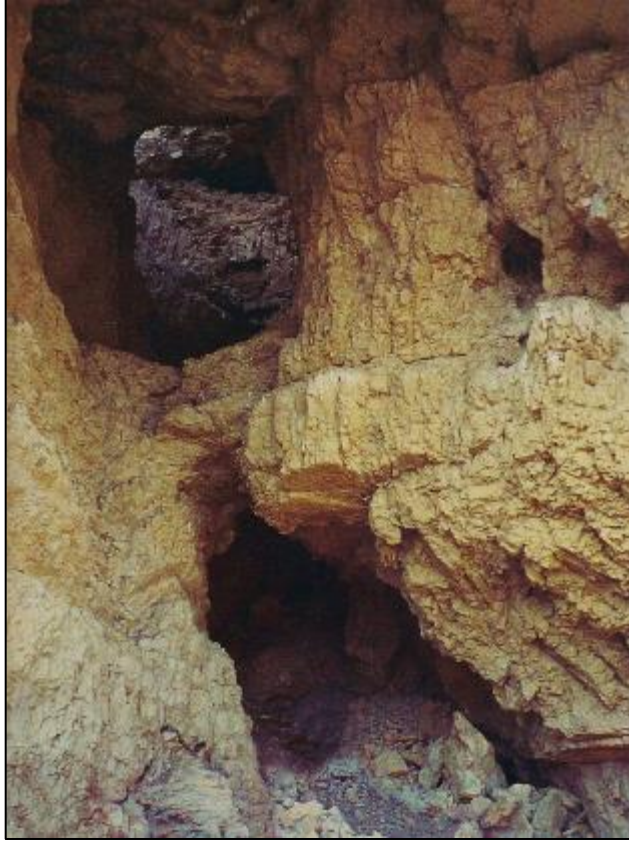


2 Nephi 12:8 **Their land is also full of idols (Illustration) Jewish Ancient Idol Worship [bibleplaces.com](http://bibleplaces.com)**  
 2 Nephi 12:10 **O Ye Wicked Ones, Enter into the Rock and Hide Thee in the Dust:**

Interestingly, this phrase in 2 Nephi 12:10 (“O ye wicked ones, enter into the rock and hide thee in the dust”) is matched in verse 19 with “And they shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth” These two verses are part of a chiastic structure. The phrase is also linked to Isaiah’s statement in verse 20: “In that day a man shall cast his idols . . . made for himself to worship to the moles [whose holes are in the “dust”] and to the bats [who dwell in caves]” No wonder when Moroni attempted to blend the covenant texts of all the covenant writers in his final writings, he lamented his weakness by saying:

Thou hast also made our words powerful and great, even that we cannot write them; wherefore, when we write we behold our weakness, and stumble because of the placing of our words; and I fear lest the Gentiles shall mock at our words. (Ether 12:25)

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]



2 Nephi 12:10 **Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust (Illustration):** Cave north of Qumran (by the Dead Sea). Hundreds of natural caves exist in the central hill country of Judea and Samaria as well as in the deserts and fault escarpment overlooking the Dead Sea region. In ancient times, caves served as hiding places, dwellings, and tombs. Photograph by Carrilyn Clarkson. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 119]

2 Nephi 12:13 **Cedars of Lebanon:**

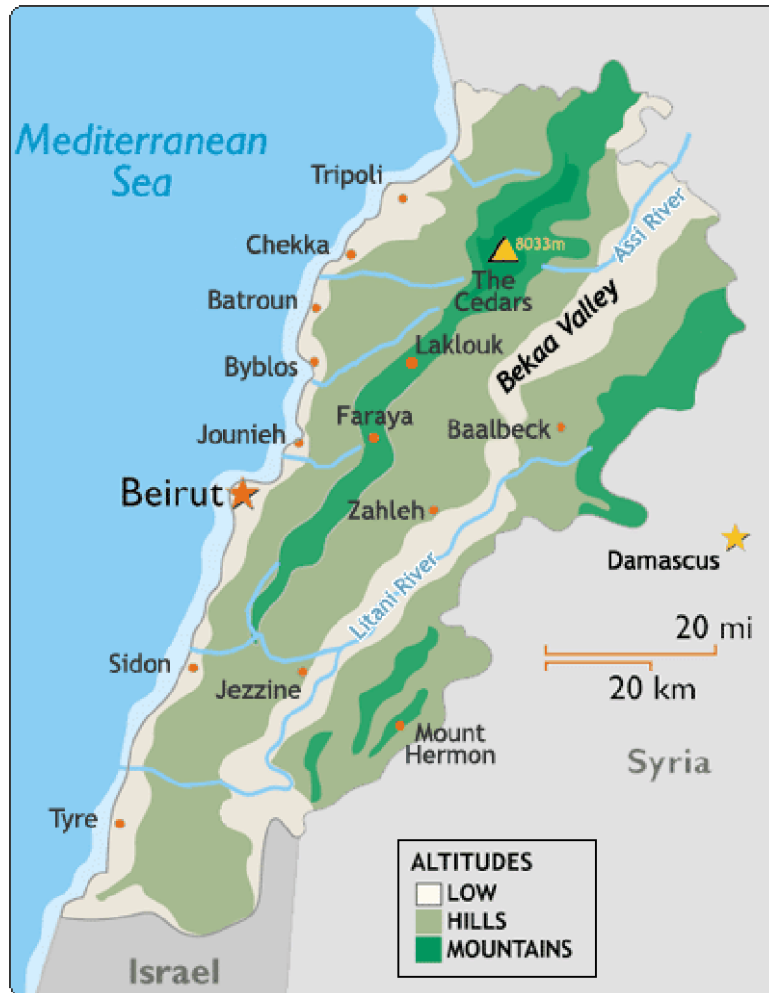
In biblical times, the name Lebanon was applied to a mountain range in Syria and loosely to the adjoining regions (Joshua 13:5). The name is also that of a modern republic.



Levanon and Israel map

[Jfjfp.com](http://Jfjfp.com)

The Lebanon range is a ridge almost 160 kilometers long, following the southwest to northeast trend of the Phoenician coast from behind Sidon north. Lebanon was above all famous for its former dense forest cover. The coastland and lower mountain-slopes support garden-cultivation, olive groves, vineyards, fruit-orchards (mulberries, figs, apples, apricots, walnuts) and small cornfields. Higher still rises the forest-cover of myrtles and conifers, culminating in the groves of mighty cedars, of which, alas, only one or two isolated groves survive (because of excessive deforestation).



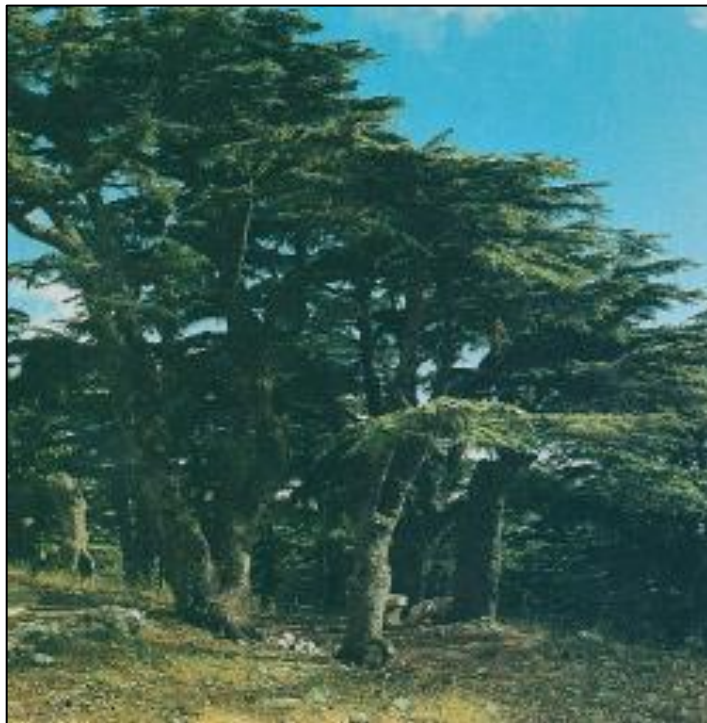
Lebanon map showing mountains

fao.org

Lebanon's cedars [2 Nephi 12:13] and conifers (firs, cypresses, etc.) furnished the finest building timber in the ancient East, sought by the rulers of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Syria-Palestine alike. The mighty cedars were apt symbols of majesty and strength in biblical imagery; *cf.* Judges 9:15; 1 Kings 4:33; 2 Kings 14:9; Psalms 92:12; Isaiah 35:2; 60:13. They were also symbols of earthly pride subject to divine wrath; *cf.* Psalms 29:5-6; Isaiah 2:13; 10:34; Jeremiah 22:6. [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 2, p. 891-893] [See 2 Nephi 24:8]



2 Nephi 12:13 **Cedars of Lebanon (Illustration):** Snow-capped mountain ridges in Lebanon with cedars at Kadesh. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 892-893]



2 Nephi 12:13 **Cedars of Lebanon (Illustration):** Cedar trees in the Lebanon hills. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 892-893]

**2 Nephi 12:13 The Cedars of Lebanon (Illustration-not shown):** A stand of cedars of Lebanon, east of Byblos. Mature cedars of Lebanon have large trunks and branches that spread out horizontally. In biblical times abundant forests of cedars flourished in the mountains of Lebanon, but now they are sparse. Multiple ancient Near Eastern kingdoms imported cedars of Lebanon to use in many of their fine buildings. Hiram, king of Tyre, through an agreement with King Solomon, transported cedars to Jerusalem for Solomon's temple. Kings David and Solomon each used cedar in the construction of their personal residences. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 121]

**2 Nephi 12:13 The Cedars of Lebanon and the Oaks of Bashan:**

These two types of wood were the finest, most sought after types of wood available in the days of Isaiah. The cedars of Lebanon were used to build the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 5:6). In this scripture these two types of timber represent the fine things in the world, royal authority, and the pride and loftiness of man's materialism. Zechariah similarly describes the trees of the forest as representing pride—a pride that will be destroyed when the Lord is exalted:

‘Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.

Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down.

There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled.’ (Zechariah 11:3)

According to Easton's Bible Dictionary:

“The cedar is often figuratively alluded to in the sacred Scriptures. ‘The mighty conquerors of olden days, the despots of Assyria and the Pharaohs of Egypt, the proud and idolatrous monarchs of Judah, the Hebrew commonwealth itself, the war-like Ammonites of patriarchal times, and the moral majesty of the Messianic age, are all compared to the towering cedar, in its royal loftiness and supremacy.’

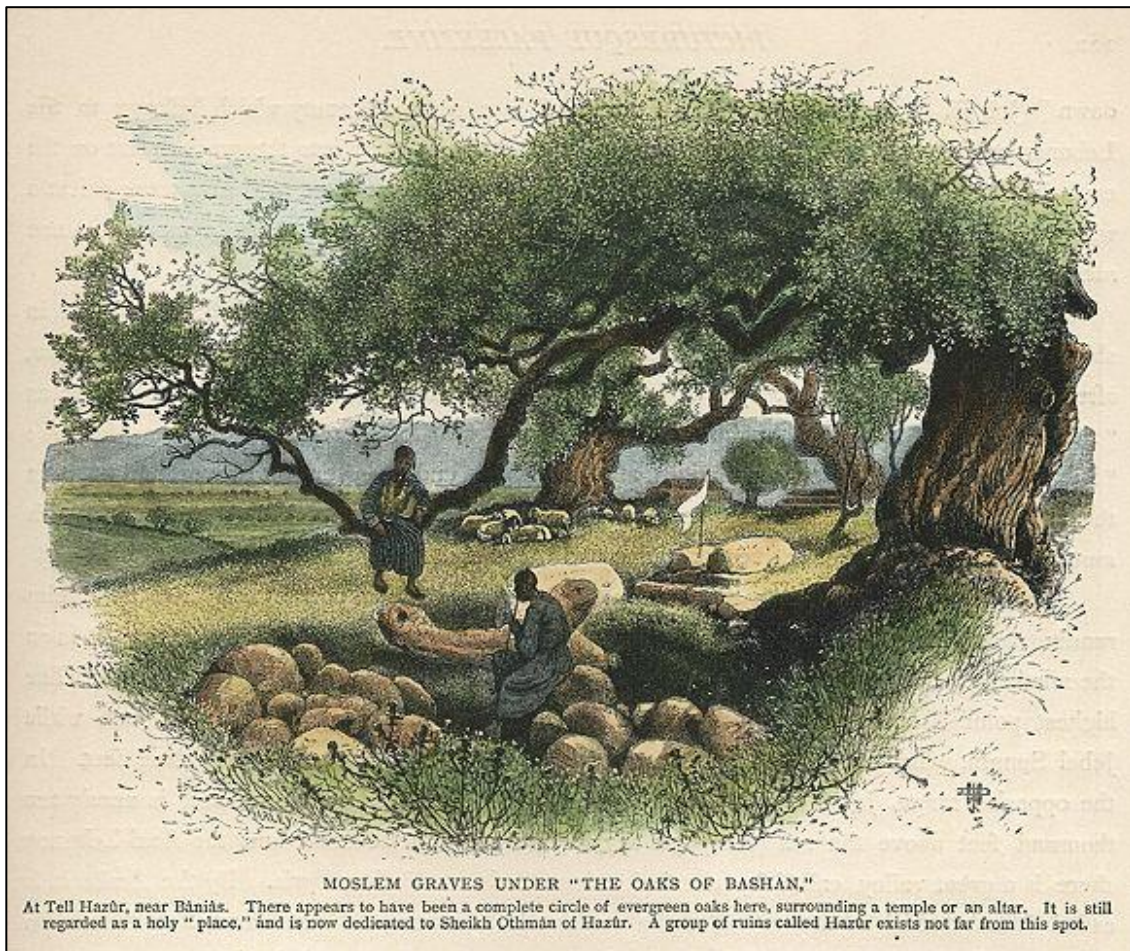
Yet Hugh Nibley adds this somber note:

“But you can only find about half a dozen cedars of Lebanon today. In a few little pockets where they've been preserved you'll find a cedar. They've sprung up, and there may be a hundred or two in the land. That's about all there are. You can't find [many] cedars of Lebanon. It has been bare ever since, but at one time [Lebanon] supplied the world with all the timber it needed for thousands of years.” (Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Lecture 74, p. 209)

