

2 Nephi

Chapter 16

2 Nephi 16:1 **In the Year That King Uzziah Died:**

Uzziah, also called Azariah (2 Kings 15:1), was the son of Amaziah. He was the ninth king of Judah and ascended the throne in Jerusalem at the age of sixteen years. He reigned between the years 810 and 759 B.C. It is said of him that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord in the early part of his government, as long as he followed the counsel of Zechariah, the prophet. (2 Chron. 26) But later in life, pride inspired him to attempt to usurp the prerogatives of the priesthood. He went into the temple and insisted on burning incense on the altar. When he defied the High Priest Azariah and his assistants, he was stricken with leprosy, and remained a sufferer of that loathsome affliction until his death. Jotham, his son, succeeded him on the throne. Isaiah was called to the prophetic office during the last year of the life of Uzziah in his exclusion from family, friends and society.

[Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 338.]

2 Nephi 16:1 **I Saw Also the Lord Sitting upon a Throne:**

Earlier, Nephi had remarked that he, Jacob and Isaiah had all seen their redeemer (2 Ne 11:2-3). Here we see that Isaiah was given the privilege of seeing the throne of God. This is a helpful scripture if one is faced with the common Christian doctrine that man cannot see the face of God. This is based on erroneous interpretations of the passage in John, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him' (Jn 1:18). The Joseph Smith translation makes a condition on this all exclusive statement, adding, 'except he hath borne record of the Son.' Later in John's record we get another, less exclusive statement, 'Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father' (Jn 6:46).

In the Old Testament, there is ample evidence that the righteous saw God. Seventy of the elders of Israel were privileged to see God, 'And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness' (Ex 24:10). Moses spoke with the Lord, 'face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend' (Ex 33:11). In this instance, it is apparent that Isaiah also was given the same privilege, 'for mine eyes have seen the King' (v. 5). Modern scripture helps us understand that this is only possible if one has become sufficiently purified and has exhibited sufficient faith. See DC 88:68, DC 93:1, and DC 97:16.

[josephsmith.com]

2 Nephi 16:1 His Train Filled the Temple:

According to *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*,

The “train” answers to the skirts of the glory of the Lord, who clothes Himself with light as with a garment (Exodus 33:22-23). It is noticeable (1) that the versions (LXX., Targum, Vulg.) suppress the train, apparently as being too anthropomorphic, and (2) that to the mind of St. John this was a vision of the glory of the Christ (John 12:41).

According to *Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*, "his train" may denote the effects of Christ's kingly and priestly offices, with which the Church was filled upon his exaltation.

www.biblehub.com/commentaries

2 Nephi 16:2 Above It Stood the Seraphims: Each One Had Six Wings:

In Isaiah 6:2 we find that: “Above [the throne] stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.”



Isaiah Seraphim

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

Seraphim are angels. As Isaiah explains, they have six wings and their privilege is to attend the throne of God and sing praises to His name. The following quotes help us understand the beings around the throne of God. Elder McConkie explains the term seraphim and Joseph Smith explains the other varied beasts which attend the throne of God.

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

“Seraphs are angels who reside in the presence of God, giving continual glory, honor, and adoration to him. ‘Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.’ (Ps. 148:2.) It is clear that seraphs include the unembodied spirits of pre-existence, for our Lord ‘looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made.’ (D. & C. 38:1.) Whether the name seraphs also applies to perfected and resurrected angels is not clear. While petitioning on behalf of the saints, the Prophet prayed that ‘we may mingle our voices with those bright, shining seraphs around thy throne, with acclamations of praise, singing Hosanna to God and the Lamb!’ (D. & C. 109:79.)

“In Hebrew the plural of seraph is seraphim or, as incorrectly recorded in the King James Version of the Bible, seraphims. Isaiah saw seraphim in vision and heard them cry one to another, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’ (Inspired Version, Isa. 6:1-8.) The fact that these holy beings were shown to him as having wings was simply to symbolize their ‘power, to move, to act, etc.’ as was the case also in visions others had received. (D. & C. 77:4.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 702-3.)

Joseph Smith remarked:

“John saw curious looking beasts in heaven; he saw every creature that was in heaven, - all the beasts, fowls and fish in heaven, - actually there, giving glory to God. How do you prove it? (See Rev. 5:13.) ‘And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.’

“I suppose John saw beings there of a thousand forms, that had been saved from ten thousand times ten thousand earths like this, — strange beasts of which we have no conception: all might be seen in heaven. The grand secret was to show John what there was in heaven. John learned that God glorified Himself by saving all that His hands had made, whether beasts, fowls, fishes or men; and He will glorify Himself with them.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 291.)

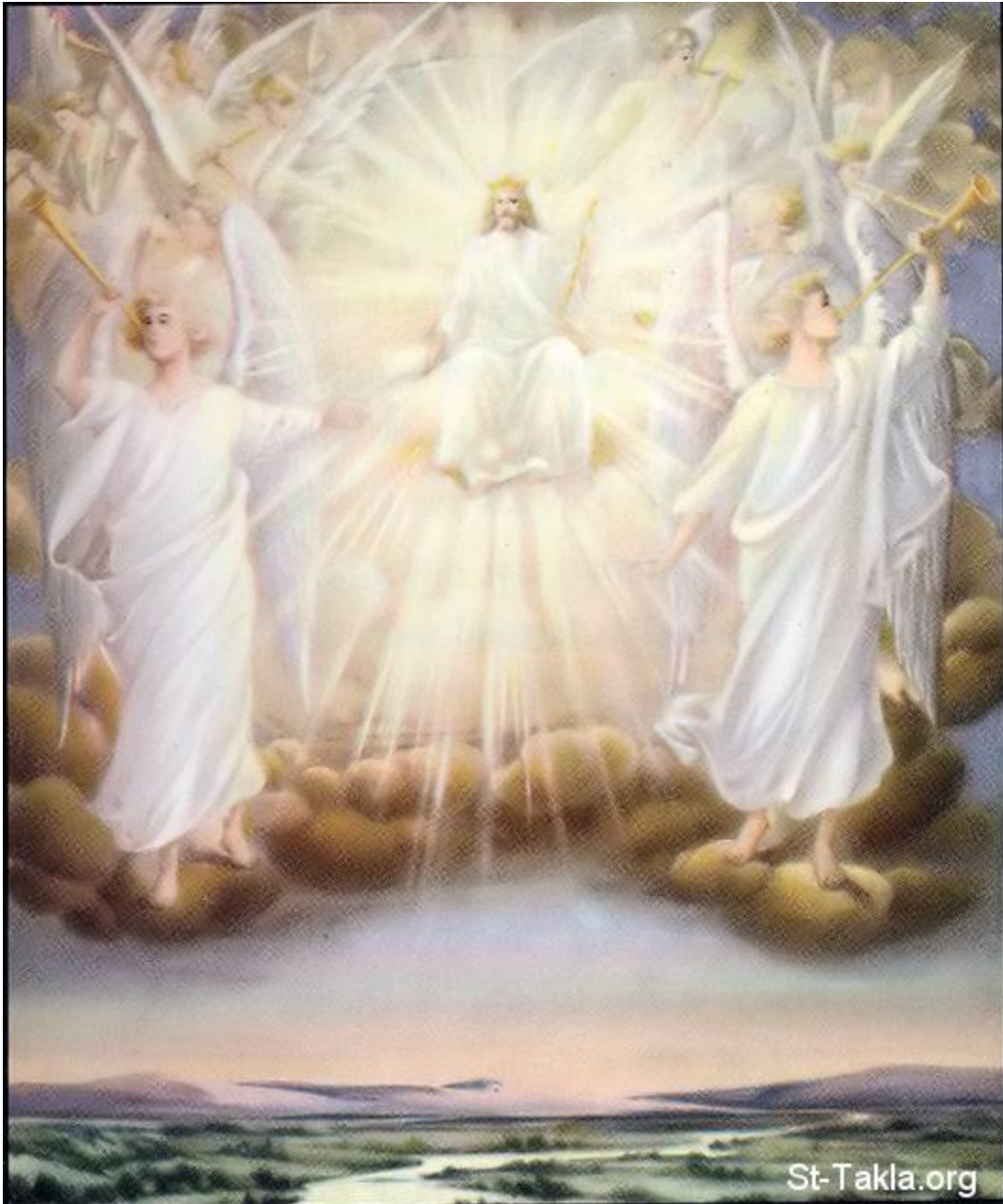
[josephsmith.com]

2 Nephi 16:4 **The Posts of the Door Moved:**

According to Michael King, at the beginning of his ministry, Isaiah was taken to the temple

to meet the Lord and receive his commission to teach the people. Much of the imagery used by Isaiah reflects an intimate understanding of the ceremony and symbolisms of the tabernacle as well as of latter-day temples. Isaiah uses this understanding to teach the ordinances of the temple that are necessary so that God may fulfill his covenant with members of the house of Israel and provide them a way to return to him.

Isaiah "saw the Lord sitting upon a throne" surrounded by seraphim, or cherubim.



God on his throne

patcegan.wordpress.com

As "the posts of the door moved," Isaiah became self-conscious and felt unworthy to enter into the Lord's presence. Isaiah no doubt had an understanding of the tabernacle and knew that only the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, or presence of the Lord. As the high priest approached the entrance of the Holy of Holies, he encountered the veil, on which were embroidered cherubim, which symbolized sentinels to guard the way into the presence of God.



the-scarlet-thread.com

In order to enter, the priest would strike the posts with blood from an animal that had been slain as atonement for the sins of the people.¹ Perhaps this was what Isaiah witnessed [for himself] as he described the posts of the door moving. He realized that he was being invited to enter into the presence of the Lord. It is no wonder that he would exclaim, "Woe is me! for I am undone. . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah 6:5).

[Michael L. King, "Isaiah's Vision of God's Plan to Fulfill His Covenant," in *Covenants Prophecies and Hymns of the Old Testament*, pp. 169.]

2 Nephi 16:6 **A Live-Coal:**

In Isaiah's account, one of God's angels touched his lips (or his means of communication) with "live coal."



Isaiah and the Seraphim with the live coal

gorepent.com

According to Hoyt Brewster, the "live coal" (2 Nephi 16:6) was a symbol of God's cleansing power. Through its touch, Isaiah's sins were "purged" and he was sanctified to perform God's work. . . . The Hebrew word for "live coal" is *ritzpah*, translated as a "**glowing (incandescent) stone.**" (See *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, 131) [Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Isaiah Plain & Simple*, p. 46]

Note* Could this "live coal" be more properly termed a personal seer stone or "Urim & Thummim" by which we are able to see and communicate spiritual understanding? (Alan Miner, Personal Notes)



Personal seer stone?