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

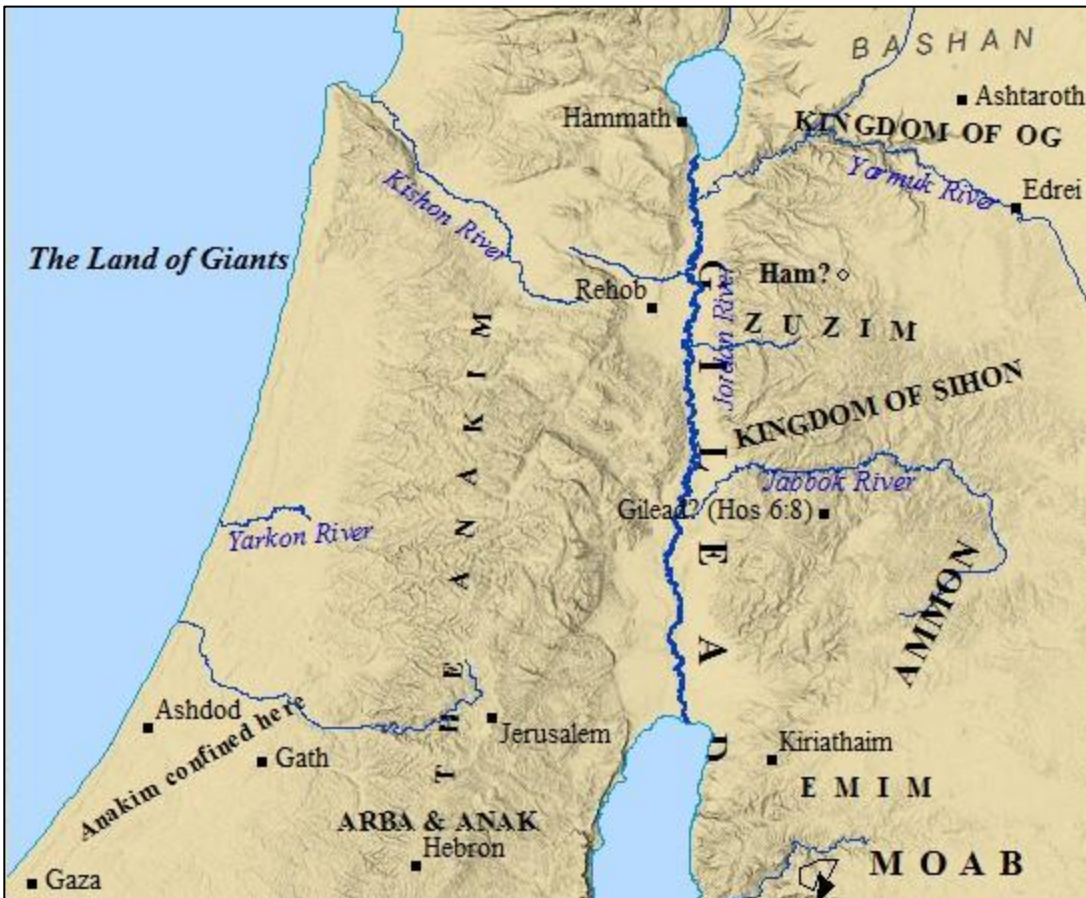
### 2 Nephi 12:13 Oaks of Bashan:

Bashan (2 Nephi 12:13) was a region east of Jordan and lying to the north of Gilead. In the wide sense it was counted as extending north to Mt. Hermon. Its fertility was famous (see Psalms 22:12; Ezekiel 39:18; Isaiah 2:13; Jeremiah 50:19). It formed part of the dominions of David and Solomon, was lost during the Syrian wars, was regained by Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25), only to be taken by Tiglath-pileser III (2 Kings 15:29), after which it formed part of the successive Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian Empires. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 177]



2 Nephi 12:13 **Oaks of Bashan (Illustration):** Moslem Graves Under “The Oaks of Bashan”  
[antiqueprints.com](http://antiqueprints.com) ]

2 Nephi 12:13 **The oaks of Bashan (Illustration-not shown):** An oak of Bashan, near Qatzrin, an ancient village from the talmudic period (ca. A.D. 200-500). Bashan was a region north of Gilead and east of the Jordan River. The region was known to be fertile and was celebrated for its oak trees. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 121]



Location of Bashan (upper right)

2 Nephi 12:13 **Bashan (Illustration):** The Location of Bashan [Israel-a-history-of.com](http://Israel-a-history-of.com) ]

2 Nephi 12:13 **Bashan (Illustration-not shown):** The Location of Bashan. [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, p. 177]



2 Nephi 12:15 **Upon Every High Tower and upon Every Fenced Wall:**



Jerusalem city walls and the tower of David

[panoramio.com](http://panoramio.com)

2 Nephi 12:15 **Upon every high tower and upon every fenced wall (Illustration):** Jerusalem city walls and the tower of David [panoramio.com](http://panoramio.com) ]

2 Nephi 12:15 **Upon every high tower (Illustration-not shown):** Northwest tower of the Ajiloun Castle, Jordan, built by Azz Al Din Ausama in A.D. 1184-85. Large complex towers made of stone were built into the walls of fortified cities. Watchmen and guards stood on these towers ready to warn the city's inhabitants of danger. Photograph by Carrilyn Clarkson. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 122]

2 Nephi 12:15 **Upon every fenced wall (Illustration-not shown):** Throughout the ages, the walls and fortresses of Jerusalem have been built, destroyed, and sometimes rebuilt. The stones reflect the culture and time of those who placed them. The remains of this wall date back to Isaiah's time. Photograph by John W. Welch. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 122]

2 Nephi 12:16 **[The Lord Shall Come upon] All the Ships of Tarshish:**

According to Reynolds and Sjodahl, the prophet Isaiah has, in the previous verses of this section, emphasized the fact that humiliation would be the consequence of pride. All that was high and exalted in its own estimation would be debased and humiliated. He enumerates: The cedars of Lebanon, the oaks of Bashan, the mountains and hills, the nations and people, the

towers and walls and, finally, the ships of the sea, even the largest, the Tarshish ships, with their proud standards or figure heads. . . . "Ships of Tarshish" (2 Nephi 12:16) apparently refers to ships capable of long voyages. These ships would have sailed from the major ports of the Mediterranean, one of which was Tyre. This famous city, about 50 miles south of Beirut, was once a mercantile world center, comparable in importance to New York, or London, of today. It was the capital of Phoenicia, the mother country of Carthage, the great rival of Rome, in the Mediterranean. Her sailors and merchants roamed all over the then known world.

But the prophets of the Lord predicted her downfall and destruction. Isaiah foretold that Tyre would fall and be utterly forgotten. (Isaiah 23:5,8,15) Ezekiel has this prediction:

Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. (Ezekiel 26:1-6)

This has been fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to the city. It lasted for thirteen years, until, as Ezekiel says, "every head"--of his vast army--was made bald and every shoulder was peeled"--from carrying burdens--" yet had he no wages, nor his army." (Ezekiel 29:18) The time had not yet come. About 270 years later, Alexander the great accomplished its downfall.

Tyre was built on rocks in the sea, about a mile and a half from the shore. Alexander caused a road to be constructed through the water. This gigantic task completed, he threw the city with its 150 feet high walls into the deep, and swept the rocks on which it had stood. Fishermen did actually spread their nets on these rocks to dry in the sun.

Isaiah has a remarkable prediction that may be noted here. He says: "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it (Tyre) is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in; from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them. . . . Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste." (Isaiah 23:1-14) "Ships of Tarshish" were sometimes absent on their voyages for two or three years. Imagine the consternation of the crews, when such ships came back and found no harbor in which to enter, no houses where the city had stood, only naked rocks, connected with the shore by means of a mole!

At the beginning of our era, a new Tyre was visited by the disciples of Christ. It had a temple and some churches. During the 7th century it came into the hands of the Saracenes, and then, in the 12th century, the crusaders. It was then a place of some importance. For 300 years it was ruled by the Turks. In 1834 it was visited by a destructive earthquake. Ten years later a traveler relates that when he and others came to the place and looked for a shop in which to buy some souvenirs, they found none. Fishermen were still spreading their nets on the rocks. [George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, pp. 294-

295,325]

**2 Nephi 12:16 And upon All the Ships of the Sea:**

According to Sidney Sperry, in 2 Nephi 12:16 (cf. Isaiah 2:16) the Prophet prefaces a whole phrase not contained in either the King James Version or the Hebrew text. The phrase in question is *and upon all the ships of the sea*. With this phrase the Septuagint agrees, and it is perfectly easy to explain, on the basis of the Book of Mormon reading's being the original, why our present Hebrew text only has two phrases.

According to the Book of Mormon the original had three phrases all beginning with the words *and upon all*. But a perfectly natural error---some scribe's eye inadvertently hit upon the second *and upon all*, and the first phrase was omitted. It is interesting to note that the Septuagint version has preserved the first phrase of this verse correctly, has omitted one phrase, and has corrupted another. The Hebrew has preserved the last two phrases correctly, but the Book of Mormon has preserved all three. [Sidney B. Sperry, "The Book of Mormon As Translation English," in Journal of Book of Mormon Studies, F.A.R.M.S., Spring 1995, pp. 212-213]

According to Victor Ludlow, it appears that the Book of Mormon contains the most complete retention of the original structure of this verse. Since the prophet Joseph Smith did not know Greek, and since there is no evidence that he had access to a copy of the Septuagint when he completed his Book of Mormon translation in 1829, this addition supports the fact that Joseph Smith translated the Isaiah portion in the Book of Mormon from a more authentic ancient text. [Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, p. 91]

<u>Book of Mormon</u>	<u>Septuagint</u>	<u>Hebrew (KJV)</u>
(1) And upon all the ships of the sea	(1) And upon all the ships of the sea	
(2) And upon all the ships of Tarsus		(2) And upon all the ships of Tarshish
(3) And upon all pleasant pictures	(3) And upon all pleasant ships	(3) And upon all pleasant ships

2 Nephi 12:16 **And upon all the ships of the sea (Illustration):** 2 Nephi 12:16: A Comparison of Three Ancient Texts. [Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, p. 91]

**2 Nephi 12:16 Ships of Tarshish:**

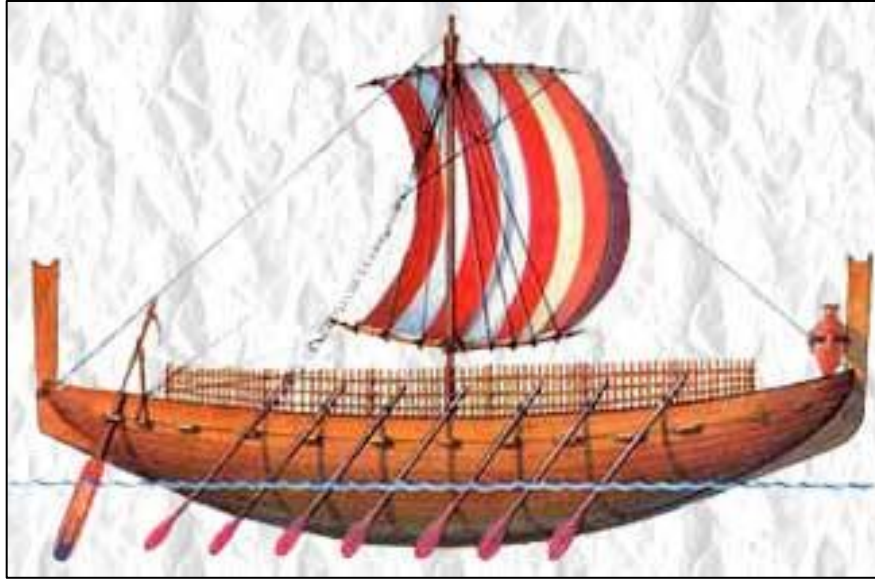
The general Hebrew word for ship, *niyya*, refers most commonly to seagoing merchant vessels (e.g. Proverbs 31:14) which are often described as "ships of Tarshish" (2 Nephi 12:16; Isaiah 2:16; 1 Kings 22:48). Whether or not Tarshish is to be identified with a geographical location such as Tartessus in southern Spain or Tarsus in Cilicia or is thought to mean something like "ore-carrier," the ship so described is a Phoenician long-range merchantman.

Phoenician shipping developed during the 2nd millennium B.C. and is known to us from Egyptian tomb paintings and from texts. The paintings reveal that, unlike contemporary Egyptian ships, Canaanite (early Phoenician) vessels were built with a keel and had a fence-like structure along the deck. . . . A document from Ras Shamra, (about 1200 B.C.), refers to one of these merchantmen as having a cargo of 457,000 kilograms (450 tons) with no indication that it was at all unusual. Such a large vessel had to rely on sail power and could be rowed only for brief periods in an emergency.

The ship that Jonah embarked on at Joppa is called a *s pina* (Jonah 1:5), which may indicate that it was a large vessel with a deck, possibly similar to a Greek merchantman. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 1441-1442]

The question as to the locality of Tarshish has given rise to not a little discussion. Some think there was a tarshish in the East, on the Indian coast, seeing that "ships of Tarshish" sailed from Ezion-geber, on the Red Sea (1 Kings 9:26; 22:48; 2 Chronicles 9:21). Some, again, argue that Carthage was the place so named. There can be little doubt, however, that this is the name of a Phoenician port in Spain, between the two mouths of the Guadalquivir (the name given to the river by the Arabs, and meaning "the great wady" or water-course). It was founded by a Carthaginian colony, and was the farthest western harbour of Tyrian sailors. It was to this port Jonah's ship was about to sail from Joppa. It has well been styled "the Peru of Tyrian adventure;" it abounded in gold and silver mines.

It appears that the name "Tarshish" is also used without reference to any locality. "Ships of Tarshish" is an expression sometimes denoting simply ships intended for a long voyage (Isaiah 23:1, 14), ships of a large size (sea-going ships), whatever might be the port to which they sailed. Solomon's ships were so styled (1 Kings 10:22; 22:49). (*Easton's Bible Dictionary*) [Infobases, LDS Collectors Library '97 ] [See the commentary on 1 Nephi 18:8]



Ships of Tarshish (Phoenician Ship)

[susandayley.wordpress.com](http://susandayley.wordpress.com)

2 Nephi 12:16 **Ships of Tarshish (Illustration- not shown):** A Phoenician trading vessel carved on the end of a stone sarcophagus from Tyre. 2nd-1st century B.C. [Tyndale House, [The Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#), Vol. 3, pp. 1441]

#### 2 Nephi 12:16 **Tarshish:**

According to George Potter and Richard Wellington, some scholars have associated Tarshish with Tartessus in Spain. However there was also a Tarshish on the Indian Ocean (see LDS Bible Dictionary). In 2 Chronicles 9:21 we can read of some of the merchandise brought back to Palestine from trips to Tarshish; gold, silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks (hardly products from Spain). While the ivory & gold could equally have come from Africa, the complete list of items indicates dealings with India,<sup>i</sup> an ancient trading partner with southern Arabia. Peacocks live in India and are not found in Africa at all.<sup>ii</sup> Moreover, 2 Chronicles 20:36 notes that the ships that went to Tarshish came from the port of Ezion geber, a port on the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. It is possible that Tarshish might have been associated with Moscha on the Indian Ocean. Moscha was located on the eastern part of the Salalah plain in the Dhofar region of what is today Oman. Today, the ruins of what is thought to be Moscha are found at the inlet of khor Rori. From Moscha, in the area known as Dhofar, ships loaded with the precious frankincense embarked into the Indian Ocean.



Dhofar, Oman (Tarshish?)

[expeditionportal.com](http://expeditionportal.com)

It is almost certain that Lehi knew of the ocean-going ships of the Indian Ocean, their port-of-call at the Frankincense port of Moscha, and the authorized trail he could take overland to reach Moscha. His contemporaries Ezekiel and Jeremiah, had a knowledge of the Frankincense trail and the oceanic shipping that was taking place in the Indian ocean. Ezekiel wrote of the merchants of Dedan and Sheba, both associated with Arabian empires whose wealth was based on the incense trade and both of which were situated on trading routes (Ezekiel 27:20, 22). Ezekiel specifically mentioned the ocean going ships of the merchants of Tarshish, as well as their pilots and mariners. [George Potter & Richard Wellington, Discovering Nephi's Trail, Chapter 4, p. 3, Unpublished] [See the commentary on Ophir--2 Nephi 23:12]

**2 Nephi 12:16 [The Lord Shall Come upon] All the Ships of Tarshish and upon All Pleasant Pictures:**

According to Reynolds and Sjodahl, the expression "pleasant pictures" (2 Nephi 12:16) refers to the standards or figure heads of the ships. In Acts 28:11 the student will find an illustration of the meaning of this expression. There we are informed that the ship in which Paul traveled from Malta to Rome had Castor and Pollux for a "sign." Those mythical twin sons of Zeus were the supposed protectors of the ship, and their images were painted, or sculptured in a prominent place on the ship. Others had different protectors and therefore different images and standards. But idols, whether on land or sea will be utterly destroyed in the wrath of the day of the Lord.