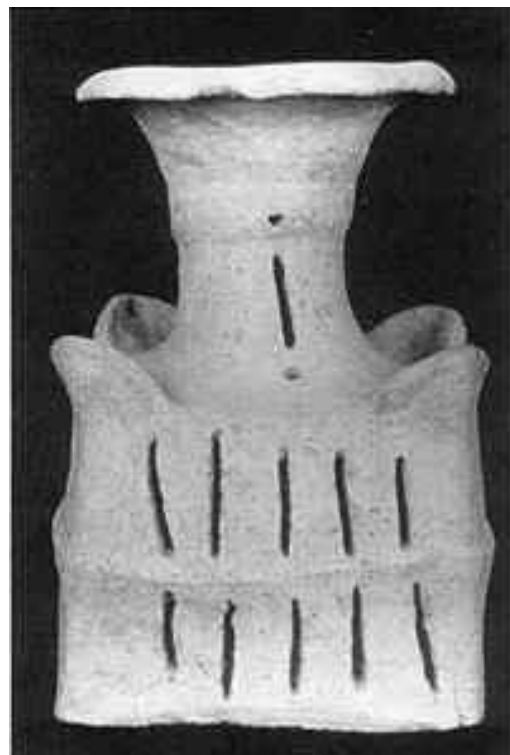
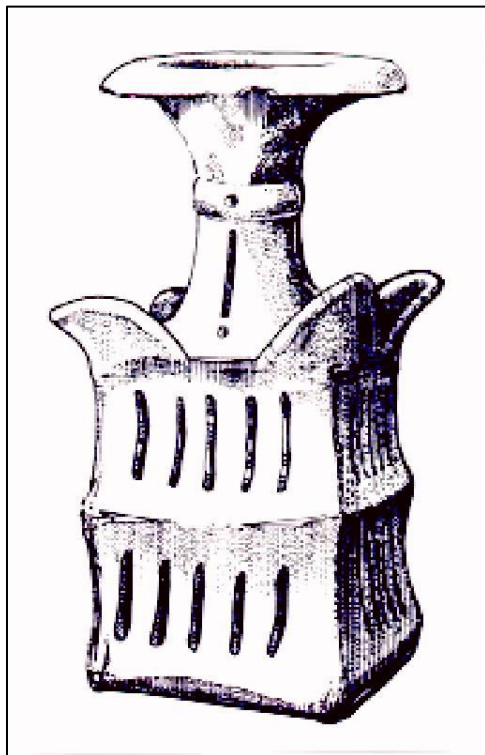
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2 Nephi 16:6 **Taken With Tongs from off the Altar:**



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2 Nephi 16:6 **Taken with tongs from off the altar (Illustration):** Canaanite horned altar or incense burner from Megiddo in ancient Palestine (c. 1900 B.C.) in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem. This distinctive style of altar was also used by the Israelites (see Leviticus 4:7; 1 Kings 1:50; 2:28). Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett. [Daniel Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, p. 188.]



2 Nephi 16:6 **Taken with tongs from off the altar (Illustration):** Left: Four-horned incense burner from Monte Alban Period I (Southern Mexico)] This illustration shows the similarity in style with the four-horned Hebrew altars. [Joseph Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, p. 88.] Right: Incense burner from Monte Alban lightplanet.com]

2 Nephi 16:7 **This Has Touched Thy Lips; and Thine Iniquity Is Taken Away:**

According to David Bokovoy, in the process of cleansing Isaiah so that he could leave behind the impurities of his people and receive introduction into the assembly, one of the seraphim purified Isaiah's mouth with a live coal taken directly from the celestial altar (Isaiah 6:6-7). Isaiah could now fully participate with the heavenly host in offering praises to the Lord. He had become a member of the heavenly court. In the ancient Near East, mouth cleansing rituals held considerable significance.ⁱⁱ In Mesopotamian ritual prayers, for example, mouth purification symbolized total and complete purity. A biblical scholar Victor Horowitz has noted, "A large portion of the [Mesopotamian] sources . . . raise the possibility that the washing of the mouth or the purity of the mouth has independent significance as a characteristic granting or symbolizing special divine or quasi-divine status to the person or object so designated. The pure mouth enables the person or object to stand before the gods or to enter the divine realm, or symbolizes a divine status."ⁱⁱⁱ

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

2 Nephi 16:8 **Whom Shall I Send, and Who Will Go For Us?:**

Isaiah is often used in his own prophecies as a type for Christ. This is an excellent example. Obviously, the phrase, 'whom shall I send,' has reference to the discussion had in the beginning when the Savior was chosen to be the Redeemer of the world. The Pearl of Great Price teaches this doctrine:

'And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered [like unto Lucifer] and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first.

And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him.' (Abraham 3:27-8; see also Moses 4:1-4))

When considering Isaiah as the one who said, Here am I; send me, we must understand that Isaiah was volunteering for the mission of preaching to the house of Israel. His mission was a type for Christ. His people were like those of Christ's day—they had ears but were spiritually deaf, and they had eyes but were spiritually blind.

[josephsmith.com/Isaiah]

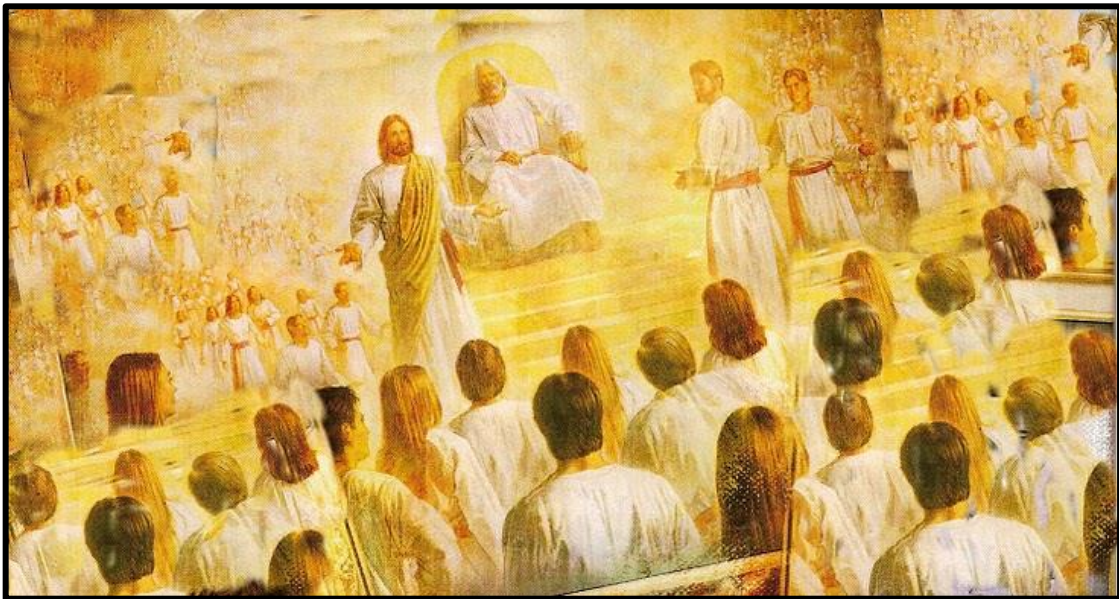
2 Nephi 16:8 **Whom Shall I Send . . . Here Am I; Send Me:**

David Bokovoy writes that due to the Savior's centrality in the plan of salvation, the Book

of Mormon teaches that "all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world . . . are the typifying of [Christ]: (2 Nephi 11:4). This declaration demonstrates one of the roles that prophets such as Isaiah fulfill. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained:

No doubt there are many events in the lives of many prophets that set those righteous persons apart as types and shadows of their Messiah. It is wholesome and proper to look for similitudes of Christ everywhere and to use them repeatedly in keeping him and his laws uppermost in our minds.^{iv}

From this observation we learn that many of the events that occur in a prophetic life are meant to serve as typology of the Savior. Isaiah's commission to the service of God symbolized the election of Jehovah, the premortal Messiah, as our Lord and Savior. The details of Isaiah's vision suggest the he, like many other visionaries from the ancient Near East, received an invitation to attend a meeting of the heavenly council. Ancient texts from the world of the Bible reveal that the people of the Near East believed in a heavenly council or divine assembly that governed the affairs of the universe.



Heavenly Council

lifebeforelife.org

From Abraham's description of these events, we learn that the Lord needed a savior to resolve the crisis that would occur as a result of humanity's mortal existence. In this grand assembly, the Lord petitioned his council with the question, "Whom shall I send?" (Abraham 3:27).

Like Jehovah before him, Isaiah was addressed by the leader of the assembly with the perennial question, "Whom shall I send?" (2 Nephi 16:8; Isaiah 6:8). Then, with the very words used by Jehovah, the creator of the universe, Isaiah responded with the proposal, "Here am I; send me" (v. 8). This response, first articulated by Jehovah in the premortal council, is often connected with the calling of the Lord's anointed.^v

The exact verbal exchange between God, Jehovah, and Isaiah during the meetings of the divine assembly parallels statements recently discovered in cuneiform tablets from Mesopotamia. An analysis of these tablets reveals that the details pertaining to Isaiah's vision, as well as those featured in the book of Abraham, reflect a well-established pattern in antiquity. In Akkadian, the language of ancient Babylon and Assyria, the phrase *mannam luspur*, or "Whom shall I send," occurs in a number of documents.

For the people of the Near East, the divine assembly described by Isaiah represented the ultimate authority in the universe. The discovery of several cuneiform tablets from Ugarit and Mesopotamia has allowed scholars to retrace the central features of this institution.^{vi}



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A comparative analysis of these traditions suggests several motifs as commonly featured elements in the tales of the assembly. These stories often include the following scenario: first, a crisis would occur; this crisis would then force the high god to call upon the council for volunteers to resolve the dilemma; various proposals would then be considered; when at last, all hope for resolution seemed lost, a winning suggestion was made and a savior commissioned.^{vii}

[David E. Bokovoy, "The Calling of Isaiah," in *Covenants Prophecies and Hymns of the Old Testament*, pp. 129-136]

2 Nephi 16:9 [Isaiah Told the People] Hear Ye Indeed, but They Understood Not:

According to Donald Parry and John Welch, Isaiah was specifically commanded by the Lord to speak precisely in such a way that his recalcitrant audience would "hear . . . but understand *not*"

and would "see . . . but perceive *not*" (2 Nephi 16:9). God wanted Isaiah to tell the people enough to warn them, but not to tell them enough to let them comprehend what was really going on (see 2 Nephi 16:10-11). Isaiah carried out this assignment masterfully, making it hard for almost everyone to understand what he was talking about. Then how can Isaiah best be taught and understood? The answer is the Book of Mormon itself.

The use of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon is not a shallow or superficial importing of extraneous material into an illogical context. In each case, it is clear that the Book of Mormon teachers were intimately, deeply, and profoundly immersed in the meanings of these Isaiah texts. If modern readers can only understand why and how Nephi, Jacob, Abinadi, and Jesus interpreted and used Isaiah, the insights in the Book of Mormon will do much to clarify what the Isaiah chapters are all about. Intriguingly, Nephi rejoiced in the "plainness" of Isaiah (2 Nephi 2 Nephi 25:4) and knew that Isaiah possessed great knowledge of the Messiah, for he had seen the Redeemer as had Nephi (see 2 Nephi 11:2). By using Nephi, his fellow prophets, and the words of Christ as our guide, hopefully the writings of Isaiah can become plainer and simpler to us. [Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch, "Introduction," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, pp. vii-viii.]

2 Nephi 16:10 **Heart . . . Ears . . . Eyes:**

It is interesting to note that all of the phrases in 2 Nephi 16:10, such as "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes--lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart," are culturally applicable to the process of making a people accountable -- see Galatians 6:7, and Revelations 20:12.

It is interesting that these phrases are listed in a chiastic style of Hebrew parallelism:

- A. Make the heart of this people fat,
- B. and make their ears heavy,
- C. and shut their eyes--
- C' lest they see with their eyes,
- B' and hear with their ears,
- A' and understand with their heart,

In Galatians 6:7 we find the following covenant related statement:

"Be not deceived; **for] God is not mocked:** for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

In Revelation 20:12 we find:

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

[Alan Miner, Personal Notes]

2 Nephi 16:10 **Shut Their Eyes—Lest They See With Their Eyes, and Hear With Their Ears:**

This verse can be confusing because it sounds like the Lord's intentions are to make the people spiritually blind and spiritually deaf. It sounds like the Lord doesn't really want the people to 'be converted and be healed.' Yet, we know that the Lord wants everyone to repent. Therefore, we must understand that Isaiah's eloquent language takes some poetic license. The language used describes not the intent of Isaiah's teachings but their effect upon the people.

What is the effect of prophetic teachings upon the righteous? They are enlightened, seeing spiritual truths never before seen, understanding concepts never before appreciated. What is the natural effect of prophetic teachings upon the wicked? They are outraged; they rebel against the word of the Lord, thereby extinguishing any flicker of light that existed in the deepest recesses of their spirits. Isaiah's teachings would have just such an extinguishing effect upon the people, effectively shutting their eyes, closing their ears, and hardening their hearts. [josephsmith.com]

2 Nephi 16:13 **Teil-Tree:**

The "teil-tree" in Isaiah 6:13 has been defined as the Terebinth, turpentine tree (Heb. *ela*, Isaiah 6:13, AV "teil tree"; Hosea 4:13, "elm"). The Palestine terebinth (*Pistacia terebinthus* var. *palestina*, or *P. palestina*) is a small tree occurring very frequently in the hills. The terebinth was one of the trees under which sacrifice and offerings were made "because their shade is good" (Hosea 4:13). [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 3, p. 1592.]



Terebinth tree

beholdaproverb.com

According to Hoyt Brewster, although the branches of Israel will have been broken off the main tree and scattered--casting off their dead and dried up leaves--the stump of the tree will yet produce edible fruit. . . . The potential to produce life ("substance") remains in the old tree. [Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Isaiah Plain & Simple*, p. 61.]



Terebinth trees of Mamre

linda-peaceinthestorm.blogspot.com

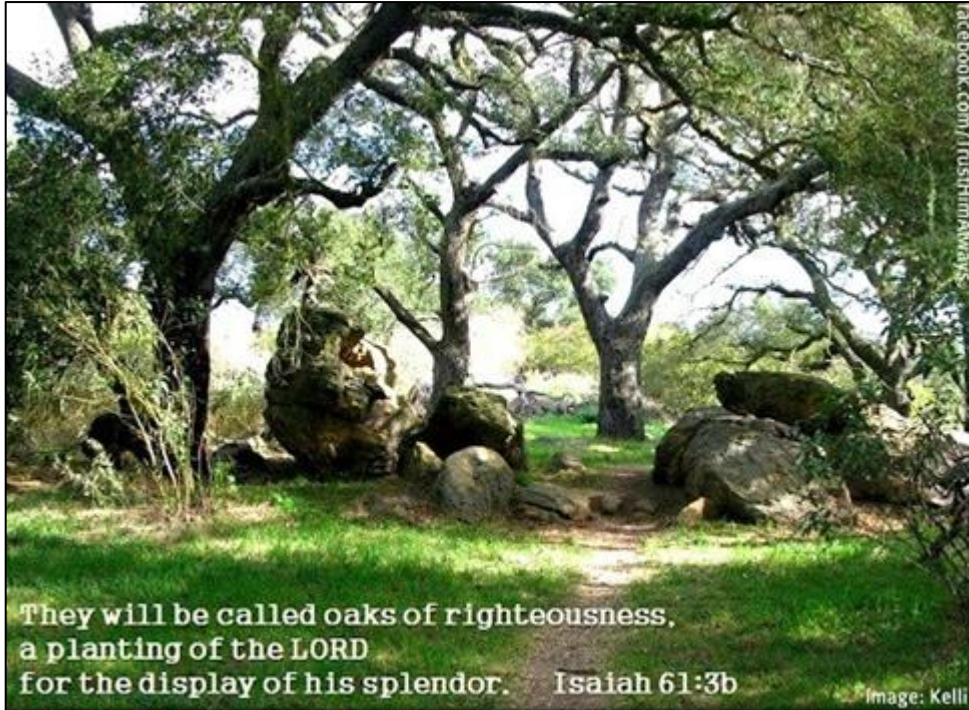
Note* Mamre, like the Oak, is associated with the seed of Judah---the scarlet thread (Genesis 38). The scarlet thread is associated with the sacrifice of the Red Heifer. The Sacrifice of the Red Heifer is associated with the seed of Christ.

Isaiah wonders how long the children of Israel will be wicked. The answer given explains that they will be scattered all over the earth. It won't be until the gathering of Israel in the last days that the children of Israel will turn again to the Lord their God. The house of Israel is likened to a tree in wintertime, though stripped of its leaves and barren, still the holy seed remains in the trunk and will bring forth beautiful leaves when Israel returns.

“Isaiah associated the oak and the terebinth (teal-tree) not only with apostasy but also with restoration. Both kinds of trees are robust and cannot be destroyed merely by chopping them down, for the remaining stumps will regenerate the tree by sending forth new shoots... (Isa. 6:12-13).

“Accordingly, Isaiah taught that a part of Israel would return like the oak and the terebinth, which though they are eaten or consumed (hayetah lebaer) right to their substance or stumps (matzabeth), yet they possess a seed in them that can regenerate.” (Terry Ball, Thy People Shall Be My People and Thy God My God, p. 29)

2 Nephi 16:13 **As An Oak Whose Substance Is in Them When They Cast Their Leaves:**



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1300 year old live Oak Tree

examiner.com

2 Nephi 16:13 **So the Holy Seed:**



An Acorn

care2.com

Chapter 17

2 Nephi 17:1 (**Historical Context of Isaiah's Prophecies**):

At the time of Isaiah's ministry, the children of Israel were divided into two kingdoms: the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom.



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The northern kingdom was also called the kingdom of Israel or the kingdom of Ephraim (because Ephraim was the leading tribe).



THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL

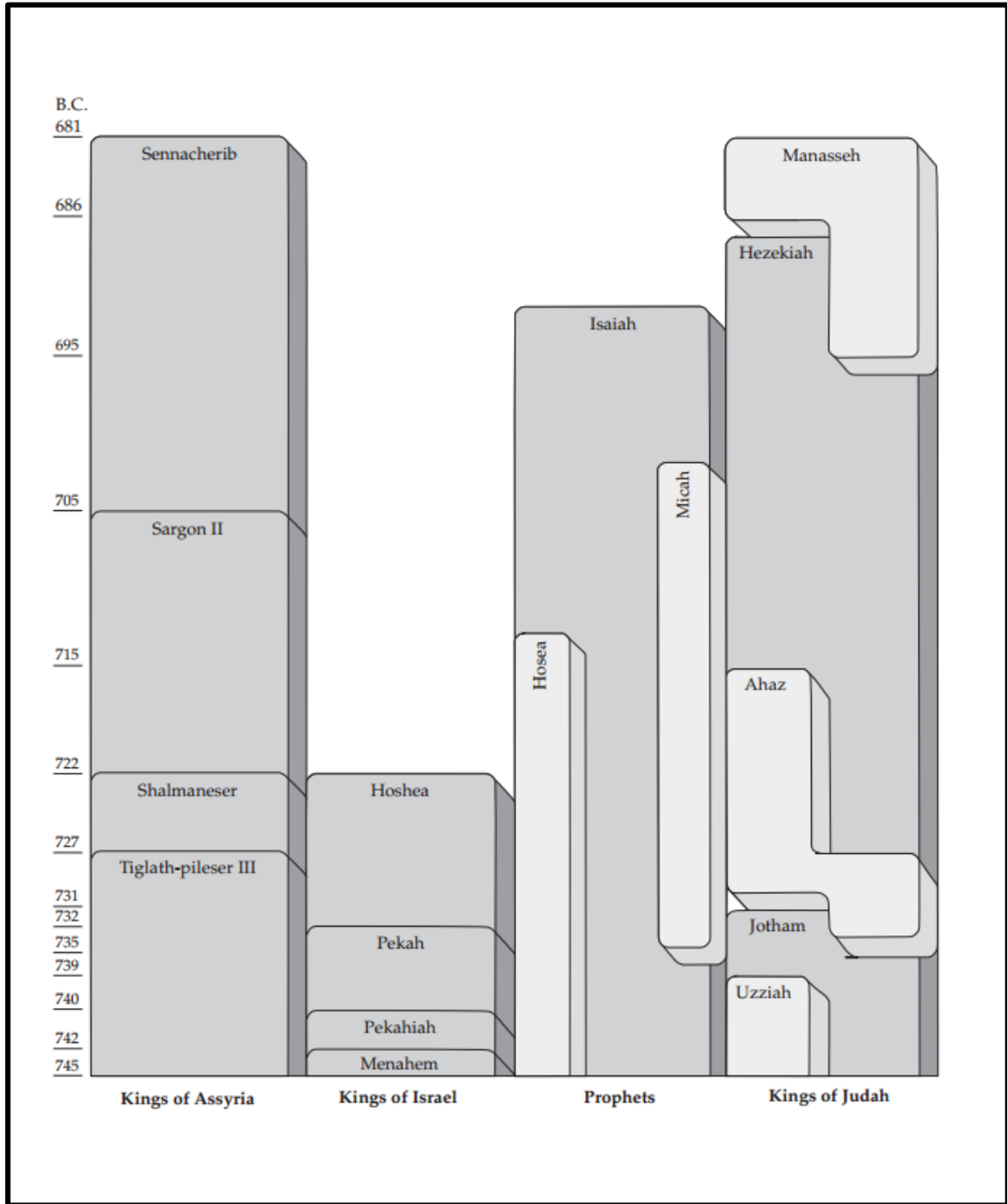
- | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| ■ Reuben | ■ Judah | ■ Naphtali | ■ Issachar | ■ Zebulun |
| ■ Simeon | ■ Dan | ■ Gad | ■ Asher | ■ Benjamin |
| ■ Ephraim | ■ Manesseh | | | |