[George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 325]

2 Nephi 12:16 **And upon all the ships of Tarshish (Illustration-not shown):** This Byzantine mosaic of a ship, found in Hisham's Palace near Jericho, may be similar in appearance to the ships of Tarshish. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 26]

2 Nephi 12:16 **And upon all the ships of Tarshish (Illustration-not shown):** A model of a Canaanite merchant ship. During the Old Testament period, ships carried a variety of goods for merchants and seamen for navies. The Phoenicians, especially, were famous for their transport of merchandise on elaborately built ships to Mediterranean seaports. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 27]



2 Nephi 12:20 **A man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which he hath made for himself to worship (Illustration):** Stone mould with modern cast, for making figurines of a fertility goddess with a horned hat, probably Asherah. . [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 131]

2 Nephi 12:20 **He Hath Made for Himself to Worship:**

Jeff Lindsay notes that scholars have found support for variant passages in the Book of Mormon chapters of Isaiah in other early biblical manuscript texts. Franklin Harris writes that "in Isaiah 2:20 (2 Nephi 12:20) where the Book of Mormon reads 'he hath made' for 'they made' the reading is confirmed by Codex Alexandrinus which renders 'he made.'" (Franklin S. Harris, Jr., The Book of Mormon: Messages and Evidences, pp. 50-52) [Quoted by Jeff Lindsay, "Did Joseph Smith Plagiarize from the King James Bible?," Book of Mormon Commentary, [www.jefflindsay.com](http://www.jefflindsay.com)]



Mole in a hole

[pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

2 Nephi 12:20 **Moles (Illustration):** Moles in holes [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com) ]



Bats flying in and out of a cave

[flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com)

2 Nephi 12:20 **Bats (Illustration):** Bats flying in and out of a cave [flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com) ]

2 Nephi 12:20 **The bats (Illustration-not shown):** Bats hanging from tree branches in a centuries-old building, Akko. Several species of bats live in the Near East, most of which eat insects. They dwell communally in caves, crevices, or other dark places. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 123]



## Chapter 13

### 2 Nephi 13:1 **The Lord . . . Doth Take Away:**

Job expressed the idea that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away (Job 1:21). This chapter is Isaiah's prophecy of how the Lord will take away all that is dear to the kingdom of Judah. Their city will be taken, their society will crumble; they will be at a loss for leadership; they will lose all prestige, independence, self-sufficiency, and sovereignty. While the various punishments may seem harsh, they should have been well known to the Jews. When Moses gave the law, he specifically revealed the punishments and curses which would befall the people if they did not keep the law:

'The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies:

Thou . . . shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. . . .

Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people . . .

thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always . . .

thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb and a byword, among all nations  
whither the Lord shall lead thee. . . .

Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed;

because thou hearkenest not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments.' (Deut. 28:25-45)

The history of Judah and Jerusalem demonstrate how literally Isaiah's prophecy has been fulfilled. The punishments have been severe because the Jews were the covenant people. Their history reminds us of what the Lord thinks of covenant breakers: "For of him unto whom much is given, much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation" (D & C 82:3).

[[josephsmith.com.2Nephi](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)]

### 2 Nephi 13:1 **Jerusalem . . . Judah:**

Jerusalem is the capital city of the land of Judah. The people that live in these locations represent the tribe of Judah, which is part of the covenant House of Israel.



Location of Judah and Jerusalem

[enterthebible.org](http://enterthebible.org)

2 Nephi 13:1 **The Lord of Hosts doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah (Illustration):** Location of Judah and Jerusalem [enterthebible.org](http://enterthebible.org) ]

2 Nephi 13:1 **The Whole Staff of Bread and the Whole Stay of Water:**

Sitting behind massive fortifications, and with massive reserves of food and water, the people of Bible times often thought themselves to be safe from foreign enemies that might lay siege to their city. But despite their reserve stores of grain and water, the foreign enemies would lay siege to a city for months, even years in order to obtain victory. The Israelite stronghold of Masada was one of the last strongholds to fall to the Romans. It has been preserved as a historical site. [Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]



Parallel rectangular grain storage areas at Masada

[blindness.org](http://blindness.org)

2 Nephi 13:1,8 **The whole stay of bread (Illustration):** Parallel rectangular grain storage areas at Masada. [blindness.org](http://blindness.org)]

2 Nephi 13:1,8 **The whole stay of bread (Illustration-not shown):** The governments of Israel and Judah kept reserve supplies of grain, wine, oil, and weapons in store cities, such as Jerusalem, Beth Shemesh, and Megiddo. The empty grain storage of Megiddo is an example of one reserve. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 7]



2 Nephi 13:1 **The whole stay of water (Illustration):** Empty water cistern, Gibeon. Cisterns served as the main water source for many ancient villages and towns. Villagers built channels that collected winter rains into one or more cisterns. Water users would draw from the cistern for domestic purposes. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 7]

### 2 Nephi 13:1 **The Whole Staff of Bread, and the Whole Stay of Water:**

Taken at face value, if the supply of bread and water is taken away by the Lord, the result will be severe famine and drought. When Jerusalem was under siege to the Romans in 70 AD, they suffered from a terrible famine. Many died of hunger; many were slain by Roman soldiers while they lay famished with hunger. Josephus records:

“Now of those that perished by famine in the city, the number was prodigious, and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable... Moreover, their hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew every thing, while they gathered such things as the most sordid animals would not touch, and endured to eat them; nor did they at length abstain from girdles and shoes; and the very leather which belonged to their shields they pulled off and gnawed: the very wisps of old hay became food to some...”  
(Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Book VI, 4:3)

“So the Romans...when they were come to the houses to plunder them, they found in them entire families of dead men, and the upper rooms full of dead corpses, that is of

such as died by the famine...those that were still alive...they ran every one through whom they met with, and obstructed the very lanes with their dead bodies, and made the whole city run down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood. (Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, Book VI, 8:5)

These destructions had come upon the Jews 'because their tongues and their doings have been against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory' (v. 8). The famine of 70 AD was part of the first Abomination of Desolation. The second Abomination of Desolation is yet to occur. It will take place directly preceding the Second Coming. At that time, the events of the first Desolation will be repeated. The entire thirteenth chapter is dealing with this time period. The fourteenth chapter is also; as verses 3-5 make clear. These events are part of the destructions of the last days. In order to understand them better, it makes sense to look at what happened in 70 AD, for these events will be repeated.

[[josephsmith.com.2Nephi](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)]

**2 Nephi 13:1-3 The Lord . . . Doth Take Away . . . the Mighty Man, and the Man of War, the Judge:**

When Jerusalem was sacked by the Babylonians in 587 BC, the rulers were either killed or taken back to Babylon. Had Lehi been in Jerusalem at the time, he would have been one of them. Josephus records how part of Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled:

"...the general of the Babylonian king now overthrew the city to the very foundations, and removed all the people, and took for prisoners the high priest Seraiah, and Zephaniah the priest that was next to him, and the rulers that guarded the temple, who were three in number, and the eunuch who was over the armed men, and seven friends of [king] Zedekiah, and his scribe, and sixty other rulers; all whom, together with the vessels they had pillaged, he carried to the king of Babylon." (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book X, 8:5)

**2 Nephi 13:4 I Will Give Children unto Them to Be Their Princes:**

Victor Ludlow writes:

"Many of the Jewish kings before the Babylonian captivity came to rule at a very early age. Ahaz, Hezekiah, Amon, and Jehoiakim were all in their early twenties. Manasseh was only twelve, Josiah a mere eight years old, and Jehoiachim either eighteen or eight, depending upon whether the age recorded in 2 Kings or 2 Chronicles is correct. (See 2 Kgs 24:8, 2 Chr. 36:9)."

[Victor Ludlow, [Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet](#), p. 103]

2 Nephi 13:5 **The People Shall Be Oppressed:**

According to David Ridges, there is a chiasmic structure here in the text, in which the most important or center part reads: “the people shall be oppressed.”

Verse

1	[A] For the Lord of Hosts doth take away from Jerusalem
1	[B] the whole staff of bread
2	[C] The mighty man
3	[D] counselor
4	[E] babes
5	[F] the people shall be oppressed
5	[E'] the child
6	[D'] ruler
7	[C'] healer
7	[B'] bread
8	[A'] For Jerusalem is ruined

[David J. Ridges, *Your Study of Isaiah Made Easier in the Bible and the Book of Mormon*, Second Edition, pp. 222-223]

2 Nephi 13:5 **The People Shall Be Oppressed Every One By Another . . . By His Neighbor:**

This is exactly what happened during the first Abomination of Desolation (AD 70):

“...for if so much as the shadow of any kind of food did any where appear, a war was commenced presently, and the dearest friends fell a fighting one with another about it, snatching from each other the most miserable supports of life. Nor would men believe that those who were dying had no food, but the robbers would search them when they were expiring, lest any one should have concealed food in their bosoms, and counterfeited dying; nay, these robbers gaped for want, and ran about stumbling and staggering along like mad dogs, and reeling against the doors of the houses like drunken men; they would also, in the great distress they were in, rush into the very same houses two or three times in one and the same day.” (Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Book VI, 4:3)



Hunger

[destination-yisrael.biblesearchers](http://destination-yisrael.biblesearchers)

#### 2 Nephi 13:7 **I Will Not Be a Healer [Ruler]:**

John Tvedtnes writes that in comparing the Isaiah text from the King James Bible with the Book of Mormon, we find that the RLDS version of the Book of Mormon reads "ruler" instead of "healer" for 2 Nephi 13:7. However the word "healer" appears in the KJV, 1830 edition and our present LDS edition. The word "ruler" seems more logical, since the person speaking has been asked to be "ruler" in the preceding verse. Moreover, the person speaking repeats "ruler" later in this same verse. One must assume that the RLDS committee consulted some Biblical commentary on this, unless the original manuscript so reads (in which case, this would be greater evidence for the Book of Mormon.

[John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," FARMS, p. 29]

#### 2 Nephi 13:8 **Jerusalem Is Ruined, and Judah Is Fallen:**

At the time Isaiah wrote this, the kingdom of Judah was relatively strong. There was no reason to predict its ruin. Yet by the spirit of prophecy, Isaiah knew that the people would ripen in wickedness, even as Sodom, thereby bringing upon themselves the judgment of God. This judgment occurred on multiple occasions. First, the Jews were sacked by the Babylonians in approximately 587 BC. Second, the Jews were sacked by the Romans in 70 AD. Third, the Jews will be sacked by a group of Gentile nations in the last days (Revelation 11:2, Zechariah 14:2). There were other times when the city was taken, by other armies, etc., but the city was not destroyed as in these three instances. We have seen Isaiah's prophetic dualism (the multiple applications of one prophecy) before. Here we see that Isaiah's prophecy refers to all three events.

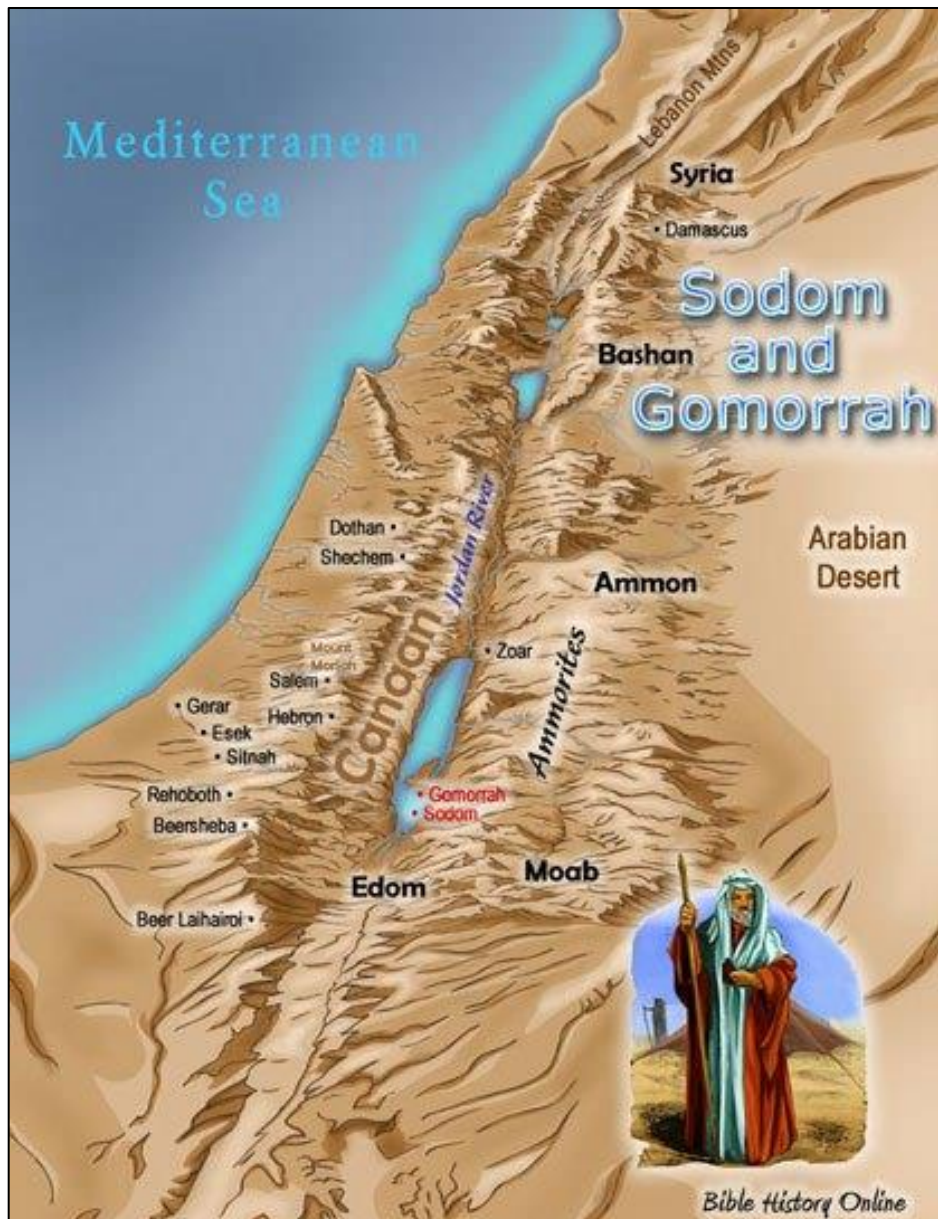
[[josephsmith.com](http://josephsmith.com).2Nephi]

2 Nephi 13:9 **Sodom:**

The city of Sodom (2 Nephi 13:9), according to one viewpoint, is thought to be one of the cities of the plain located north of the Dead Sea, where the Jordan Valley broadens into the "Circle" or "Plain" of the Jordan (Deuteronomy 34:3), the evidence being "that Abraham and Lot looked upon the cities from near Bethel (Genesis 13:10).

On the other hand, there is a view that Sodom lies buried beneath the shallow waters of the southern tip of the Dead Sea.





Sodom and Gomorrah

[iejaktamadun.wordpress.com](http://iejaktamadun.wordpress.com)

As Lot saw it, the Circle of the Jordan was supremely attractive from every material viewpoint (Genesis 13:10), but it was to become desolate. The efficient cause of this destruction of the cities was probably an earthquake, with an accompanying release and explosion of gaseous deposits. Biblically and fundamentally it was God's judgment, remembered again and again throughout the Bible (Deuteronomy 29:23; Isaiah 1:9; Jeremiah 49:18; etc.) and Sodom became synonymous with brazen sin (Isaiah 3:9; Lamentations 4:6; Jude 7). Whereas Ezekiel 16:49-51 lists the sins of Sodom as pride, prosperous complacency and "abomination", **Genesis 19:4-5 concentrates on sexual perversion, particularly homosexuality.** [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1237] [See 2 Nephi 23:19]

## 2 Nephi 13:9 **Sodom:**

According to Walter Kaiser, the five sites of the plain, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zoar and Zeboiim, were located along the southern portion of the Jordan Valley (Genesis 13:10-11). But these same five cities were overthrown by a cataclysmic destruction of unusual proportions according to the biblical description (Genesis 19:18-20; 19:1-13). God sent a conflagration of "fire and brimstone" on all five of these cities for their reputation as centers for gross sin.