The ten tribes lived in the northern kingdom. Since the days of Solomon, when the northern kingdom broke from the ruling family of the tribe of Judah, the northern kingdom had

been ruled by wicked men. They had practiced idolatry, rejected the Lord, perverted the priesthood, etc. In chapter 17, one of the kingdom's wicked kings, Pekah has made a pact with the king of Syria, Rezin, to conquer the kingdom of Judah. Any fighting between the northern and southern kingdoms was an abomination to the Lord They were brothers and should have lived together in peace.

The southern kingdom was also called the kingdom of Judah because Judah was the leading tribe. It contained members of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and some Levites. Since the days of Solomon, the southern kingdom had been ruled, for the most part, by righteous kings. One exception to this rule is king Ahaz, who followed the wicked ways of his northern neighbors (2 Chronicles 28:2). It was during the reign of Ahaz that Pekah and Rezin came against Jerusalem..

B.C.	Kings of Israel		Kings of Judah	
	<u>Kings of Assyria</u>	<u>Northern King dom</u>	<u>Southern Kingdom</u>	<u>Prophet Isaiah</u> <u>Syria</u>
745	Tiglath-pileser III	Menahem	Uzziah	Isaiah
742	"	Pekahiah	"	"
740	"	Pekah	"	Isaiah ministry
739	"	"	Jotham	"
735	"	PEKAH	AHAZ	ISAIAH REZIN
732	"	Hoshea	"	"
727	Shalmaneser	"	"	"
722	Sargon II-->	CONQUERED	"	"
715	"		Hezekiah	"
705	Sennacherib		"	"
695	"		"	Isaiah dies?
693	"		"	Isaiah dies?
686	"		Manasseh	
681	Sennacherib		"	



LDS Old Testament Manual CES

Isaiah’s ministry was among the Jews in Jerusalem, although he speaks of events in both kingdoms. The 1981 Book of Mormon Institute Manual discusses his ministry:

“Isaiah lived and prophesied during the reigns of four kings of Judah—Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (Isaiah 1:1). This period of his ministry spanned from the year King Uzziah died (c. 740 BC) until the end of Hezekiah’s reign (c. 699BC). Tradition says he was killed by Hezekiah’s son Manasseh...

“Isaiah’s call to the ministry came during the decline of Judah’s and Israel’s power and prosperity. During the reign of Ahaz, a major crisis occurred: the Syro-Ephraimite war (c. 734 BC). Pekah, King of Israel, and Rezin, King of Syria, threatened to capture Jerusalem and replace Ahaz with a king of their own choosing for the purpose of forming a tripartite alliance, consisting of Syria, Israel, and Judah, against Assyria. (See 2 Nephi 17ff.) Isaiah revealed the plot to Ahaz and prophesied that such an alliance would fail; the prophet tried in vain to convince Ahaz to place his trust in the Lord rather than in foreign alliances. Instead, Ahaz made an agreement with the Assyrian monarch, Tilgath-pelezer II (Pul), and Judah became a vassal state, paying tribute to Assyria to escape the threat of Syria and Israel.” (*Book of Mormon Institute Manual*, p. 93)

2 Nephi 17:1 **Judah:**

(See below the commentary on “Israel”)

2 Nephi 17:1 **Syria:**

In the English Old Testament, the term "Syria" or "Syrians" merely denotes Aramaeans. Historically, ancient Syria existed as a political unit only during the period of the Hellenistic Seleucid Monarchy, founded by Seleucus I (312-281 B.C.). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 3, p. 1237]

The association of the earliest "Arameans" with the east and northeast is evident in Genesis 10:22-23, where Aram, Elam and Assyria occur together--a mark of very early date. Shortly after 770 B.C., Syria of the Aramaean kingdom of Damascus came under the overlordship of Jeroboam II of Israel (2 Kings 14:28). Still later, perhaps after Jeroboam II's death in 753 B.C., a king Rezin appeared in Damascus and menaced Judah as Israel's ally, even conquering Transjordan; but Ahaz of Judah appealed to Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria, who then in 732 B.C. defeated and slew Rezin (2 Kings 16:5-9; deporting the unhappy Aramaeans to Qir, ironically their ancient homeland, as prophesied by Amos (1:4-5). Other Aramaean kingdoms are rarely mentioned in Scripture; however Sennacherib in 701 B.C. mocked Hezekiah over the impotence of the kings and gods of Arpad, Hamath, Gozan, Harran, Rezep and the "children of Eden in Telassar: (2 Kings 18:34; 19:12-13). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, pp. 88-91.]



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2 Nephi 17:1 **Syria (Illustration – not shown):** Centers of Aramaean settlement. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, p. 91.]

2 Nephi 17:1 **Israel:**

Up to this point, all of the previous references to the term "Israel" in the Book of Mormon have been related to the full "house of Israel," or the full nation of Israel with all its twelve tribes (see for example 1 Nephi 5:9, 10:12, 12:9; 2 Nephi 6:5, 9:1). However, here in 2 Nephi 17:1 the term "Israel" refers to the Northern Kingdom, that is the ten tribes other than Judah and Benjamin (who comprised the Southern Kingdom), and its lands, which were located north of those lands belonging to Judah and Benjamin.



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After the death of Solomon, the tribes of Israel split into two kingdoms--the Northern kingdom of Israel, which renounced its allegiance to the throne of David, and the Southern kingdom of Judah, consisting of the tribal territories of Judah and Benjamin, over which the descendants of David and Solomon continued to reign in their capital at Jerusalem. Jeroboam, the founder of the separate monarchy of the Northern kingdom, elevated the two ancient sanctuaries of Dan (in the far north) and Bethel (near the frontier with Judah) to the status of national shrines. In both of these golden bull-calves provided the visible pedestals for Yahweh's invisible throne (the function fulfilled by golden cherubs in the Jerusalem Temple). Omri (about 880 B.C.) founded a new capital for the Northern kingdom at Samaria.

About 745 B.C., Tiglath-pileser III became king of Assyria and inaugurated a campaign of imperial conquest which in less than a quarter of a century brought an end to the existence of the kingdom of Israel and to the independence of the kingdom of Judah. Menahem of Israel (about 745-737 B.C.) paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser. These were the conditions when Ahaz became king of

Judah.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 709-711.] [See the commentary on the man "Israel"--1 Nephi 5:9, and the larger "Israel" of all the twelve tribes--1 Nephi 12:9]

2 Nephi 17:1 **Israel (Illustration – not shown):** The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. [LDS Bible, Map 9, 1979 Edition]

2 Nephi 17:2 **Syria Is Confederate With Ephraim:**

The news of an alliance between Syria and the kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) was terrifying to king Ahaz and his people. Both kingdoms were larger and more powerful than Judah. Ahaz's first response was to look to other nations, i.e., Assyria for help.

2 Nephi 17:2 **Ephraim (Kingdom of Israel):**

The region in central west Palestine that fell to Ephraim part of the division of lands among the twelve tribes of Israel (or the twelve sons of Jacob). The region is mainly relatively high hill-country with better rainfall than Judaea and some good soils.



THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL

- | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| ■ Reuben | ■ Judah | ■ Naphtali | ■ Issachar | ■ Zebulun |
| ■ Simeon | ■ Dan | ■ Gad | ■ Asher | ■ Benjamin |
| ■ Ephraim | ■ Manesseh | | | |

The term "Ephraim" also was used to denote the Northern kingdom separate from Judah and Benjamin (Isaiah 7:2; 2 Nephi 17:2).

The sick Jacob acknowledged the two sons of Joseph (Genesis 48:5), blessing Ephraim with his right hand and Manasseh with his left (Genesis 48:13-14), thus signifying that Ephraim would become the greater people (v. 19).



Jacob blessing Ephraim and Mannaseh

ucg.org

Joshua the son of Nun, was descended from Ephraim (Numbers 13:8). He was chosen with Eleazar the priest to divide the land (Numbers 34:17). Ephraim is also included in the blessing of Moses. Under the valiant leadership of Joshua, Ephraim with the other tribes received its inheritance, which is described in Joshua 16.

From the beginning the tribe of Ephraim occupied a position of prestige and significance. The prestige of Ephraim kept it from looking with favor upon Judah. After the death of Saul, his captain, Abner, made Eshbaal king over the northern tribes, including Ephraim.

The 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom were

- ◆ Reuben
- ◆ Gad
- ◆ Asher
- ◆ Nephtali
- ◆ Dan
- ◆ Manasseh
- ◆ Simeon
- ◆ Ephraim
- ◆ Issachar
- ◆ Zabulon

The tribes of the Southern kingdom of Judah were

- ◆ Judah
- ◆ Benjamin

Helpforhomeschoolers.com

Judah followed David (2 Samuel 2:8ff.), and after Eshbaal's death the northern tribes invited David to become their king, but later David learned that Israel followed after Absalom. The northern tribes never did desire to yield to David's reign, but David grew continually greater and stronger. Under Solomon the Southern kingdom reached the pinnacle of splendor and prosperity. Nevertheless, even at this time, there was discontent in the north (1 Kings 11:26ff.).

The north revolted, renouncing all claim to the promises made to David (1 Kings 12;16). Nevertheless, God continued to send his prophets to the Northern kingdom, and one of the characteristics of the Messianic kingdom is to be the healing of the tragic schism introduced by Jeroboam the son of Nebat (*cf.* Hosea 1:11; Isaiah 11:13). Even when exile has overtaken the Southern as well as the Northern kingdom, Ephraim retains a special place: "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born" (Jeremiah 31:9). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 462-464] [See 2 Nephi 21:13]

2 Nephi 17:2 **Ephraim (Illustration – not shown):** (1) The hilly lands allotted to Ephraim, in central west Palestine. (2) The mountains of Ephraim. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 464]

2 Nephi 17:2 **Ephraim (Illustration – not shown):** The tribes of Israel. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1594]

2 Nephi 17:3 **Go Forth Now [Isaiah] to Meet Ahaz, Thou, and Shearjashub:**

Who was Shearjashub? As the scripture plainly declares, Shearjashub was Isaiah's son. His name means, "the remnant shall return." We learn of another of his sons in Isaiah 8:1. With this other son, the Lord instructs Isaiah to name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz, signifying the imminent destruction of Israel. Interestingly, both of Isaiah's sons had unusual names with prophetic significance. Why Shear-jashub accompanied Isaiah now is not recorded. It might be that his name represented an additional symbol of the Messiah, who would gather the remnants of Israel—remnants who would return.

2 Nephi 17:3 **Ahaz:**

According to *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, Ahaz was the eleventh king of Judah, son of Jotham, and reigned from 741-726, about sixteen years. At the time of his accession, Rezin, king of Damascus, (Syria) and Pekah, king of Israel had recently formed a league against Judah, and they proceeded to lay siege to Jerusalem.

He was weak, a gross idolater, and sought safety in heathen ceremonies, making his son pass through the fire to Molech, consulting wizards and necromancers (Isaiah 8:19) and other idolatrous practices (2 Kings 23:12).

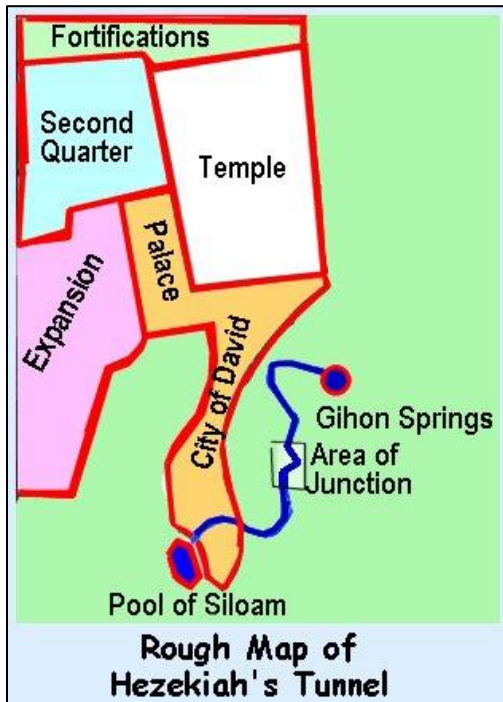
Ahaz, having forfeited God's favor by his wickedness, sought deliverance from his troubles by appealing to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria. But Ahaz had to purchase this help at a costly price; he became tributary to Tiglath-pileser. He would die at the age of 36.

2 Nephi 17:3 **At the End of the Conduit of the Upper Pool:**

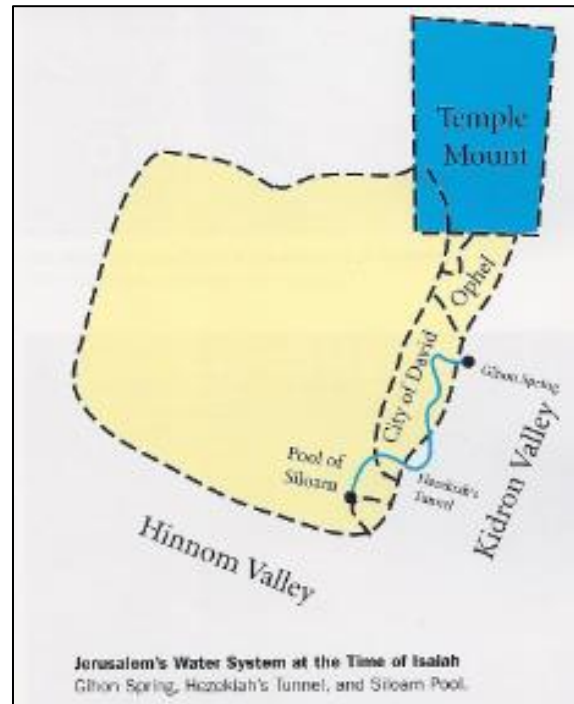
The chief water source for the city of Jerusalem was called Gihon Spring, and was located just outside of the city wall previous to the time of king Ahaz. It lay in a basin forming the head of the valley of Hinnom or Gihon. It was probably filled in the rainy seasons by waters which flowed from the higher ground, some say from under the temple.

The location of this upper pool outside the city walls made the city very vulnerable in time of siege. That is, the ancient city of Jerusalem was situated on a mountain, and was

naturally defensible from almost all sides. However, their major source of water, the Gihon spring, was located on the side of the slope overlooking the Kidron Valley. Thus, in order for the city walls to be high enough to be defensible, the spring had to be left outside the walls.



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Visualizing Isaiah, p. 9

Donald Parry writes that the Gihon Spring flows from a natural cave on the west side of the valley of Kidron, south of where Solomon's temple once stood. . From this spring King Hezekiah's engineers ran a tunnel under the city to safeguard Jerusalem's water supply from the invading Assyrians. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 9.]

2 Nephi 17:3 The Conduit of the Upper Pool:

Because the upper pool or springs of Gihon lay outside the city wall, the city was very vulnerable in time of siege. The spring's water had begun to be diverted centuries before the reign of Ahaz. As originally or subsequently constructed, a 20-foot ditch had been dug in the ground to the city in a direct route to the pool of Siloam, and then covered over by large rock slabs, which were supposedly hidden by foliage. But this man-made ditch was still vulnerable to discovery and control by an invading army.

Some think that King Ahaz might have come to this conduit of the upper pool of Gihon Spring thinking that Isaiah wanted to talk to him about the water supply and the city's defenses. Since Ahaz's heart was filled with apostasy and his mind was muddled with anxiety over the

imminent attack of a huge army from the north, Ahaz would certainly not be in a mood to understand or accept what Isaiah was about to tell him.

Quite the contrary, years after Ahaz's reign, during the reign of Hezekiah, the Assyrian military leaders would meet with the representative of King Hezekiah, the King of Judah on or near this very spot, to talk about tribute versus war:

"In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. And the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field." (Isaiah 36:1-2 RSV)

At this time the Assyrian leader ridiculed the King of Judah's representative in asking in essence: "Who do you put your trust in? He discounted the strength of Egypt, and then proclaimed:

"But if thou say to me, We trust in the Lord our God; is it not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar' . . . "

"Thus saith the king [of Assyria], Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us . . . "

The Assyrian representative then said: "Make an agreement with me by a present." He ended his tirade in essence with the words: "Who is your God, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?"

What the Assyrians didn't count on was Hezekiah's preparation for defense, both physically and spiritually. Although there was an existing fortified access to the Gihon spring where people might travel and then descend to the springs, it was apparently deemed not safe enough for Hezekiah. The Bible says that King Hezekiah, fearful that the Assyrians would lay siege to the city, blocked the Gihon spring's water outside the city and diverted it through a new channel cut through solid rock to the then Pool of Siloam.

"When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and that he intended to wage war against Jerusalem, he consulted with his officials and military staff about blocking off the water from the springs outside the city, and they helped him. They gathered a large group of people who blocked all the springs and the stream that flowed through the land. 'Why should the kings of Assyria come and find plenty of water?' they said." (2 Chronicles 32:2-4)

"It was Hezekiah who blocked the upper outlet of the Gihon spring and channeled the water down to the west side of the City of David. He succeeded in everything he undertook" (2 Chronicles 32:30)

This tunnel, cut through limestone rock for a distance of 1750 feet from the Gihon spring and channeled underneath the City of David to the Pool of Siloam was called Hezekiah's Tunnel, and also the Siloam Tunnel. The waters that came into the Pool of Siloam ("Pool of Siloah" – Nehemiah 3:15) were referred to by Isaiah as the "waters of Shiloah." (Isaiah) Shiloah means "sent." In the literal sense the water was being sent through an aqueduct (John 9:7) Basically, this pool was situated at the foot of Mount Zion. The water was a small current, which moved softly and slowly. It was compared at one time to the house of David because of its easy and gentle government.

As for spiritual preparation, upon hearing what the Assyrian representative had said, king Hezekiah sought the counsel of Isaiah to save Jerusalem. Isaiah prophesied the defeat of the Assyrians and the death of the Assyrian king Sennacherib. Hezekiah prayed for deliverance. When Sennacherib invaded an angel would slay 185,000 Assyrians.

Sennacherib departed and went back to Nineveh, where he was slain by his sons while worshipping his own god. (Isaiah chapters 36, 37)

[Alan Miner Personal Notes]

2 Nephi 17:3 **The Upper Pool in the Highway of the Fuller's Field:**



The upper pool in the highway (Gihon)

specialtyinterests.net

Wayne Blank writes:

A fuller was someone who cleaned and thickened (to make it "full") freshly-woven (usually woolen) cloth. The process involved cleaning, bleaching, wetting and beating the fibers to a consistent and desirable condition. Fuller's earth was a variety of clay that was used to scour and cleanse the cloth. Fuller's soap was an alkali made from plant ashes which was also used to clean and full new cloth. Since fullers required plenty of running water, along with the natural substances described, a fuller's field was a place where all were available for the fullers to conduct their profession. ("The Fullers' Field," bibleapps.com/commentaries/Isaiah)

This location for the fullers' field was probably because much water was needed in bleaching or dyeing cloth, also clay. Additionally, there was space where cloth or garments that had been dyed or bleached could be spread out or suspended. The name 'highway' denotes the public path, or road that led to this field. Probably, on one side of this highway was the aqueduct, and on the other the fuller's field.

The fuller's field conveyed some symbolism because this is where garments were whitened and made "full" again.