So significant was this divine act of destruction that the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah became a byword among the authors of Scripture. Even nonbiblical authors wrote about Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction in a way that indicated they regarded it as a real event. For instance, the first-century A.D. historian Flavius Josephus devoted a large section of his work to this destruction as did Philo.<sup>iii</sup> Some of these authors even claimed that the results of the destruction could be seen up to their own day.

But where are these cities, precisely? At first it was held that these cities were to be located at the bottom of the southern end of the Dead Sea where the sea floor (even in wet years) is not more than ten or twenty feet deep into the area below the "tongue" or Lisan that protrudes out from the southeastern shore of Transjordan. In 1960 Ralph Baney explored the floor of the sea and found trees standing in water down to the twenty-three-foot level at that time. This proved Albright's theory that the water level had risen, submerging ancient structures, but it did not show that any of them were any of the famous five cities of the plain.<sup>iv</sup>

In the course of time, the search focused on the eastern shore of Transjordan at, and just south of, the Lisan. One site, known as Bab edh-Dhra, contains the remains of a heavily fortified and settled community, dating from 3150 to 2200 B.C.

In 1965 and 1967, Paul Lapp began his excavation of the site of Bab edh-Dhra. These explorations were continued by Walter Rast and Thomas Schaub in 1973. The excavations revealed a huge fortification wall some twenty-three feet thick surrounding the city, with mud-brick houses and a Canaanite temple inside the walls. But what startled the excavators was the huge layers of ash reaching many feet in its depths. Moreover, so hot and intense had been the flames that destroyed this site that the bricks had turned red permanently from the intense heat. Bryant Wood concluded that:

the evidence would suggest that this site of Bab edh-Dhra is the biblical city of Sodom. . . . What [the first archaeologists who excavated buildings related to this site] discovered was that the fire started on the roof of the building, then the roof burned through, collapsed into the interior, and then the fire spread inside the building. And this was the case in every single charnel house that they excavated. Now this is something that is quite difficult to explain naturally . . . How do you explain the burning of these charnel houses in

a cemetery located some distance from the town?<sup>v</sup>

The biblical account that God had rained down fire and brimstone on these five cities of the plain finds strong confirmation in the archaeological evidence. Rast and Schaub's investigations found other sites in addition to the proposed location of Sodom at Bab edh-Dhra (in the Wadi Kerak) just east of the Lisan, or "Tongue" that protrudes out into the Dead Sea. They were Numeria, in the Wadi Numeria (perhaps the site of Gomorrah); es Safi, in the Wadi Hesa (probably the site of Zoar); Feifa, in the Wadi Feifa (maybe the site of Admah); and Khanazir, near the Wadi Khanazir (perhaps the site of Zeboiim). All these sites were destroyed or abandoned at about the same time, about 2450-2350 B.C., according to the archaeologists' dating.<sup>vi</sup> Four of them exhibit the same huge ash layers that were found at Bab edh-Dhra. At Numeria, this heavily fortified city had an ash layer that topped seven feet.

While we await final identification and confirmation, it does appear that we are very close to confirming what the Bible had disclosed about these sites that became legends in their own times.

[Water C. Kaiser Jr., The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable & Relevant?, pp. 91-94]

#### 2 Nephi 13:12 **And My People:**

In comparing 2 Nephi 13:12 with Isaiah 3:12, the King James Version reads, "As for my people," and the Book of Mormon reads, "And my people." Sidney Sperry explains that if the last letter of the Hebrew text of Isaiah 3:11 is placed in front of the first word in Isaiah 3:12, we have precisely the Book of Mormon reading. Here is another sample of wrong word division, which the Prophet Joseph Smith corrected; only a translator could reasonably do this.

[Sidney Sperry, "The Book Of Mormon As Translation English," in Journal of Book of Mormon Studies, F.A.R.M.S., Spring 1995, p. 213]

#### 2 Nephi 13:14 **Ye Have Eaten up the Vineyard and the Spoil of the Poor in Your Houses:**

Franklin Harris makes an interesting comment concerning an Isaiah variant:

In some cases the Book of Mormon text adds "and," which in Hebrew is represented by a single character "waw," inferring there has been an omission from the present Hebrew text, the addition is confirmed by the Septuagint and the Syriac. Examples are found in Isaiah 3:14 (2 Nephi 13:14), 48:13 (1 Nephi 20:13); 50:9 (2 Nephi 7:9); 51:18 (2 Nephi 8:18). (Franklin S. Harris, Jr., The Book of Mormon: Messages and Evidences, pp. 50-52)  
[Quoted by Jeff Lindsay, "Did Joseph Smith Plagiarize from the King James Bible?," Book of Mormon Commentary, [www.jefflindsay.com](http://www.jefflindsay.com)]

2 Nephi 13:16 **Stretched-Forth Necks:**



Stretched-forth neck

[gataddzone.net](http://gataddzone.net)

2 Nephi 13:16 **Making a Tinkling With Their Feet:**

Chardin ascribes the tinkling sound to little bells fastened to those rings around the ankles. In the East Indies, golden bells adorned the feet and ankles of the ladies from the earliest times; they placed them in the flowing tresses of their hair; they suspended them round their necks, and to the golden rings which they wore on their fingers, to announce their superior rank, and extort the homage which they had a right to expect from the lower orders; and from the banks of the Indus, it is probable the custom was introduced into the other countries of Asia. The Arabian females in Palestine and Syria delight in the same ornaments. [God Vine [godvine.com/bible/Isaiah/3](http://godvine.com/bible/Isaiah/3) ]



Tinkling foot ornaments [utc.edu](http://utc.edu)



Tinkling foot ornaments [blicktx.blogspot.com](http://blicktx.blogspot.com)

2 Nephi 13:17,18 **Making a tinkling with their feet (Illustration):** Tinkling foot ornaments [utc.edu](http://utc.edu)  
]

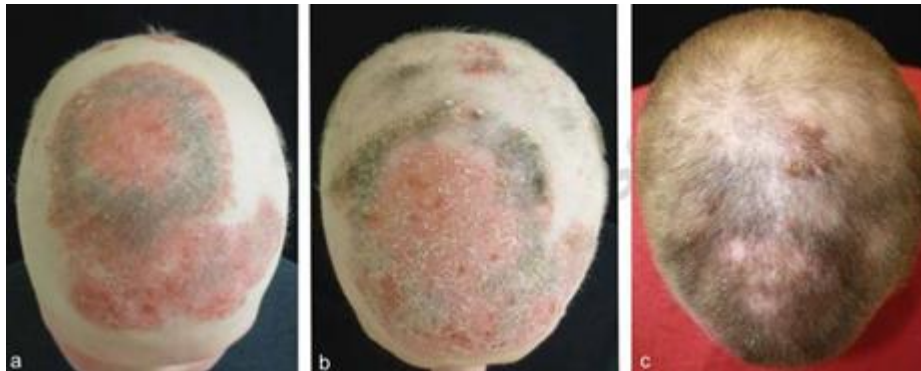
2 Nephi 13:16 **Wanton Eyes:**



Heavy Eye Makeup

[loveallraces.blogspot.com](http://loveallraces.blogspot.com)

**2 Nephi 13: The Lord Will Smite With a Scab the Crown of the Head (Baldness):**



Baldness

[boingboing.net](http://boingboing.net)

Conquering armies often kept the best captives who would bring a good price in the slave markets back home. They shaved the hair off of these women slaves for three basic reasons:

1. Humiliation
2. Identification (thus it was not easy for a slave to run away)
3. Sanitation

A “scab” on the top of the captives’ head might have resulted from filthy conditions brought on by a prior siege of their city before it fell. The scab could have been caused because of scratching to relieve the itch of infested head lice and other skin disorders. When the captives’ heads were shaved, the scab would have been revealed. [Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

**2 Nephi 13:18: Cauls and Round Tires Like the Moon:**

Isaiah. 3:18 "In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments

about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon."

**CAULS** In Hebrew, the word for Cauls is Shabiys. It is a seldom-used word and means to "interweave" as in netting --or in this case, a hairnet. The Septuagint explains it as a net-works or caps of net-works worn on the head. But a Caul was no ordinary hairnet.



Caul [medieval-bride.blogspot.com](http://medieval-bride.blogspot.com)

Caul

[etsy.com](http://etsy.com)

Since ancient times, hair nets have been a popular fashion accessory for women. Egyptian and Assyrian monuments show figures of women with ornamented netting draped over their heads. Some of these early hairnets have been recovered and are displayed in museums where they are marveled over for the beauty and intricacy.

Rev. Joseph Roberts, in his "Oriental Illustrations of the Sacred Scriptures" (London 1844), described a Caul that he viewed: "It was made of gold and with many joints (in the netting) and it contained 45 rubies and 9 pearls all knotted into the netting."

A caul or ancient hairnet was a woven strap or girdle, about four inches long, and placed on top of the head so that it extended from ear to ear and rested on the brow. Some cauls had more netting attached that enclosed or held up the hair, some did not. Engravings show cauls fashioned both ways. Along the edge of a caul, numerous spangles, balls, small sun-like shapes of hammered metal, and even coins were attached by threads or ribbons and allowed to dangle over the eyes of the wearer. As a woman moved, the ornaments of her caul caught the sunlight and glistened as they tinkled.

1 Peter 3 indicates that the ancient practice of caul wearing, which was popular in the 8th. century BC, was still in practice in the first century AD and now included braiding many of the same sun symbols, jewels and other ornaments down the length of the hair itself.

**TIRES** In Hebrew, the word for tires is saharon and means a round pendent that is shaped like a crescent or half-moon and hung about the neck. In ancient times, tires were made of gold or silver and fastened around the neck by means of a ribbon, strap, or thinly crafted metal. While only women wore cauls, both men and women wore tires. Even camels wore tires. Such a practice

was especially common to the later Arabs.



“Tire” (singular ornament)

[deseos.se](http://deseos.se)

Tires were moon-shaped ornaments that could be plain metal or highly decorated with precious stones. A poor person might have a single tire draping down between the breasts, while wealthy women were known for wearing elaborate tires that covered most of their chests. Sometimes, several tires were worn at once. And many times, tires were inscribed or engraved with the purpose for why they were worn.



“Tire” (complex ornament)

[1indian-jewelry.blogspot.com](http://1indian-jewelry.blogspot.com)



Depending on the culture and the era, a number of meanings were associated with the wearing of the cauls and tires, . A caul might be worn to show wealth, one's position in society, enhance appearance or call attention to one's beauty. Later Arabs used cauls and tires to prevent the "evil eye" from afflicting them. Camels draped with tires were thought to keep the caravan safe during travel and trade negotiations. The continual tinkling noise of the moon-shaped ornaments was believed to ward off evil spirits.

By New Testament times, discs and crescents were well-recognized symbols of the popular sun and moon cults; religions that were especially appealing to the vain. The wearing of Cauls and Tires became an accepted way to advertise one's spiritual leanings.

The opening text is rich with descriptive symbolism. Usually, Isaiah did not delve into minute particulars of a subject; in this case, women's adornment. But in his third chapter, he stepped out of character. With great determination of meaning, he specifically listed those ornament that were considered vulgar public displays of wealth, status, glory and idolatry to describe Jerusalem and Judah in the time of Uzziah-Jotham. In words understandable to his audience, Isaiah is saying that God's holy people have degenerated into a vain, self-serving, haughty, high-minded, proud, self-centered, self-flattering and idolatrous people. They have ceased to love God. They love themselves more.\*

The point of Isaiah's address (Chapter 3) is ) God's universal judgment against those who are self-absorbed and practice false glory

["cauls and tires" [ancientbiblehistory.com](http://ancientbiblehistory.com)]

2 Nephi 13:19 **Chains:**



Chains

[aliexpress.com](http://aliexpress.com)

2 Nephi 13:19 Bracelets:



Bracelets

[sunbijou.com](http://sunbijou.com)

2 Nephi 3:19 The Mufflers . . . the Bonnets:

#### The Muffler



"Muffler" (elaborate veil)

[womeninthebible.net](http://womeninthebible.net)

"Muffler" is the name given to an article of woman's dress in Isaiah 3:19. It describes a veil more elaborate and costly than the ordinary. A cognate word in the sense of "veiled" is applied in the Mishna (Shabbath, vi.6) to Jewesses from Arabia. [Definitions from multiple website bible dictionaries]

## The Bonnet



"Bonnet" (fancy jeweled head turban)

[fashionoutfits.org](http://fashionoutfits.org)

The word "bonnet" in Isaiah 3:20 refers to an elaborate head-dress worn by females. It consisted of a piece of cloth twisted about the head. In modern times it might be referred to as an elaborate jeweled "hijab."

### 2 Nephi 13:20 **Ornaments of the Legs:**

According to Barnes Notes on Isaiah 3:20, the word used here is derived from a verb signifying "to walk, to go," particularly to walk in a stately and formal manner - with a measured step, and thus refers to a proud and lofty gait. The "ornament" which is here referred to is supposed to have been a short chain extending from one foot to the other, worn by the Eastern women to give them a measured and stately gait. - "Gesenius." This "chain" is supposed to have been attached by hooks or clasps to the 'tinkling ornaments' mentioned in Isaiah 3:16. Safieri mentions these ornaments, and thus describes them: 'The word denotes a small chain, with which females, when they walk, connect their feet, in order to make their steps equal.' Happily these ornaments are unknown in modern times, at least in Western countries. They are still retained in the East. [God Vine [godvine.com/bible/Isaiah/3](http://godvine.com/bible/Isaiah/3) ]



Leg ornaments [penelopeestilosa.wordpress.com](http://penelopeestilosa.wordpress.com)



[pinterest.com](http://pinterest.com)

2 Nephi 13:20 **Headbands:**



"Headbands" Ancient Egyptian Women

[historylink101.com](http://historylink101.com)

2 Nephi 13:20 **Headbands (Illustration)** Ancient Egyptian Women [historylink101.com](http://historylink101.com) ]

2 Nephi 13:20 **Tablet:**

The meaning of the word "tablet" as used in Isaiah 3:20 is somewhat confusing. Although the word used in Exodus 35:22 probably means a string of beads worn round the neck (see also Numbers 31:50 ), in Isaiah 3:20 the Hebrew word has been interpreted to mean a perfume-box, as it is rendered in the Revised Version. [[wisdom.library.org](http://wisdom.library.org) ] The Hebrew is, as in the margin, 'the houses of the soul.' The word translated "soul" means also the "breath;" and hence, as one of its meanings, that which is "breathed," "or which is smelled;" "scent; fragrancy, odor." The word "houses" here may denote also "boxes" - as boxes of perfumes. However other

website dictionaries discount this. The problem of interpretation also comes when we see the word “tablet” in Isaiah 3:20 in a long list of items worn by women.



“Tablet”? Perfume Bottle Necklace [ebay.com](http://ebay.com)

Thus “tablet” might be interpreted as a some perfumed substance housed in a pendant worn around the neck or attached to the body in some way. [Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

#### 2 Nephi 13:20 **Ear-rings:**

It is by no means certain that the original word in Isaiah 3:20 translated as “ear-rings” means what we normally refer to as “earings.” The word is derived from the verb signifying “to whisper,” and then “to conjure, to charm,” and here probably denotes precious stones or plates of gold and silver worn by the females as “amulets” or “charms.” (perhaps with something inscribed).



"ear-rings"

[luvimages.com](http://luvimages.com)

They were worn suspended from the ears by Oriental females.

[God Vine [godvine.com/bible/isaiah/3](http://godvine.com/bible/isaiah/3) ]

2 Nephi 13:21 **Rings:**



“Rings”

[bridalsandgrooms.blogspot.com](http://bridalsandgrooms.blogspot.com)

2 Nephi 13:21: Rings (Illustration): Toe Rings [bridalsandgrooms.blogspot.com](http://bridalsandgrooms.blogspot.com) ]

### 2 Nephi 13:21 **Nose Jewels:**

"Nose-jewels" are only mentioned in Isaiah 3:21, although they are referred to in Gen. 24:47, Prov. 11:22, and Hos. 2:13. They were among the most valued of ancient female ornaments. They "were made of ivory or metal, and" "occasionally jeweled." They were more than an inch in diameter," and hung upon the mouth. Eliezer gave one to Rebekah which was of gold and weighed half a shekel...