Clorox My UltimateCare Bleach

whatsupfagans.com



Bleached fabric -- before and after

whatsupfagans.com

Indeed, the Messiah was likened to fullers' soap:

"Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before Me, and The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His Temple the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, He is coming, says The Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of His coming, and who can stand when He appears? "For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, till they present right offerings to The Lord."
(Malachi 3:1-3 RSV)

[Note* Thus, the location where Isaiah met Ahaz was heavy in symbolism. It was where life-giving waters flowed to the City of David and the City of Jerusalem. These waters were "sent" and were gentle and slow. It was the location where garments were made white and "full" again. It was symbolic of the Savior, the Messiah---or as Isaiah would call him: "Immanuel."

[Alan Miner, [Personal Notes](#)]

2 Nephi 17:4 **Fear Not, Neither Be Faint-hearted For the Two Tails of These Smoking Firebrands:**

The Lord tells Ahaz, through Isaiah, not to fear the enemy. Why is the enemy likened to "the two tails of smoking firebrands?" A firebrand was a technique used to destroy the crops and vineyards of an enemy. Foxes would be taken, have some sort of torch (firebrand) tied to their tails, and then sent to run through the fields of the enemies. The foxes would scamper around starting fires everywhere they went. Therefore, the phrase 'two tails of these smoking firebrands' refers to Pekah and Rezin as destroyers. The fact that the firebrands are smoking suggests that the fire (representing their strength) has been extinguished. The phrase also carries a certain disdain. A good example of the use of firebrands is found in Judges:

'And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails.

And when he had set the brands on fire, he let [them] go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.' (Judges 15:4-5)

[josephsmith.com]

2 Nephi 17:7 It Shall Not Stand, Neither Shall It Come to Pass:

Isaiah told Ahaz that because the Lord considered it evil for Israel to plot with Syria against Judah, this plot by Israel and Syria against Judah would not stand. The tone of the next verses demonstrates that Ahaz lacked faith in the Lord.

Ahaz was able to defend his people without the help of Assyria. This is recorded in 2 Kings 16:5-6, 'Rezin...and Pekah...came up to Jerusalem to war; and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him.' In the siege, Rezin was only able to take one city, Elath.

But Josephus explained that after Ahaz had successfully repelled the Rezin/Pekah alliance, he took all the credit himself, forgetting the help he had received from the Lord.

Ahaz then considered himself so great that he went to Damascus to attack Rezin and Pekah. This time he did not have the Lord's help and was beaten severely. According to 2 Chronicles 28:6-7, 120,000 men were killed and another 200,000 were taken captive. These prisoners were later released.

This great devastation happened because of the wickedness of Ahaz. Had he trusted in the Lord and recognized his hand in his military victories, the Lord would not have let this military disaster come upon his people.

But this disaster prompted Ahaz to get revenge. Having already abandoned the Lord, Ahaz enlisted the help of the Assyrians.. The Assyrians then attacked the Syrians and killed Rezin. But ultimately for Ahaz, this alliance with Assyria would prove fatal. (See Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book IX, chapter XII, 2 Kings 16:7-9, and 2 Chron. 28.)

[josephsmith.com]

2 Nephi 17:8 The Head of Syria Is Damascus, and the Head of Damascus is Rezin:

Damascus, the capital city of Syria (Isaiah 7:8), situated east of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains and overshadowed in the southwest by Mt. Hermon .



Jesuswalk.com

The district of Damascus is famous for its orchards and gardens, being irrigated by the clear Abana (modern Barada) and adjacent Pharpar rivers, which compared favorably with the slower, muddy Jordan (2 Kings 5:12) and Euphrates rivers (Isaiah 8:5-8). It is a natural communications center, linking the caravan route to the Mediterranean coast (about 100 kilometers to the west) through Tyre (Phoenicia) (Ezekiel 27:18) to Egypt with the tracks east across the desert to Assyria and Babylonia, south to Arabia, and north to Aleppo. The city was of special importance as head of an Aramaean (Syrian) state in the 10th-8th centuries B.C.

Under king Rezin, Syria oppressed Judah (2 Kings 16:6), but was a vassal of Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria.

Timeline for Assyrian Empire

Adad-Nerari III	810-783 BC (Religious revival in his day possibly from Jonah)
Tiglath-Pileser III	744-727 BC (Carried away tribes east of Jordan)
Shalmaneser V	726-722 BC (Began captivity of Israel)
Sargon II	721-705 BC (Completed Israel's captivity)
Sennacherib	704-681 BC (Tried and failed to conquer Jerusalem)
Esarhaddon	680-669 BC (Conquered Egypt)
Assurbanipal	668-633 BC (Extended conquest of Egypt as far as Luxor)
Fall of Nineveh	612 BC

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Note* Donald Parry notes that Tiglath-pileser III, king of Assyria, describes the war booty he obtained from Rezin, (or Rezon), the king of Syria. Rezin is also mentioned in Isaiah 7:19- 7:

I (Tiglath pileser) received tribute from . . . Rezon of Damascus . . . (to wit) gold, silver, tin, iron, elephant hides, ivory, linen garments with multicolored trimmings, blue dyed wool, purple dyed wool, ebony wood . . . horses, mules, large and small cattle, (male) camels, female camels with their foals." (James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*, p. 283)

[Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 28.]

2 Nephi 17:8 **(The Assyrian Empire) [Illustration – not shown]:** Syria Pays Tribute to Tiglath Pileser III. Chart: Highlights of the Assyrian Empire during the Ministry of the Prophet Isaiah and Later. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 28.]

Soon thereafter, Rezin revolted, captured Elath and took many Judaeans captive to Damascus (2 Chronicles 28:5). Ahaz of Judah thereupon appealed for help to Assyria who responded by launching a series of punitive raids in 734-732 B.C., which culminated in the capture of Damascus, as prophesied by Isaiah (17:1) and Amos (1:4-5), and the death of Rezin. The spoiling of the city (Isaiah 8:4), the deportation of its inhabitants to Kir (Qir) (2 Kings 16:9), and its destruction were cited as an object lesson to Judah (Isaiah 10:9).

In return for this assistance Ahaz was summoned to pay tribute to the Assyrian king at Damascus, where he saw and copied the altar (2 Kings 16:10-12) which led to the worship of Syrian

deities within the Temple at Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 28:23).

Damascus was subsequently reduced to a subsidiary city within the Assyrian province of Hamath and henceforth lost its political influence, but not completely its economic influence (cf. Ezekiel 27:18). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 355-357.] [See 2 Nephi 20:9]

2 Nephi 17:8 **For the head of Syria is Damascus . . . and the head of Ephraim is Samaria (Illustration – not shown):** The kingdoms of Israel and Syria attack Judah. Artist: Tom Child. [Thomas R. Valletta ed., The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families, 1999, p. 112]

2 Nephi 17:8 **Within Threescore and Five Years Shall Ephraim Be Broken, That It Be Not a People:**

Assyria, the enemy of Israel, had embarked on a ruthless campaign to expand its borders. Isaiah's specific prophecy that in "threescore and five years" Ephraim, or the northern kingdom of Israel, would no longer be a kingdom or a nation was fulfilled. Ephraim fell in 721 B.C., midway through Isaiah's ministry. King Sargon II of Assyria deported most of Ephraim's citizens, some of the ten tribes of Israel, to the north countries (see 2 Kings 17:5-6).

[Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 10.]

2 Nephi 17:8 **Within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people (Illustration – not shown):** Map: Campaigns of Salmaneser V. and Sargon II (Isaiah 20). Adapted from *Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 149. Photograph by *Biblical Archaeological Review* Mesop 4-085 Erich Lessing/Art Resource, N.Y. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 10.]

2 Nephi 17:8 **Within Threescore and Five Years Shall Ephraim Be Broken, That It Be Not a People:**

A score is twenty years. So Isaiah is prophesying of the downfall of the northern kingdom within 65 years. This occurs at the hands of the Assyrians during the reign of Pekah's successor, Hoshea. This prophecy is fulfilled well within the 65-year time limit.

'Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.

In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes' (2 Kings 17:5-6).

Victor Ludlow writes that in this prophecy, Isaiah promises that the Syro-Israelite alliance will fail and that Israel will be scattered within sixty-five years. The fulfillment came about in successive stages. First, Tiglath-Pileser III (Pul) attacked Syria and Israel in 732 B.C. and took many Israelites captive to Assyria, especially those from the northern tribes. Secondly, in 730-727, Pul annexed the Transjordan area and deported large numbers of the Israelite tribes from that area to the far reaches of the Assyrian Empire. Third, in 726, Hoshea refused to pay Assyrian tribute, and Pul's successor, Shalmaneser, retaliated by attacking Israel and besieging Samaria, which fell in 722 B.C. Thus, within a dozen years of Isaiah's prophecy, the alliance had completely failed, and three major groups of Israelites had been deported. Finally, large groups of the Israelites fled from Assyria to the remote areas northward and became the lost Ten Tribes of Israel. Apparently, within about fifty years of their leaving Assyria, they were scattered so widely that many of them no longer existed as a cohesive group. Thereby Isaiah's prophecy to Ephraim was completely realized."

[Victor L. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, pp. 141 – 142.]

2 Nephi 17:9 **Samaria:**

The name of the Northern Israelite capital and of the territory surrounding it. It was located on a hill 11 kilometers northwest of Shechem commanding the main trade routes through the Esdraelon plain.

King Menahem preserved the city from attack by paying tribute to Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria (2 Kings 15:17-20). Menahem's son Pekah, however, drew the Assyrian army back again by his attack on Judah, then a vassal-ally of Assyria.

Sargon II, a new king of Assyria, initiated a scheme of mass deportation for the whole area. According to his annals, Sargon carried off 27,270 captives, and the effect was to terminate the existence of the Northern kingdom of Israel as a homogeneous and independent state. The exiles were despatched to places in Syria, Assyria and Babylonia and replaced by colonists from other disturbed parts of the Assyrian empire (2 Kings 17:24). [Tyndale House, [The Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#), Vol. 3, pp. 1375-1376.] [See 2 Nephi 20:9]

2 Nephi 17:9 **Samaria (Illustration – not shown):** The location of Samaria. [Tyndale House, [The Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#), Vol. 3, p. 1572.]

2 Nephi 17:9 **Samaria (Illustration – not shown):** The Tribes of Israel. [Tyndale House, [The Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#), Vol. 3, p. 1594.]