“Nose jewels”

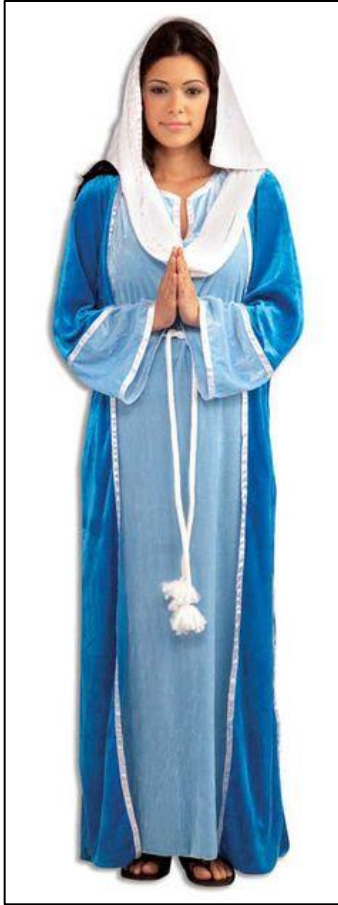
[hdwallpaperinfor.1300.bizcn.com](http://hdwallpaperinfor.1300.bizcn.com)

At the present day the women in the country and in the desert wear these ornaments in one of "the sides of the nostrils"

[ [kingjamesbibleverse.com](http://kingjamesbibleverse.com) ]

### 2 Nephi 13:22 **Changeable Suits of Apparel:**

The term "changeable suit of apparel" in 2 Nephi 13:22 has been interpreted by multiple bible internet sites as a festival robe. What this means to me is that it was a more expensive robe reserved for public gatherings or festivals. As such it would have distinguished the woman wearing it as being rich or important.

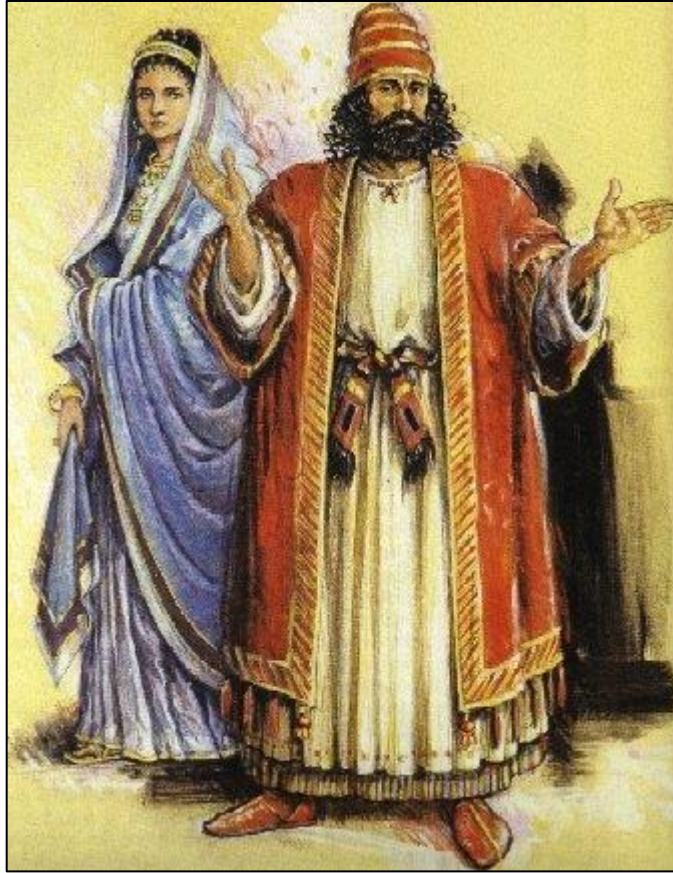


'Changeable suit" [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

**2 Nephi 13:22 Mantles:**

The word "mantle" in 2 Nephi 13:22 has been defined as an elaborate short cloak or tunic. As such it would have probably been worn over a robe or dress, enhancing the importance or wealth of the individual.





'Mantle'

[womeninthebible.net](http://womeninthebible.net)

**2 Nephi 13:22 Wimples:**

The term "wimples" in 2 Nephi 13:22 has been interpreted by multiple bible internet sites as a cloak or a shawl of fine material and design.



“Wimple” (expensive shawl)

[siguatian.cn.alibaba.com](http://siguatian.cn.alibaba.com)

Again it would have designated a woman as rich or important. [Alan Miner Personal Notes]

#### 2 Nephi 13:22 **Crisping Pins:**

The term "crisping pins" in 2 Nephi 13:22 has been interpreted by multiple bible internet sites as a satchel, a wallet, or a handbag. It's purpose was to hold women's personal items—similar to modern times.



Ancient Egyptian Handbag [throwinthebag.wordpress.com](http://throwinthebag.wordpress.com)

But anciently as in modern times this "accessory" could distinguish the woman who carried it as being important or wealthy. For example:



Mouawad's 1001 Night Diamond Purse

[worldtekbuk.com](http://worldtekbuk.com)

The Mouawad,s 1001 Night Diamond purse is the most expensive women's purse in the world, and its worth is about \$3.8 million. ("Top Ten Most Expensive Women Purses in the World," [worldtekbuk.com](http://worldtekbuk.com) )

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

## 2 Nephi 13:23 **Glasses:**

According to Barnes' Notes on Isaiah 3:23:

The glasses - There is a great variety of opinion about the expression used here. That ancient Jews had "looking-glasses," or mirrors, is manifest from the account in Exodus 38:8. These "mirrors" were made of polished plates of brass. The Vulgate and Chaldee understand this of "mirrors." The Septuagint understands by it a "thin, transparent covering like gauze," perhaps like silk. The word is derived from the verb "to reveal, to make apparent," etc., and applies either to mirrors or to a splendid shining garment. It is probable that their excessive vanity was evinced by carrying small mirrors in their hands - that they might examine and adjust their dress as might be necessary. This is now done by females of Eastern nations. Shaw informs us that, 'In the Levant, looking-glasses are a part of female dress. The Moorish women in Barabary are so fond of their ornaments, and particularly of their looking-glasses, which they hang upon their breasts, that they will not lay them aside, even when, after the drudgery of the day, they are obliged to go two or three miles with a pitcher or a goat-skin to fetch water.' - "Burder." In Egypt, the mirror was made of mixed metal, chiefly of copper, and this metal was so highly polished, that in some of the mirrors discovered at Thebes, the luster has been partially restored, though they have been buried in the earth for many centuries. The mirror was nearly round, inserted in a handle of wood, stone, or metal, whose form varied according to the taste of the owner. The picture in the book will give you an idea of the ancient form of the mirror, and will show that they might be easily carried abroad as an ornament in public; compare Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," vol. iii., pp. 384-386. [ God Vine, [godvine.com](http://godvine.com) ]



In modern times the self-centered hand mirror has been replaced by "selfies"-- photographs of one's self by the person herself, many times in provocative poses--a type of self-adoration and self-absorption of assumed personal beauty and attraction. Thus as Barnes notes, the implication here is that the daughters of Zion had fallen to a state where they were absorbed in making themselves physically "revealed", and to openly "make apparent" their sexual desires. This applies either to mirrors or to a thin revealing garment. [Alan Miner Personal Notes]

### 2 Nephi 13:23 **Fine Linen** :

Anciently, the most delicate and fine garments were made from linen which was obtained chiefly from Egypt (see Luke 16:19). According to Clarke's Commentary on Isaiah 3:23, the "transparent garments," were a kind of silken dress ,like gauze; worn only by the most elegant women, and such as dressed themselves "more elegantly than modest women should." Such garments are worn to the present day; garments that not only show the shape of every part of the body, but the very color of the skin . [ God Vine, [godvine.com](http://godvine.com) ]

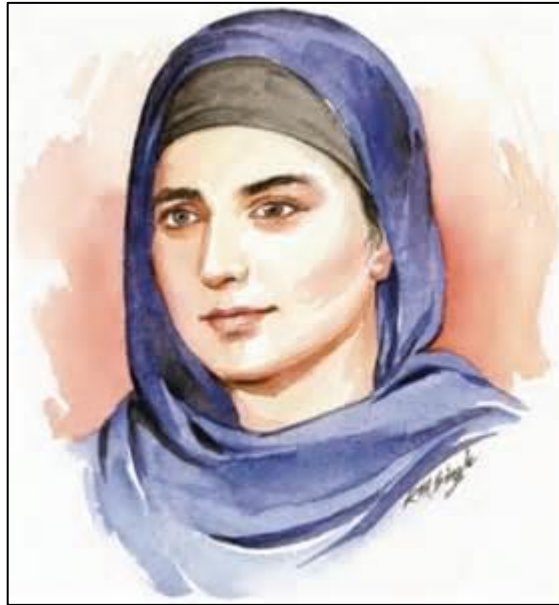


Fine linen

[rlasharespace2012.wikispaces.com](http://rlasharespace2012.wikispaces.com)

2 Nephi 13:23 **Hoods:**

A turban.



[sikhwiki.org](http://sikhwiki.org)

2 Nephi 13:23 **Veils:**



Ancient Greek veil

[mckenziecollege.com](http://mckenziecollege.com)

According to Barnes' Commentary, the veils do not differ probably from the veils worn now, except that those worn by Eastern females are "large," and made so as to cover the head and the shoulders, so that they may be drawn closely round the body, and effectually conceal the person; compare Genesis 24:65. [God Vine, [godvine.com](http://godvine.com) ]

#### 2 Nephi 13:24 **Instead of Sweet Smell (Perfumes) Here Shall Be Stink:**

According to Clarke's Commentary on Isaiah 3:24, a principal part of the delicacy of the Asiatic ladies consists in the use of baths, and of the richest oils and perfumes; an attention to which is in some degree necessary in those hot countries. Frequent mention is made of the rich ointments of the spouse in the Song of Solomon, (Sol 4:10, Sol 4:11).

The preparation for Esther's being introduced to King Ahasuerus was a course of bathing and perfuming for a whole year; "six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours;" Esther 2:12 (note). A diseased and loathsome habit of body, instead of a beautiful skin, softened and made agreeable with all that art could devise, and all that nature, so prodigal in those countries of the richest perfumes, could supply, must have been a punishment the most severe and the most mortifying to the delicacy of these haughty daughters of Sion.

The following article might prove interesting and informative:

## The Scent of Love: Ancient Perfumes

Erin Branham | May 1, 2012

“Therefore, when laughter-loving Aphrodite saw [Anchises], she loved him, and terribly desire seized her in her heart. She went to Cyprus, to Paphos, where her precinct is and fragrant altar, and passed into her sweet-smelling temple. There she went in and put to the glittering doors, and there the Graces bathed her with heavenly oil such as blooms upon the bodies of the eternal gods—oil divinely sweet, which she had by her, filled with fragrance.”

—Homeric hymn, tr. H.G. Evelyn-White

The goddess of love, beauty, and desire, Aphrodite was also mistress of the seductive arts, perfume primary among them. Accustomed as we are to the aromas of car exhaust and air-conditioned buildings, to us the ancient world would perhaps be most overpowering in terms of smell. Sweating men and animals and their waste filled a city’s streets, making it vital to set off sacred spaces as well as those of luxury by making them smell sweet. Fragrance was everywhere in the ancient world, from scented oils used to adorn the body to incense burnt in homes and temples.

Perfumes had many uses and meanings: they could be holy, used in the worship of the gods or the burial of the dead; they could be a symbol of status and superiority, used by athletes, aristocrats, politicians, and royalty; they could be medicinal, used to relieve ailments of the lungs or skin. In ancient Egypt, Greece, and across the Roman Empire, perfume was part of ritual, beauty, and commerce—much as it is today.

Written sources describing ancient perfuming making are vague at best, though some writers such as Theophrastus (Greek, c. 270–285 B.C.) in his book *On Odors* and Pliny the Elder (Roman, A.D. 23–79) in his *Natural History* include lists of ingredients for perfumes, as well as some discussion of techniques and tools. Tablets from Knossos, Crete, document oil deliveries to be processed by perfumers, and tablets from Mycenae, Thebes, and Pylos mention the work of perfumers.

Visual sources of information might be helpful—the ancient Egyptians depicted perfume making, and humorous Roman frescoes from Pompeii and Herculaneum showing bands of cupids in perfume shops mixing scents are known. One of these is on view at the Villa in Gallery 207, *Women in Antiquity*, where we also have many exquisite perfume containers—an industry in itself in the ancient world.





Wall fragment with Cupids and Psyche making perfume, Roman AD 75-100

Archeology provides richer information, showing that in ancient Egypt, Palestine, and the Roman Empire, temples almost always had perfume factories nearby producing the great quantities of fragrances they needed. A 2003 archeological find at Pyrgos on Cyprus, the island where Aphrodite first stepped foot on land after her birth at sea, discovered a perfume-making workshop from circa 1850 B.C., the oldest one in the world.



Ancient Israeli perfume bottles

[pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

In the ancient world oils were used as the carrier medium for perfumes. In modern perfume making, an alcohol is usually the carrier medium. Alcohols evaporate much more quickly than oils do, thus dispersing scent into the air more rapidly.

In the age of Greece and Rome, the abundance of olive oil made it the most popular oil for the perfume industry, though other oils such as almond were popular as well. Cheaper oil was better (and still is) because it has less of its own scent to compete with the fragrant materials.

To impart fragrance, plant-based ingredients were used, including flowers, leaves, seeds, woods, resins and gums. Animal-derived ingredients were also common, such as musk and civet, which are the glandular oils produced by the musk deer and the civet cat. These aromas tend to be pungent and even unpleasant in their natural states, but act as fixatives in combination with other scents, accentuating them and making them last longer without imparting their own scents to the mixture.

As in ancient times, today more expensive perfumes still use mostly natural products—essential oils gathered from flowers, spices, and fruits, while cheaper ones are made from synthesized oils that approximate these natural scents.

[ Erin Branham, "The Scent of Love: Ancient Perfumes, " <http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/the-scent-of-love-ancient-perfumes/> , May 1, 2012]

#### 2 Nephi 13:24 **Instead of a Girdle a Rent:**

2 Nephi 13:24 reads: "instead of a girdle, a rent." To begin with, a "girdle" is interpreted to mean a "belt." The signification of a belt, or girdle, is that it gathers up, encloses, holds in connection, and secures all the interior things, which without it would be set loose, and would be scattered. Speaking of the daughters of Zion, by whom are signified the character of Zion, Isaiah implies that instead of being immaculately dressed with a nice belt holding their dress together, they will be something related to poverty conditions. There has been a great variety of opinion about the meaning of this word "rent." The most probable signification is that which is derived from a verb meaning "to go around, encompass;" and hence, that it denotes "a cord."



"Girdle" or nice belt [holleygene.com](http://holleygene.com)



Rope belt of a poor servant woman (perhaps a slave) [bible-archaeology.info](http://bible-archaeology.info)

Some bible websites interpret "rent" to be "rope" implying that a fine sash will be replaced by a rope--further implying poverty. I will add here that a rope might also symbolize slavery, deportation and dispersion. Thus the daughters of wicked Zion might not just be reduced to poverty, but they might be enslaved and dispersed.

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

#### 2 Nephi 13:24 **Well Set Hair:**

According to the Pulpit Commentary, "Well-set hair" seems to mean "hair arranged with such exactness and order as to look like a work of art." The exact arrangement of the hair is very remarkable, both in the Egyptian and the Assyrian sculptures.

But in Isaiah's prophecy, this elaborate hair would be shaved off or plucked out by the roots in mourning.