2 Nephi 17:14 **A Virgin Shall Conceive:**

According to Cleon Skousen, it is interesting that certain theological scholars in some of the modern churches have suggested that the word "virgin" (Isaiah 7:15; 2 Nephi 17:14) be changed to "A young woman of marriageable age." What they are trying to say is that they believe Mary was a sinner. They believe the miracle of the virgin birth was invented to cover up her shame. But this will not do. How ridiculous it would have sounded to Ahaz if Isaiah had said, "Behold, a young woman of marriageable age shall conceive and bring forth a son . . ."! What kind of a sign would that be? It would be no miracle at all. The Book of Mormon uses the word "virgin" in the correct, original sense. Interestingly enough, the Septuagint version of Isaiah (written around 260 B.C., and therefore constituting the oldest Greek translation of the Old Testament) uses the word "virgin" just as the Book of Mormon does. [W. Cleon Skousen, Treasures from the Book of Mormon, Vol 1, p. 1300]



Angel Gabriel announces the call to Mary bibleguidefornewage.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 17:14-16 **A Virgin Shall Conceive, and Bear a Son, and Shall Call His Name Immanuel:**

Critics say the fulfillment of this prophecy had to be in the days of Isaiah. Latter-day Saint scholars have appropriately responded to the questions raised, adding strength to the messianic witness of the prophecy. Among these is the excellent explanation offered by Dr Sidney B. Sperry:

"Now if Immanuel of verse 14 is the Messiah, the Savior, what is his connection with the "child" of verses 15 and 16? Many Jewish commentators, not to mention some non-

Jewish ones, think that the "virgin" or "young woman" of verse 14 may be a woman of Judah, and that her son, a boy whom she called Immanuel, does not refer to the Christ. Personally, I am inclined to accept Immanuel as a reference to the Savior, and especially in the light of [Isaiah 8:8], where Judah is referred to as Immanuel's land. The allusion to Immanuel suggests that the land of Judah (about which Ahaz was concerned) had a great destiny to fulfill, and hence that it was not about to be destroyed by Syria and Ephraim. Verses 15 and 16 of [Isaiah 7] simply make our Lord's infancy a symbolical representation of a short-lived nature of the threat to Judah. (*Book of Mormon Commentary*, p. 199; see also *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, pp. 143-145; *Great Are the Works of Isaiah*, pp. 56-59)

Monte Nyman adds this insightful comment: "The point was that, even if Ahaz rejected the counsel and advice of Jehovah through his prophet, and even if Ahaz led his people into captivity, the Lord Immanuel would still come as had been prophesied." (*Great Are the Works of Isaiah*, p. 58.)

[Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Isaiah Plain & Simple*, pp. 69-70.]



Gerard van Honthorst – Nativity (1620)

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

2 Nephi 17:14 **A virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (Illustration – not shown):** The Birth of Christ. Isaiah saw in vision the birth of Jesus Christ. Artist: Robert T. Barrett. [Thomas R. Valletta ed., *The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families*, 1999, p. 113.]

2 Nephi 17:14-16 A *Virgin* Shall Conceive, and Bear a Son, and Shall Call His Name Immanuel:

Some have misconstrued Mary's immaculate conception by questioning whether or not she was actually a virgin. The scriptures leave no doubt. We also learn that Joseph did not consummate his marriage with Mary until after the birth of Jesus, 'And [he] knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS' (Matt 1:25). All we need to know about how God the Father is the literal and physical Father of Jesus Christ is contained words of the angel to Mary, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God' (Lu 1:35).

The name Immanuel means "God with us." It is given as a title of the Son of God, not as his given name. Isaiah commonly uses titles to describe the Messiah, 'his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace' (Isa 9:6). "Immanuel" is also spoken of in Isaiah 8:8. [josephsmith.com]

2 Nephi 17:16 Before The Child Shall Know to Refuse the Evil and Choose the Good:

According to Jeffrey R. Holland, the Lord's prophecy through Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 7 has dual fulfillment and probably applies not just to Jesus, but to Isaiah's son. The destruction of Syria and Ephraim are to come before this child reaches the age of accountability.

"There are plural or parallel elements to this prophecy, as with so much of Isaiah's writing. The most immediate meaning was probably focused on Isaiah's wife, a pure and good woman who brought forth a son about this time, the child becoming a type and shadow of the greater, later fulfillment of the prophecy that would be realized in the birth of Jesus Christ. The symbolism in the dual prophecy acquires additional importance when we realize that Isaiah's wife may have been of royal blood, and therefore her son would have been royalty of the line of David. Here again is a type, a prefiguration of the greater Immanuel, Jesus Christ, the ultimate son of David, the royal King who would be born of a literal virgin. Indeed, his title Immanuel would be carried forward to the latter days, being applied to the Savior in section 128 verse 22 of the Doctrine and Covenants."

(Jeffrey R. Holland, Christ and the New Covenant, p. 79.)

2 Nephi 17:17 The Lord Shall Bring upon Thee . . . the King of Assyria:

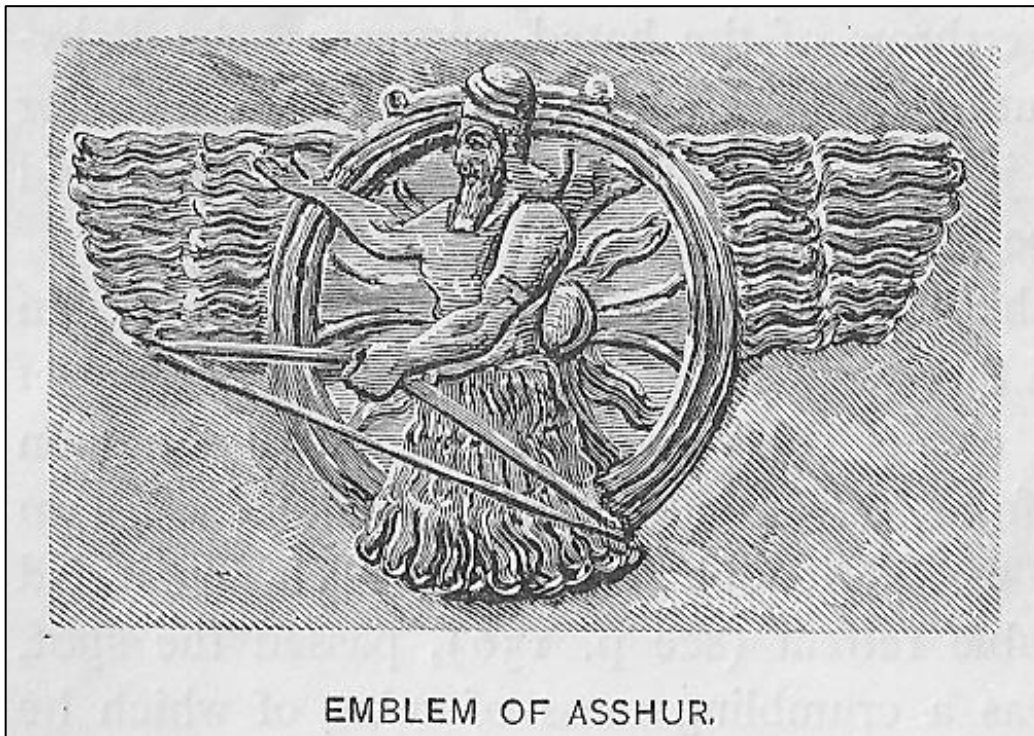
Hoyt Brewster writes:

“With King Ahaz having rejected the word of the Lord, the prophet now proceeds to pronounce the penalties that would befall the king and the people of Judah. Instead of becoming a partner with the Assyrians, Ahaz and his people would become their prey. They would experience a devastation such as they had not seen since the days the northern tribes broke away from the united kingdom of the twelve tribes. Flies and bees would infest the land, and thorns and briars would take over the once-productive land. The people would be taken into captivity, and those who remain would have to forage for food.

[Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., Isaiah Plain and Simple, p. 70.]

2 Nephi 17:18 The Lord Shall Hiss . . . For the Bee:

It is interesting that the emblem of Asshur, the original capital of Assyria, resembles a bee.



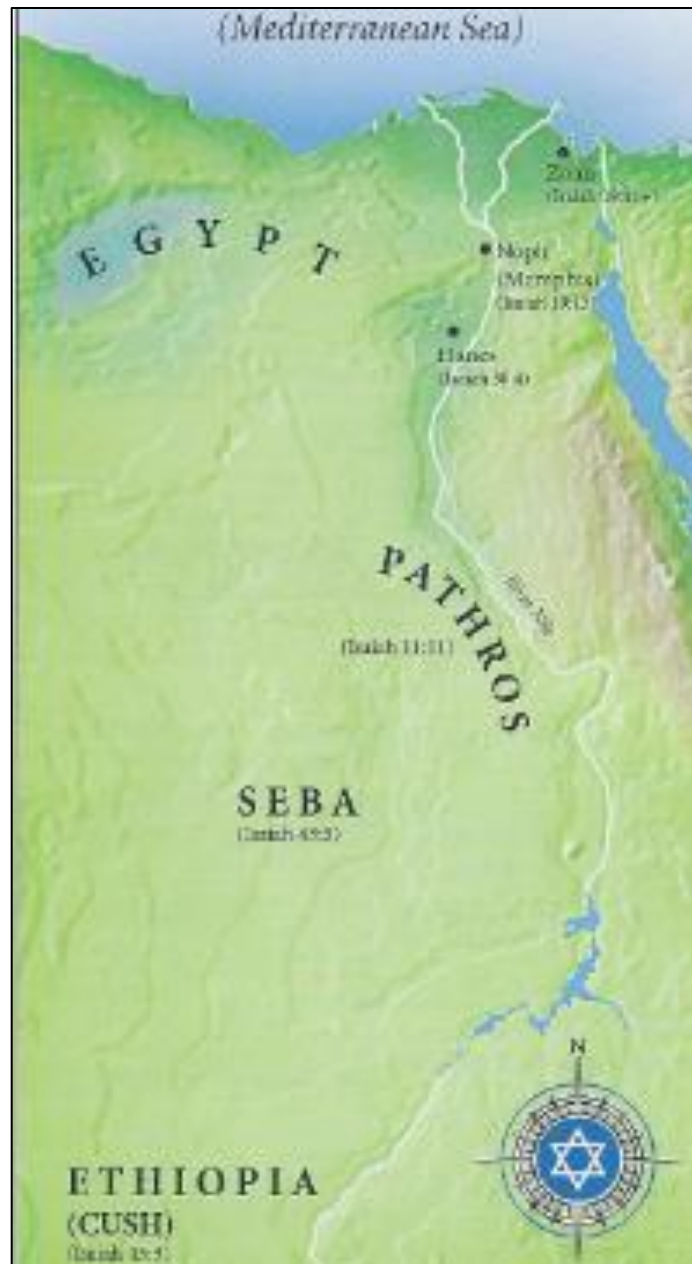
Emblem (possibly hypothetical) of the city of Asshur, the original capital of Assyria uk.wikimedia.org



God of Asshur (Assyrians)

greatdreams.com

2 Nephi 17:18 **The Lord shall hiss . . . for the bee (Illustration – not shown):** A tradition relates that beekeepers of the ancient Near East called their bees by a whistle or hiss. The bees would then gather at their hives, usually made of clay or baskets. This tradition may have been known to those who heard Isaiah prophesy that the Lord would whistle for the fly and the bee. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 26.]