[Bible Hub [biblehub.com/isaiah/3](http://biblehub.com/isaiah/3) ]



"Corn Rows" [costumecraze.com](http://costumecraze.com)



India braids [fvstore.com](http://fvstore.com)

2 Nephi 13:24 Well set hair (Illustration): Left: Corn Rows [costumecraze.com](http://costumecraze.com) Right: Indian hair [fvstore.com](http://fvstore.com) ]

Note\* For those who consider "corn rows" to be modern, see the following illustration below:



"Well-dressed hair" Egyptian Music and Dance

[acs.psu.edu](http://acs.psu.edu)

## 2 Nephi 13: 24 **Instead of Well Set Hair, Baldness:**

Baldness, especially among women, was not customary, and most wore well-coifed hair. Shaving all or part of the head of someone was a sign of disrespect (Isaiah 7:20; 2 Nephi 17:20) or mourning (Isaiah 15:2). A special haircut also seemed to be the mark of a slave, since one of the Hammurabi's laws reads: "If a barber shaves off the hairlock of a slave not belonging to him without the consent of the slave's owner, they shall cut off the barber's hand." Thus the formally prim and proper upper-class women will be either humiliated or enslaved.

[David W. Baker, *Isaiah: Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, p. 23]

As a side note, I came across a very interesting article about a bible story that has always been related to "baldness." The article provides a whole new perspective on the story in light of a better understanding of the text. The article is posted on The Left Hand of Ehud: Matt's Bible Blog ([mattsbibleblog.wordpress.com](http://mattsbibleblog.wordpress.com)) for April 10, 2012. I am including this article as an example of what cultural understanding can do to our perspective and understanding of scriptural verses. The article is as follows:

### **Elisha and the Bears (2 Kings 2:23-24)**

There are certain verses that get pulled out whenever someone wants to talk about obscure bits of the Bible. The story of Ehud is one of them, as is the naked young man in Mark; basically anything that involves nudity or weird violence. And one of the weirdest moments of violence in the Bible is the story of Elisha and the two bears.



Elisha and the bears

The context – the prophet Elijah has been taken up to heaven, leaving his successor Elisha to take up his mantle. Almost immediately he seems to establish his credentials – he purifies the stagnant water supply of Jericho before heading off to Bethel. This is when things get strange.

He's faced with a group of kids who mock his bald head. This isn't polite behaviour, and so Elisha calls down a curse upon his tormentors, whereupon two bears charge out of the woods and maul 42 of them.

End of story. Elisha heads off to Mount Carmel (the site of his mentor's greatest victory) and the kids presumably think twice before dissing baldies.

The reason this story gets so much airplay is thanks to the King James Version, which describes those mocking Elisha as 'little children'. Translated that way, the whole story sounds less biblical and more Hunger Games.

However, translation is where the problem starts. Where the KJV talks about little children, the Hebrew actually means 'youths' – in several other places throughout the Bible, the same word refers to young men old enough to go to war. Meanwhile, Elisha probably wasn't that much older than them – after all, he was working for his father when Elijah appointed him as his successor, and his ministry would go on to last over sixty years. This doesn't really seem to be a bunch of school kids mocking an old man.

Suddenly the story starts to take on a different tone. Look at what the youths shout at Elisha – "Go on up, you baldhead!" We tend to focus on the baldhead, because let's face it, it's funny to see that in the Bible. But the real insult is in "Go on up".

(It's worth noting that Elijah was always considered to be hairy, so maybe there's a personal slight going on here – "You're no Elijah, Elisha...")

This incident takes place not long after Elijah was taken up to heaven (at Bethel). In other words, the youths are telling Elisha to follow his mentor and get out of there. This isn't a personal insult aimed at Elisha's haircut (or lack of one), it's a pointed comment aimed at his status as a prophet; they're not rejecting Elisha, they're rejecting God himself and they seem to know it.

This isn't surprising – Bethel was a centre for Golden Calf worship, established in the city a few generations earlier by an idolatrous king. You wouldn't expect the place to be particularly welcoming to someone identifying himself as part of a tradition fundamentally opposed to worshipping other gods. With this in mind, maybe there's more to this than an aggressive teenage street gang. Maybe there's an element of intimidation going on here.

After all, look at how many youths the bears mauled – 42 of them. In what appears to be a nasty confrontation, the odds are not in Elisha's favour. This isn't about a stropy prophet getting a bunch of children eaten by wild animals, this is something that could turn violent.

Of course, the bears attacking the youths still isn't the non-violent response to the situation we might like to see, but the story falls within a broader context of God's prophets being threatened by the followers of other gods, and of Israel breaking the historic covenant – in a prophecy against idolatry, Hosea refers to God acting like an angry bear. This isn't the nasty little story some paint it as, it's part of an ongoing conflict.

And I guess that's a lesson we can take away from the story – when we're dealing with the Bible, context is vital. Reading these two verses can make it look like Elisha's a child-mauling lunatic; looked at these verses from another angle, he's miraculously saved from a mob of young men who seem to want him out of their city ASAP [As Soon As Possible]. It's an important distinction to make . . .

["Elisha and the Bears (2 Kings 2:23-24)," The Left Hand of Ehad: Matt's Bible Blog ([matts bibleblog.wordpress.com](http://matts bibleblog.wordpress.com)), April 10, 2012]

#### 2 Nephi 13:24 **Instead of a Stomacher, a girding of Sackcloth:**

The term "stomacher" in Isaiah 3:24 is interpreted by multiple bible internet sites as an article of female attire, probably some sort of broad girdle around the breast and/or the pit of the stomach--thus a broad girdle.

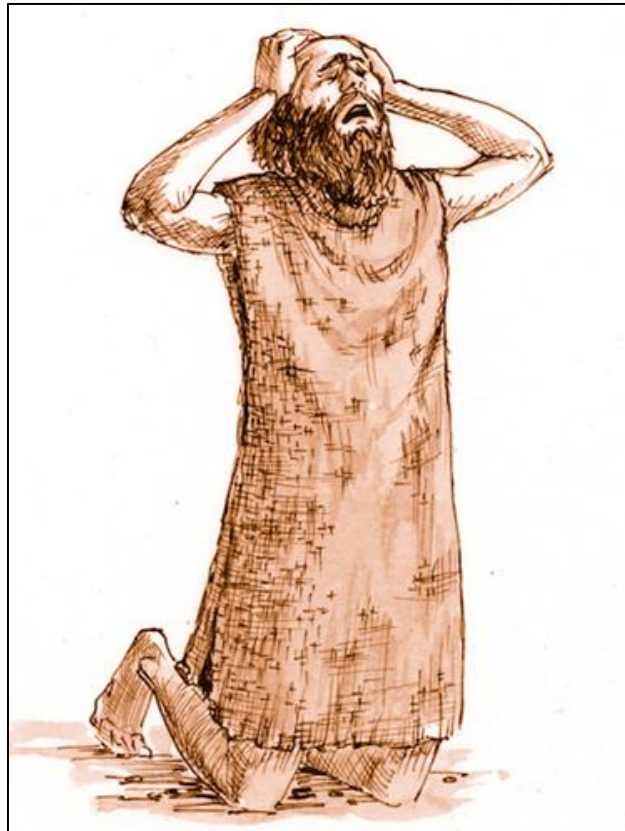


"Stomacher" (broad girdle) [Revivalclothing.com](http://Revivalclothing.com)

The stomacher was usually a sign or mark of a fine robe. [Alan Miner Personal Notes]

**2 Nephi 13:24 A Girding of Sackcloth:**

Anciently sackcloth was used in making sacks or bags. According to multiple internet bible websites, It was an extremely coarse, rough, and thick fabric, made of black goats' hair (see Isaiah 50:3; Revelation 6:12). It, was used also for making the rough garments used by mourners, which were in extreme cases worn next the skin. ( 1 Kings 21:27 ; 2 Kings 6:30 ; Job 16:15 ; Isaiah 32:11 ) The Old Testament gives no exact description of the garment, so its shape must be a matter of conjecture. It was perhaps worn loose and in some cases cinched around the hips with rope or a broad strip of sackcloth wrapped around the chest and abdomen ("sim be-motnayim," Gen. 37:34; "he'elah 'al motnayim," Amos 8:10) For insight into a girding of sackcloth compare Genesis 37:34; 2 Samuel 3:31, etc.; and for the adoption of the custom by women, see 2 Samuel 21:10; Joel 1:8.



Sackcloth covering

[smp.org](http://smp.org)

Sackcloth was furthermore a sign of submission (I Kings 20: 30-) which perhaps implies slavery and servitude in addition to mourning and poverty. [Alan Miner Personal Notes]



**2 Nephi 13:24 Burning Instead of Beauty:**

According to Barnes Notes on Isaiah 3:24 , the word translated as "burning" here does not occur elsewhere. It seems to denote "a brand, a mark burnt in, a stigma;" perhaps a sun-burned countenance, indicating exposure in the long and wearisome journey of a captivity over burning sands and beneath a scorching sun.

According to the Pulpit Commentary, similar to the cognate verb used in Proverbs 6:28; Isaiah 43:2, and the cognate noun used in Exodus 21:25, the " burning" intended in Isaiah 3:24 is probably branding by a barbarous enemy (see Herod., 7:233; 'Hist. Tamerlau.,' p. 320).

Note\* Perhaps this implies that these daughters of Zion will be forced to be out in the sun for long periods of time to do manual labor as servants or slaves. [Alan Miner Personal Notes]

**2 Nephi 13:26 And Her Gates Shall Lament and Mourn:**

According to Barnes' Notes on Isaiah 3:26, cities were surrounded with walls, and were entered through gates opening into the principal streets.



Ishtar Gate in Ancient Babylon

[chickenscratchbc.blogspot.com](http://chickenscratchbc.blogspot.com)

Those gates became, of course, the places of chief confluence and of business; and the expression here means, that in all the places of confluence, or amidst the assembled people, there should be lamentation on account of the slain in battle, and the loss of their mighty men in

war.

[God Vine [godvine.com/bible/Isaiah/3](http://godvine.com/bible/Isaiah/3) ]

### 2 Nephi 3:26 **And She Shall Sit Upon the Ground:**

Extreme sorrow and mourning is debilitating, affecting the ability to stand. Utnapishtim experienced this when he saw the destruction of his fellow human beings after the flood in the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic. He said: "Consequently I crouched, I sat down, I wept." The image is one of abject despair and defeat. [David W. Baker, Isaiah: Zondeervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, p. 24]

Clarke's Commentary on Isaiah 3:26 notes that the prophet Jeremiah (Lamentations 2:8) has given it the first place among many indications of sorrow, in the following elegant description of the same state of distress of his country:

"The elders of the daughter of Sion sit on the ground, they are silent: They have cast up dust on their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth; The virgins of Jerusalem have bowed down their heads to the ground."

## Chapter 14

### 2 Nephi 14:1 (**Position of Verse 1**):

According to Reynolds and Sjodahl, some scholars regard the first verse of this chapter (2 Nephi 14:1) as belonging to the preceding chapter. It might be well, therefore, to remember that the division of the Bible into chapters and verses is not part of the original arrangement of the sacred volume.

The present division of the Scriptures into chapters and verses . . . are not of divine origin, nor are they of great antiquity. The Vulgate was the first version divided into chapters: a work undertaken by cardinal Hugo in the 13th century, or as Jahn thinks, by Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, 1227. He introduced the division into chapters only. The Hebrew Scriptures were similarly divided by Mordecai Nathan in 1445, and in 1661 Athias added in his printed text the division into verses. The New Testament was divided in the same way by Robert Stephens, who is said to have completed it in the year 1551, during a journey from Paris to Lyons. As might be expected, these divisions are very imperfect, and even when not inaccurate, they tend to break the sense and to obscure the meaning. (*Bible Handbook*, by Dr. Joseph Angus, p. 60)

[George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 332]

### 2 Nephi 14:1 **Seven Women Shall Take Hold of One Man**:

So many men will be killed in the destructions and wars which accompany the Second Coming that there will be an incredible difference in the number of living males and females: “seven women” (meaning simply a lot of women) will request a man’s hand in marriage. Economic problems will be such that these women will be willing to provide their own food and clothing, contrary to the usual marriage customs. According to the Hebrew scriptures (Exodus 21:10), a man was required to provide a wife with food and clothing; but in this case Isaiah observes that the women are willing to waive that right. Having a good knowledge of the importance of marriage, they request a man to take away their reproach. In Isaiah’s day and, indeed, in many parts of the Near East today, it was and is a disgrace to remain unmarried.”

The culture of Isaiah, understandably, is reflected in the statement, ‘only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach.’ Anciently, a woman who could have no children was described with the unflattering adjective, “barren.” This was because great emphasis was placed on marriage and a woman’s ability to have children.

[Sidney Sperry, Book of Mormon Compendium, chapter 11, 2 Nephi 14]

### 2 Nephi 14:2 **The Branch of the Lord:**

According to Barnes' Notes on Isaiah 4:2:

The branch of the Lord - יהוה צמח yehovâh tsemach. "The sprout" of Yahweh. This expression, and this verse, have had a great variety of interpretations. The Septuagint reads it, 'In that day God shall shine in counsel with glory upon the earth, to exalt, and to glorify the remnant of Israel.' The Chaldee renders it, 'In that day, the Messiah of the Lord shall be for joy and glory, and the doers of the law for praise and honor to those of Israel who are delivered.' It is clear that the passage is designed to denote some signal blessing that was to succeed the calamity predicted in the previous verses. The only question is, to what has the prophet reference? The word 'branch' (צמח tsemach) is derived from the verb (צמח tsâmach) signifying "to sprout, to spring up," spoken of plants. Hence, the word "branch" means properly that which "shoots up," or "sprouts" from the root of a tree, or from a decayed tree; compare Job 14:7-9.

The Messiah is thus said to be 'a root of Jesse,' Romans 11:12; compare Isaiah 11:1, note; Isaiah 11:10, note; and 'the root and offspring of David,' Revelation 22:16, as being a "descendant" of Jesse; that is, as if Jesse should fall like an aged tree, yet the "root" would sprout up and live.

The word 'branch' occurs several times in the Old Testament, and in most, if not all, with express reference to the Messiah; Jeremiah 23:5 : 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign;' Jeremiah 33:15 : 'In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David;' Zechariah 3:8; Zechariah 6:12. In all these places, there can be no doubt that there is reference to him who was "to spring up" from David, as a sprout does from a decayed and fallen tree, and who is, therefore, called a "root," a "branch" of the royal stock. There is, besides, a special beauty in the figure.

[God Vine: Isaiah [godvine.com](http://godvine.com)]

### 2 Nephi 14:3 **Everyone That Is Written among the Living:**

The righteous followers of God are inscribed in a book of life. This idea is also known in Mesopotamian though, where instead of a book we read of "Tablets of Destiny." In the Babylonian wisdom Poem of the Righteous Sufferer, the sufferer in the end receives several blessing, including: "I was reckoned among the living."

[David W. Baker, Isaiah: Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, p. 24]

**2 Nephi 14:3 Everyone That is Written among the Living:**

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

In a literal sense, the *book of life*, or *Lamb's book of Life*, is the record kept in heaven which contains the names of the faithful and an account of their righteous covenants and deeds. (D & C 128:6-7; Psalm 69:28; Revelation 3:5; 21:27) The book of life is the book containing the names of those who shall inherit eternal life; it is the book of eternal life. (Daniel 12:104; Hebrews 12:23; D & C 76:68; 132:19)

It is "the book of the names of the sanctified, (D & C 88:2) Names of faithful saints are recorded in the book of life while they are yet in mortality. (Luke 10:20; Philip 4:3; Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 9).

But those names are blotted out in the event of wickedness (Revelation 132:8; 17:8; 22:19)

[Bruce R. McConkie, "Book of Life," in Mormon Doctrine, p. 97]

**2 Nephi 14:5 A Cloud and Smoke By Day and the Shining of a Flaming Fire By Night:**

One might be tempted to interpret this scripture figuratively if the literal events had not already taken place. When Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, he protected and guided them by means of a cloud of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night:

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to do by day and night." (Exodus 13:21).

"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night." (Exodus 14:19-20")



A cloud and smoke by day

[thetorahinhaiku.com](http://thetorahinhaiku.com)



A pillar of fire by night

[Raebear.net](http://Raebear.net)

## Chapter 15

### 2 Nephi 15: **Then Will I Sing . . . a Song of My Beloved, Touching His Vineyard:**

This song likens the house of Israel to a wine vineyard. The structure of this song is the same as the allegory of the olive tree found in Jacob 5. The servant is the prophet, Isaiah. The lord of the vineyard, spoken of as 'my well-beloved', is the Lord of Hosts. And the vineyard is the house of Israel. One difference is that the fruit of this vineyard is grapes and the fruit of the vineyard in the allegory of the olive-tree is olives. Doctrinally, the most important difference is that the song of the vineyard does not deal with the scattering and gathering of Israel as does the allegory of the olive tree. Rather, it explains why it is that the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were allowed to be destroyed—because of their wickedness, for when the lord came to his vineyard, 'he looked for judgment, and behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, a cry' (v. 7).

The Israelites had a yearly festival, at the end of their year, called the feast of ingathering (Ex. 23:16;34:22), because on that occasion the people were required to give thanks especially for the harvest of fields and vineyards. It has been suggested that this song, or poem, was composed and recited on such an occasion. It contains a parable in which Israel is represented as a vineyard (as in Is. 3:14), and the consequences of the neglect of unfaithful keepers. (Matt. 21:33–41) As a literary composition, no less than as a prophetic utterance, it is regarded as an outstanding piece of sacred reading."

[Reynolds and Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, vol. 1, p. 333]



2 Nephi 15:1-2 **A vineyard in a very fruitful hill (Illustration):** A large vineyard located between Jerusalem and Hebron. The Holy Land was celebrated for its wine cultivation, as evidenced by frequent reference to vineyards, grapes, and wine throughout the Old Testament. Isaiah 5:1-2 summarizes the work of preparing a vineyard, which involved making a winepress, frequently hewn from solid rock. Harvested grapes were eaten as fresh fruit, dried into raisins, or prepared and fermented for wine. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 8]

2 Nephi 15:2 **My Well-Beloved. . . Planted It With the Choicest Vine:**

The house of Israel became the covenant people of the Lord because of the faith of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ‘For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith’ (Romans 4:13). Abraham was favored of the Lord for his righteousness and faith. He could be considered ‘the choicest vine’ which the Lord planted in his vineyard, for Abraham was both choice and chosen (Abraham 3:23).

[[josephsmith.com.2Nephi](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)]

[Note\* The tribe of Joseph, the son of Jacob (Israel) was part of this “vine” and “went over the wall” to the Americas. ]

2 Nephi 15:2 **My Well-Beloved . . . Built a Tower in the Midst of It:**





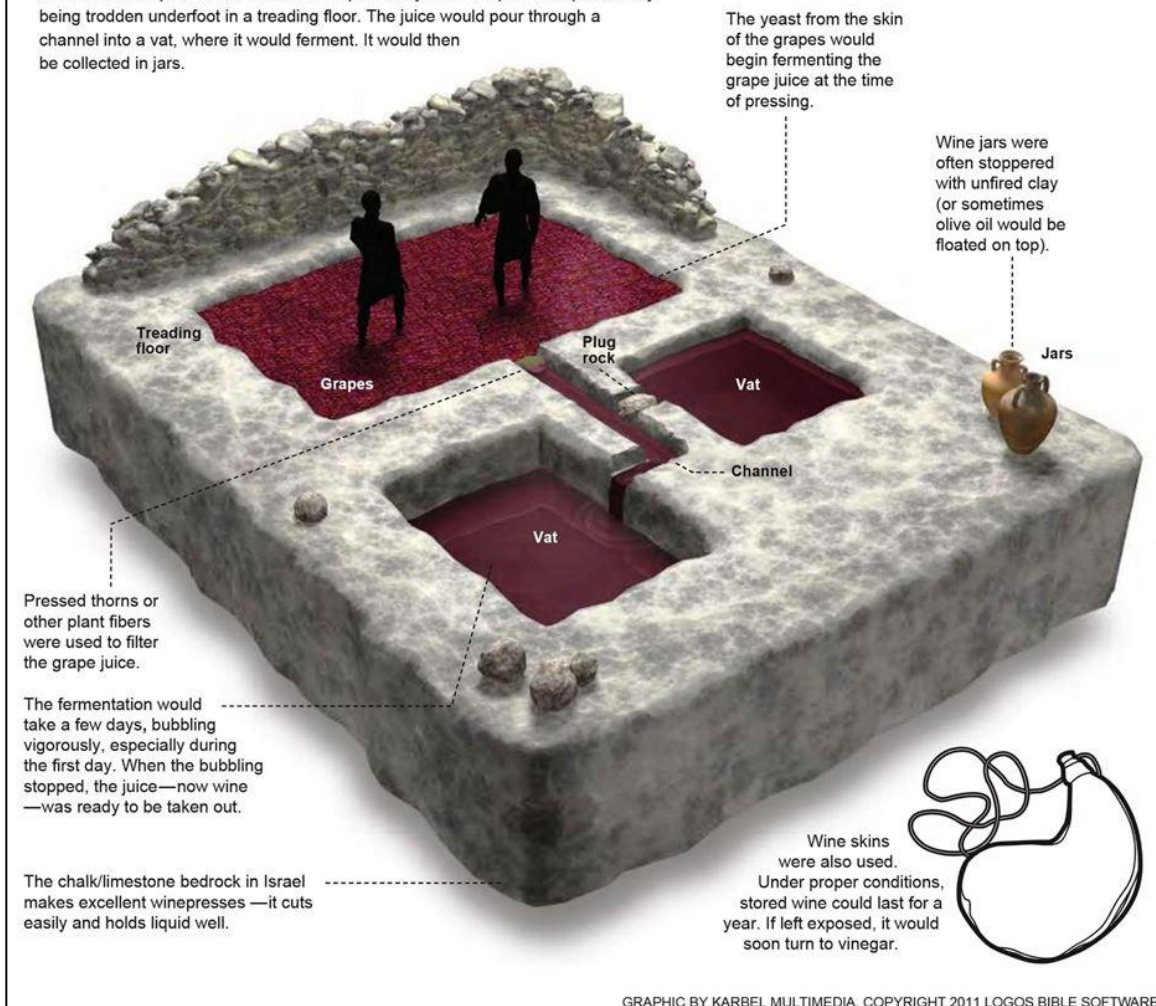
A tower in the midst of the vineyard

[emp.bui.edu](http://emp.bui.edu)

2 Nephi 15:2 **My Well-Beloved . . . Made a Winepress Therein:**

# A Winepress in Ancient Israel

An ancient winepress was a rock-hewn open-air system. Grapes were pressed by being trodden underfoot in a treading floor. The juice would pour through a channel into a vat, where it would ferment. It would then be collected in jars.



GRAPHIC BY KARBEL MULTIMEDIA, COPYRIGHT 2011 LOGOS BIBLE SOFTWARE

Ancient Wine Press

[community.logos.com](http://community.logos.com)

2 Nephi 15:1-2 **A winepress (Illustration- not shown):** An ancient winepress. After grapes were harvested, they were carried in baskets to a grape press. There, individuals trod on the grapes so that the juice flowed into a vat, where it was gathered into containers. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 8]

## 2 Nephi 15:4 **What Could Have Been Done More to My Vineyard?:**

The Lord laments that in spite of all his nurturing, tender care, and mercy, the vineyard continues to produce wild fruit. This is astonishing because the vine that was planted was

choice, the land was good, and the lord of the vineyard had done all he could do to produce good fruit.

The language of this verse is much like that in the allegory of the olive tree, 'What could I have done more for my vineyard?' (Jacob 5:41).

Significantly for the Nephites in the New World, the prophet Jeremiah, who was a contemporary with Lehi in the times before the fall of Jerusalem, prophesied in a similar fashion: "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" (Jeremiah 2:21).

[[josephsmith.com.2Nephi](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)]

#### 2 Nephi 15:5 ***I Will* Break down the Wall Thereof:**

Jeff Lindsay notes that the issue of Isaiah variants in the Book of Mormon is a complex and interesting topic now for scholars. They have found support for the Book of Mormon variants in other biblical texts. Franklin Harris writes:

In Isaiah 5:5 (2 Nephi 15:5) the Book of Mormon adds "I will" making the clause read "and I will break down the wall thereof." This reading is precisely that of the Septuagint which renders "and I will pull down its walls." (Franklin S. Harris, Jr., The Book of Mormon: Messages and Evidences, pp. 50-52)

[Quoted by Jeff Lindsay, "Did Joseph Smith Plagiarize from the King James Bible?," Book of Mormon Commentary, [www.jefflindsay.com](http://www.jefflindsay.com)]

#### 2 Nephi 15:8 **Wo unto Them That Join House to House:**

According to Hoyt Brewster, this woe is pronounced on the wealthy landowners who covet and buy up property, thus depriving the poor of their heritage. (See Micah 2:1-2). The law of ancient Israel prescribed that land could not "be sold for ever." (Leviticus 25:23; see also 1 Kings 21.) It was to remain within families as a heritage for posterity. When economical circumstances necessitated the sale of land, it was to be returned to the original owners in the year of Jubilee, which occurred every fifty years. (LDS Bible Dictionary, "Jubilee, Year of," p. 718) [ Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., Isaiah Plain & Simple, p. 46]

#### 2 Nephi 15:10 **Ten Acres of Vineyard Shall Yield One Bath, and the Seed of a Homer Shall Yield an Ephah:**

"Acre": The Israelite system of measuring area was fairly informal; the biblical text merely measures areas by describing how much land could be sown with a certain volume measure of seed, for example the amount of land able to be sown with 2 seahs of barley. The

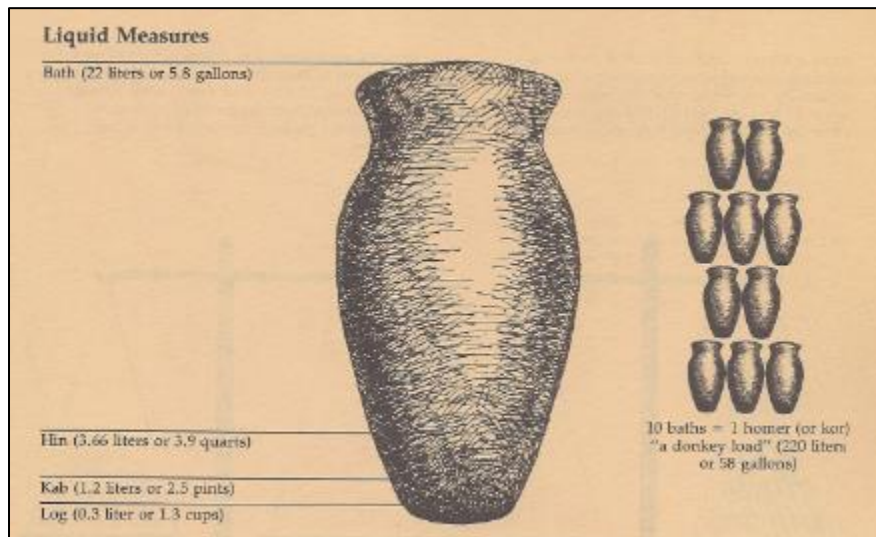
closest thing to a formal area unit was the yoke (Hebrew samed) (sometimes translated as acre), which referred to the amount of land that a pair of yoked oxen could plough in a single day; in Mesopotamia the standard estimate for this was 6480 square cubits, which is roughly equal to a third of an acre. (Wikipedia )

“Bath,” “Homer,” “Ephah”: Victor Ludlow writes:

This verse uses three unfamiliar measures, “bath,” “homer,” and “ephah.” In the Bible Dictionary, under “weights and measures,” we learn that a bath is a volume of liquid—approximately 8 ¼ gallons. An ephah is the dry equivalent to a bath, and a homer is ten times the amount of an ephah.

The significance in these verses is that the crops and land will be cursed so that they will produce much less than would be expected. In verse ten the seriousness of the desolation in the fields is demonstrated by the terms used. Ordinarily, a farmer would hope to get a thirty-, sixty-, or even a hundred-fold increase from the seed he planted. But instead he would only get one tenth back, because one homer of seed (equal to ten ephahs) would yield only one ephah of harvest. This is a unique type of “reverse tithing.” [Victor L. Ludlow, Unlocking the Old Testament, p. 149 ]

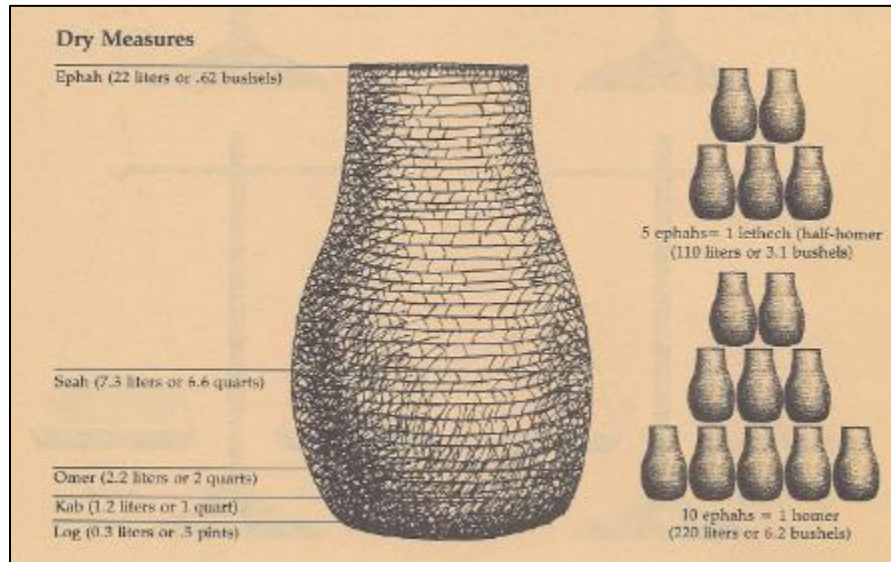
#### Liquid Measures



Bath = 22 liters or 5.8 gallons  
Hin = 3.66 liters or 3.9 quarts  
Kab = 1.2 liters or 2.5 pints  
Log = 0.3 liter or 1.3 cups

10 Baths = 1 Homer (or Kor – 220 liters or 58 gallons)  
A Kor was a “donkey load”

## Dry Measures



Ephah = 22 liters or .62 bushels  
 Seah = 7.3 liters or 6.6 quarts  
 Omer = 2.2 liters or 2 quarts  
 Kab = 1.2 liters or 1 quart  
 Log = 0.3 liters or .5 pints

5 Ephahs = 1 Lethech = .5 Homers = 3.1 bushels  
 10 Ephahs = 1 Homer = 6.2 bushels

2 Nephi 15:10 **Ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah**  
**(Illustration):** LDS Church Educational System, Old Testament: Student Manual Genesis—2 Samuel “Maps and Charts”]

2 Nephi 15:10 **Wo unto Them That Rise up Early in the Morning, That They May Follow Strong Drink:**

Under the Law of Moses, there were no proscriptions against wine or strong drink, but there are many Old Testament scriptures which warn against drunkenness and excess.



Ancient Wine Jugs

[vinepair.com](http://vinepair.com)

Symbolically, a nation that is unstable and “teetering on the edge” of covenant destruction is said to be “drunken.” This symbolism is shown in the Book of Mormon in the story of Nephi going back after the Brass Plates. He finds Laban, the caretaker of the records of the tribe of Joseph, “drunken,” and “fallen” in “darkness.” Nephi is then commanded to cut off Laban’s head, which is symbolic of the penalty for covenant disobedience.

[Alan Miner Personal Notes]

2 Nephi 15:11 **Strong drink . . . wine (Illustration – not shown):** A wineskin, probably made of goat skin, Qatzrin, an ancient village from the talmudic period (ca. A.D. 200-500). Wine was stored in earthenware jars or containers made from leather. Wine and strong drink were made during the Old Testament period and caused intoxication when abused. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham; Carrilyn Clarkson. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 46]

2 Nephi 15:12 **And the Harp . . . Viol . . . Tabret . . . Pipe . . . Are in Their Feasts:**

According to the Pulpit Commentary, it is difficult to identify the Hebrew instruments of music with modern names; but there seems to be no doubt that the kinnor was a sort of harp, and the khalib a sort of pipe. The nebel, generally rendered by "psaltery," but here in Isaiah 5:12 and in Isaiah 14:11 by "viol," was a stringed instrument played with the fingers (Josephus); perhaps a lyre, perhaps a sort of dulcimer. The toph, here in Isaiah 5:12 translated "tabret," and elsewhere often "timbrel," was most likely a tambourine.

All four instruments had in the earlier times been dedicated to the worship of Jehovah (1 Samuel 10:5); now they were employed to inflame men's passions at feasts. “They regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.” (Isaiah 5:12) The "work of Jehovah" is his manifestation of himself in history, more especially in the history of his chosen

people (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 92:4; Psalm 111:3, etc.). A pious Israelite was ever marveling at all that God had done for his nation (Deuteronomy 32:7-14; Joshua 24:2-13; 1 Chronicles 16:12-22; Ezra 9:7-9; Nehemiah 9:7-31; Psalm 68:7-28; Psalm 78:10-72; Psalm 105:5-45; Psalm 106:7-46; Psalm 136:5-24, etc.). The men of Isaiah's generation had ceased to care for things of the past, and devoted themselves to enjoying the present. "Neither consider", etc. (compare Isaiah 1:3, "My people doth not consider"). The verb used is not, however, the same in the Hebrew.

[Bible Hub [biblehub.com/Isaiah](http://biblehub.com/Isaiah)]



Egyptian Music and Dance

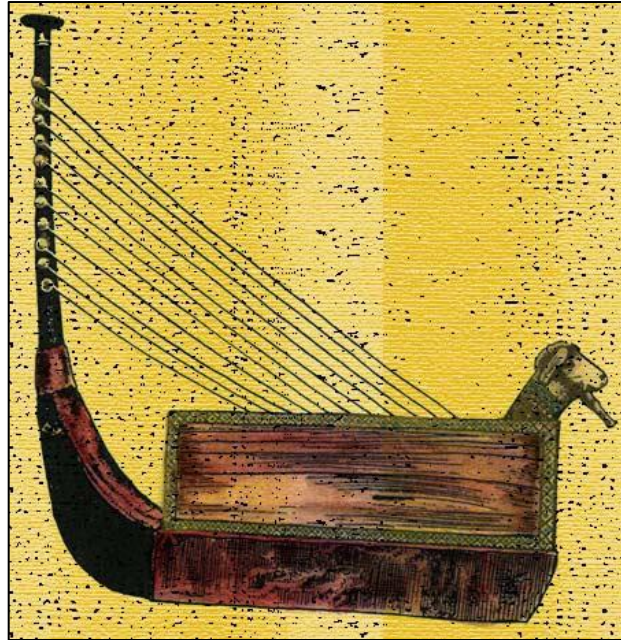
[acs.psu.edu](http://acs.psu.edu)

## 2 Nephi 15:12 **The Harp:**

According to Barnes' Notes, the harp is a well-known stringed instrument, employed commonly in sacred music. It is often mentioned as having been used to express the pious feelings of David; Psalm 32:2; Psalm 43:4; Psalm 49:5. It is early mentioned as having been invented by Jubal; Genesis 4:21. It is supposed usually to have had ten strings (Josephus, "Ant." B. x. ch. xii. Section 3). It was played by the hand; 1 Samuel 16:23; 1 Samuel 18:9. The "root" of the word is unknown. The word "kinnor" is used in all the languages cognate to the Hebrew, and is recognized even in the Persian. It is probable that the instrument here referred to was common in all the oriental nations, as it seems to have been known before the Flood, and of course the knowledge of it would be extended far.

This instrument was employed by David to drive away the melancholy of Saul 1 Samuel 16:16-22, and is the instrument usually employed to celebrate the praises of God; Psalm 33:1-2; Psalm 43:4; Psalm 49:5; Psalm 71:22-23. The harp was used on sacred occasions.

[[bibleapps.com](http://bibleapps.com)]



Ancient Harp

[bible-history.com](http://bible-history.com)



2 Nephi 15:12 **The harp (Illustration):** A man in biblical costume plays a harp. Many musical instruments, including the harp, are mentioned in the Bible. The harp was used in the temple and during various festivities. The harp was made of wood, perhaps cypress or almug, and its strings consisted of stretched and



dried sheep gut. Photograph by Mindy Anderson. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 47]

### 2 Nephi 15:12 **The Viol:**

According to the Barnes' Notes on Isaiah, the word for "viol" (nebel) is derived from the Greek word nabla, and the Latin nablum and nabla. But it is not very easy to form a correct idea of this instrument. The derivation would lead us to suppose that it was something in the shape of a "bottle," and it is probable that it had a form in the shape of a leather bottle, such as is used in the East, or at least a vessel in which wine was preserved; (1 Samuel 10:3; 1 Samuel 25:18; 2 Samuel 16:1.)

It was at first made of fir; afterward it was made of the almug tree, and occasionally it seems to have been made of metal; 2 Samuel 6:5; 1 Chronicles 13:8. The external parts of the instrument were of wood, over which strings were drawn in various ways. Josephus says it had twelve strings (Josephus "Ant." B. viii. ch. x.) Josephus says also that it was played with the fingers. - "Ibid." Hesychius and Pollux reckon it among stringed instruments. The resonance had its origin in the vessel or the bottom part of the instrument, upon which the strings were drawn. According to Ovid, this instrument was played on with both hands.

[[bibleapps.com/commentaries/isaiah/5](http://bibleapps.com/commentaries/isaiah/5) ]

### 2 Nephi 15:12 **The Tabret:**

A "tabret " (Heb. toph), is a tambourine, generally played by women ( Genesis 31:27 ; 1 Samuel 10:5 ; 18:6 ). [ [biblestudytools.com/dictionary/tabret](http://biblestudytools.com/dictionary/tabret) ]



"Tabrets" (Tambourines) [Godsoutreachministerint.org](http://Godsoutreachministerint.org)

2 Nephi 15:12 **The tambourine (Illustration-not shown):** Tambourine at the marketplace, Old City,

Jerusalem. The tambourine mentioned in the Bible was a hand held percussion instrument covered with a membrane. It was used to accompany singing and dancing at festive occasions. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 47]

### 2 Nephi 15:12 **The Pipe:**

A "pipe" is a flute. The word comes from a Hebrew root "to bore through"; or else, "to dance" (compare Job 21:11-15).

The word "pipe" ( 1 Samuel 10:5 ; 1 Kings 1:40 ; Isaiah 5:12 ; 30:29 ) comes from the Hebrew word halil. It means "bored through," and is the name given to various kinds of wind instruments, as the fife, flute, Pan-pipes, etc. In Amos 6:5 this word is rendered "instrument of music." This instrument is mentioned also in the New Testament ( Matthew 11:17 ; 1 Corinthians 14:7 ). It is still used in Palestine, and is, as in ancient times, made of different materials, as reed, copper, bronze, etc.



Ancient Egyptian Flutes [egyptianjewelryshops.com](http://egyptianjewelryshops.com)



Ancient Pan Pipe [eloradana.com.ar](http://eloradana.com.ar)

### 2 Ne 15:18 **Wo unto Them That Draw Iniquity with Cords of Vanity:**

In Isaiah 5:8-23 there are some "woes" pronounced upon those who set their hearts on the wealth of the world. In Isaiah 5:18 we come to the third "woe," which is pronounced against those who openly pile up sin upon sin, and scoff at God. These men are represented as "drawing iniquity with cords of vanity." In essence, they are symbolically dragging after them a load of sin by cords that seem too weak. They are also said to be "sinning with a cart-rope," which is a mere variant expression of the same idea of dragging a whole cart load of sins behind them.



"They draw sin . . . with a cart rope"

[thinkstockphotos.com](https://www.thinkstockphotos.com)

A parallel metaphor is: "Undo the rope of sin." [Bible Hub [biblehub.com/isaiah/5](https://biblehub.com/isaiah/5) ]

Brent Top writes: "Isaiah condemned those who think they can give up one sin and yet cling tenaciously to others." 'Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope' (Isaiah 5:18). These wicked men would cut the 'cords of vanity' and let go of a favorite sin, casting it off from their cart-- a sin here and there-- rather than just letting go of the rope and leaving the whole cart of sin behind. [Brent L. Top, [A Peculiar Treasure](#), p. 160 ]

## 2 Ne 15:19 **Let Him Make Speed, Hasten His Work, That We May See It:**

Similar to a number of Isaiah verses, this statement is a bit difficult to understand. First we must realize that the people described in this verse are the wicked people described in verse 18, that can't let go of their sins. In that sinful state, they have no real interest in the work and the counsel of the Holy One of Israel. They just want to divert the focus of attention from their sinful state to something else. And thus they are what has been termed "sign seekers."

These "sign seekers" contemptuously challenge the Lord or His Prophet: "Let him make speed, hasten his work, that we may see it." In other words, they are just mocking the Lord, much as Satan did when he tempted Christ to perform miracles—to make bread out of stones, or to throw himself off the top of temple so that angels would save him. In reality it wouldn't have mattered to Satan or to these wicked people if a miracle was performed. They would just

rationalize away whatever “sign” was given to them and continue in their wicked ways. Of these the Lord has said, ‘A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign’ (Matthew 16:4).

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]

## 2 Nephi 15:25 **Therefore, Is the Anger of the Lord Kindled against His People**

Is anger ever justified? Can God be “angry”? The Scriptures say he can. For instance, Num. 25:4; 32:14; Deut. 21:20, and many other passages. The question is similar to another: ‘Can God hear?’ Or ‘see?’ The Psalmist answers that query by propounding another: ‘He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not correct?’ (Psalm 94:9, 10) May we not continue and ask: ‘He that made his children sensitive to the injustice and sufferings of fellow beings, shall he be immovable, himself as a cold marble statue?’ That is unthinkable. The Scriptures speak not only of his wrath, but of his ‘fierce wrath.’ However, they also give us to understand that,

‘His anger endureth but a moment,  
But his favor all our life:  
There may be weeping in the evening,  
But in the morning there is joy.’ -Psalm 30:6.”

[Reynolds and Sjodahl, [Commentary on the Book of Mormon](#), vol. 1, pp. 336-337]

## 2 Nephi 15:25 **Their Carcasses Were Torn in the Midst of the Streets:**

During the destruction of Jerusalem ~ 70 AD, the Romans laid siege to the city, while the inhabitants languished with famine. Assured that the starving Jews would not be able to put up a fight, the Roman soldiers attacked the city.

“...when they went in numbers into the lanes of the city with their swords drawn, they slew those whom they overtook without and set fire to the houses whither the Jews were fled, and burnt every soul in them, and laid waste a great many of the rest; and when they were come to the houses to plunder them, they found in them entire families of dead men, and the upper rooms full of dead corpses, that is, of such as died by the famine; they then stood in a horror at this sight, and went out without touching any thing. But although they had this commiseration for such as were destroyed in that manner, yet had they not the same for those that were still alive, but they ran every one through whom they met with, and obstructed the very lanes with their dead bodies, and made the whole city run down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood.” (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book VI, 8:5)

2 Ne 15:26 he will lift up an ensign to the nations

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

“Many ancient prophecies foretold that in the last days the Lord would set up an ensign to the nations, a standard to which Israel and the righteous of all nations might gather. (Isa. 5:26; 11:10-12; 18:3; 30:17-26; 31:9; 49:22; 62:10; Zech. 9:16.) This ensign is the new and everlasting covenant, the gospel of salvation (D. & C. 49:9); it is the great latter-day Zion (D. & C. 64:41-43); it is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”  
[Mormon Doctrine, p. 228

2 Nephi 15:26-29 **They Shall Come With Speed Swiftly . . . None shall slumber nor sleep . . . Their**

**Horses’ Hoofs . . . Like Flint . . . Their Wheels Like a Whirlwind:**

LeGrand Richards writes:

“Since there were no such things as trains and airplanes in that day, Isaiah could hardly have mentioned them by name, but he seems to have described them in unmistakable words. How better could ‘their horses’ hoofs be counted like flint, and their wheel like a whirlwind’ than in the modern train? How better could ‘Their roaring...be like a lion’ than in the roar of the airplane? Trains and airplanes do not stop for night. Therefore, was not Isaiah justified in saying ‘none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken’? With this manner of transportation the Lord can really ‘hiss unto them from the end of the earth,’ that ‘they shall come with speed swiftly.’ (A Marvelous Work and a Wonder, p. 236)



“Hoofs like flint” (railroad car wheels)

[article.wn.com](http://article.wn.com)



“Wheels like a whirlwind” (Jet vapors)

[rollingatsushix.com](http://rollingatsushix.com)

“Isaiah saw many other things in connection with this gathering. He saw that the Lord would gather Israel quickly and with speed, that they would not even have time to loosen the shoe latches of their shoes, or to slumber or sleep. (See Isa. 5:27) Imagine a statement like that way back in the days of Isaiah, thousands of years ago, with their means of transportation at that time!” (Ensign, Nov. 1975, p. 50 )

#### 2 Nephi 15:30 **Like the Roaring of the Sea:**

This verse is not easy to understand as it is written. If we paraphrase this verse, and take some liberties based on other scriptures, the meaning is more clear, “And in that day when Zion

is established in great power and glory they (the inhabitants of Zion) shall roar against them (their enemies) like the roaring of the sea; and if they (their enemies) look unto their own land, behold, darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof. But if they look unto the land of Zion, behold, great light and joy, and the saints are protected by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.” (See DC 45:70, Moses 7:17, 61, 2 Ne. 14:5)

[[josephsmith.com/isaiah](http://josephsmith.com/isaiah) ]



Crashing sea waves in the Mediterranean

[carny.hubpages.com](http://carny.hubpages.com)

2 Nephi 15:30 **Like the roaring of the sea (Illustration – not shown):** The roaring waves of the Mediterranean Sea, near Akko. In the Old Testament, the Mediterranean Sea is called the Great Sea because of its great size compared to the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. It is also called the Western Sea because it lies west of the Holy Land. It stretches west from the coastline approximately 2100 miles to Gibraltar. Biblical coastal cities on its shores included Sidon, Tyre, Akko, Joppa, Ashdod, and Ashkelon. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 101]

## Notes

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- i. Geoffrey Bibby, *Looking for Dilmun* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 221.
- ii. Tosi, p. 105.
- iii. Flavius Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* 1:170-206; Philo *Somn.* 2:193; *Abraham* 227, 228. See also the *Dead Sea Scrolls* (1QapGen 21:5ff.; 21:23-22:25); as well as many apocryphal works.
- iv. William Foxwell Albright, "The Jordan Valley in the Bronze Age," *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 6:13-74; R. E. Baney, *The Search for Sodom and Gomorrah* (Kansas City, Mo.: CAM, 1962).
- v. Interview with Bryant Wood cited in Randall Price, *The Stones Cry Out* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1997), pp. 117-18.
- vi. It should be noted that these dates are about four hundred years too early to be contemporary with Abraham. Whether they will yield a later dating remains to be seen, but for the moment they are a problem either for equating them with the five cities of the plain or for their being contemporary events with the patriarch Abraham.