2 Nephi 17:18 **The rivers of Egypt (Illustration):** Map: Egypt at the Time of Isaiah.

“uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt” – Isaiah 7:18

From top to bottom (as the names are blurred)

Zoan – Isaiah 9:11

Noph (Memphis) – Isaiah 9:13

Hanes – Isaiah 30:4

Pathros – Isaiah 11:11

Seba – Isaiah 43:3

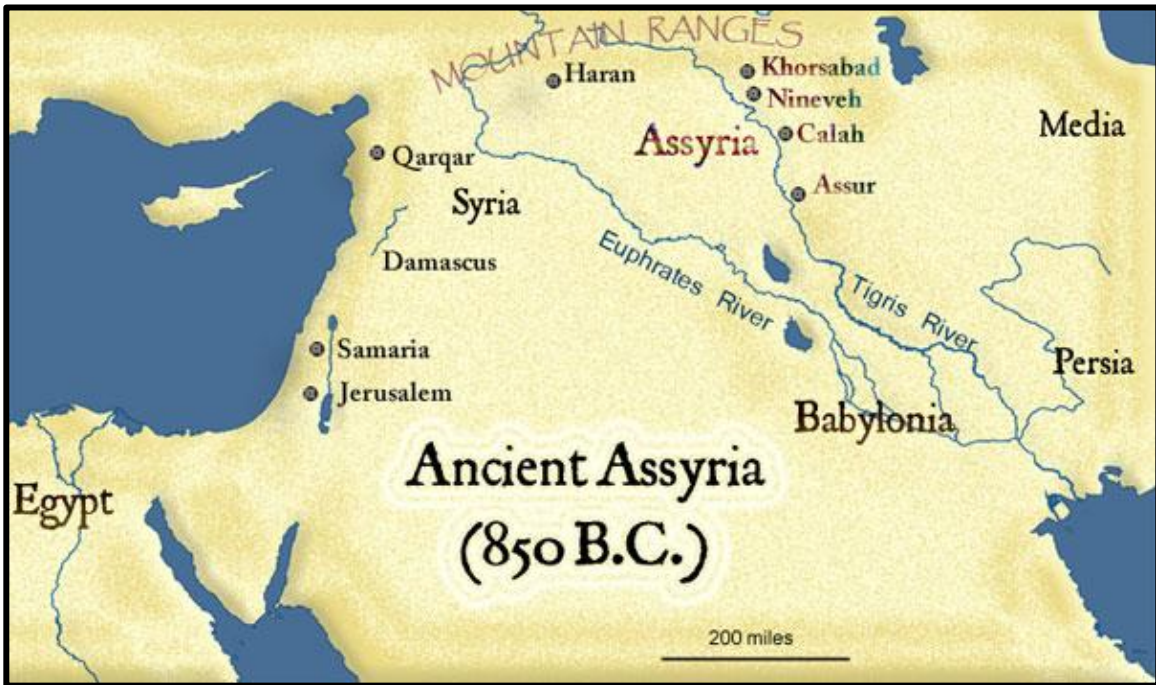
Ethiopia (Cush) – Isaiah 43:3

[Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 27.]

2 Nephi 17:18 **Assyria:**

The name of the ancient country whose inhabitants were called Assyrians. It lay in the upper Mesopotamian plain, bounded on the west by the Syrian desert, on the south by the Jebel Hamrin and Babylonia, and on the north and east by the Urtian (Armenian) and Persian hills. The most fertile and densely populated part of Assyria lay east of the central river Tigris.

Assyria, which is always carefully distinguished from Babylonia, stands for the world power whose invasions of Israel and Judah were divinely permitted, though later it too suffered destruction for its godlessness. There are frequent references to the land (Isaiah 7:18; Hosea 11:5) and to the kings of Assyria (Isaiah 8:4; 2 Kings 15-19). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 135-144.] [See 2 Nephi 21:11]



Assyria

bible-history.com

2 Nephi 17:18 **Assyria (Illustration – not shown):** Assyria and surrounding regions. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 142.]

2 Nephi 17:20 **Shall the Lord Shave With a Razor That Is Hired:**

The Assyrian king and army are likened to a razor. The razor is “hired” because the Assyrians were not the covenant people of the Lord. Therefore, the Lord is using them almost as mercenaries to act as His instrument for a short period of time. The kingdom of Judah is likened

to the hair of the head, feet, or beard that is cut down by this instrument. The phrase 'beyond the river' is used because the Assyrians were on the other side of the Euphrates River. The Lord is also making reference to an Assyrian practice of humiliating their enemies by shaving them.

Victor Ludlow writes:

"The humiliation and slavery that will befall the people is represented in verse 20 by the razor cutting off their hair. The Assyrians cut off all the hair from their captives for three reasons: humiliation, sanitation (especially while traveling under crude conditions to Assyria), and separation (if any slaves escaped while being moved from their homeland, they could not blend in with other peoples since their baldness would give them away; thus they usually were quickly recaptured, punished, and returned to their captors.)"

[Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, p. 145.]

2 Nephi 17:20 **The Beard:**

In the writings of Isaiah, reference is made to a beard (2 Nephi 17:20), which was part of the Semitic culture. According to Diane Wirth, Indians do not grow beards--this is a genetic fact. Either the men have no beards or they have only a few sparse hairs. The rest of their bodies have much less hair than do American Caucasians. So how are the numerous sculptures, the stone bas reliefs, the terracotta portraits of bearded Indians explained? Are they true "Indians," as these early Americans were called?

Kirk Magleby has done a statistical analysis of more than 230 bearded figures in Mesoamerica and found a remarkably even distribution of them throughout this area. Although bearded figures date from all time periods of the pre-Conquest era, Magleby found that they were more frequent during Book of Mormon times. This coincides quite well to the period called pre-Classic by archaeologists approximately 2300 B.C. to A.D. 300. By the time of the Aztecs, conquered by the Spanish in A.D. 1521, such portrayals of the beard were relatively rare. (Magleby, "A Survey of Mesoamerican Bearded Figures," F.A.R.M.S.).

Several Mexican codices depict leaders with appended false beards, apparently an important feature of the elite. The Indians took pride in their ancestral heritage and false beards were symbolic of greatness and royalty. This was not unlike men of the Jewish culture in the Old World who considered a man's beard a sign of dignity and honor. . . . An obvious decline in the number of bearded figures took place at the close of the pre-Classic period, precisely when the Nephite civilization collapsed [circa A.D. 385]. According to Alexander von Wuthenau, "I began an intensified study of pre-Columbian terracotta heads . . . what I was looking for were typical "Indian" heads. It was not long, however, before I discovered that in the early, lower levels these "genuine Indians" were not to be found. The earliest figures encountered were those with Mongoloid characteristics, and . . . all kinds of white people, especially Semitic types with and without beards . . . What is considered to be genuine Indian only developed, so far as I am able to

judge on the strength of these terracotta representations, in early and middle Classic times, and probably derived from earlier types.

[Diane E. Wirth, A Challenge to the Critics, pp. 29,32.]



2 Nephi 17:20 **The beard (Illustration):** Bearded man, incense burner from Maya zone at Iximche, near Chimaltenango, Guatemala. Reproduced from *Discoveries of the Truth* by Diane E. Wirth, 1978. (Photo courtesy of Musee de l'Homme, Paris.) [Diane E. Wirth, A Challenge to the Critics, p. 30.]



2 Nephi 17:20 **The beard (Illustration):** A bearded figure from the Rio Balsas, Guerrero, Mexico (Neg. #274381, courtesy Dept. Library Services, American Museum of Natural History.) [Diane E. Wirth, A Challenge to the Critics, p. 30.]

Chapter 18

2 Nephi 18:1 **Take Thee a Great Roll, and Write in It with a Man's Pen:**



Isaiah Scroll (Dead Sea Scrolls)

parablesblog.blogspot.com



2 Nephi 18:1 **Take thee a great roll (Illustration):** The Great Isaiah Scroll, discovered in 1947, is one of the Dead Sea Scrolls: The scroll contains all sixty six chapters of Isaiah. IT consists of seventeen pieces of animal skin sewn together to form a single scroll measuring twenty—four and one-half feet in length. . [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 129]



Isaiah writing on a “great roll”

womeninthescrptures.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 18:3 Then Said the Lord to Me: Call His Name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz:

Like Shearjashub, Isaiah’s other son was to be given a name with prophetic significance. The name warns of imminent destruction (the name means literally, “to speed the spoil, he hasteneth the prey”) and it has reference to the imminent destruction of Syria, Israel, and Judah. The use of the term, “prophetess,” is used to refer to Isaiah’s wife. It is not meant to indicate a prophetic calling, although there were female prophets in the Old Testament. See Ex 15:20, Judges 4:4, 2 Kings 22:14, and Nehemiah 6:14.

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 18:4 The Child Shall Not Have Knowledge to Cry . . . Before the Riches of Damascus and the Spoil of Samaria Be Taken Away:

This interpretation is not difficult. Isaiah is prophesying that before his son will be old enough to speak the kingdom of Syria (whose capital is Damascus) and the kingdom of Israel (whose capital is Samaria) will be taken by the Assyrians. This is a recurring theme from the

preceding chapters. Isaiah could be referring to either the capture of the Israel and Syria described in 2 Kings 15:29 or the final destruction of Israel which occurred about ten years later, circa 722 BC, (2 Kings 17:6). The timing of these chapters suggests the former interpretation.

The external history of the Assyrians gives their version of the events described in 2 Kings 15:29. From the Cuneiform Text of Pul:

“His noblemen I impaled alive and displayed this exhibition to his land. All his gardens and fruit orchards I destroyed. I besieged and captured the native city of Reson [Rezin] of Damascus. 800 people with their belongings I led away. Towns in 16 districts of Damascus I laid waste like mounds after the flood.

“Bet-Omri [Israel] all of whose cities I had added to my territories on my former campaigns, and had left out only the city of Samaria. The whole of Nephtali I took for Assyria. I put my officials over them as governors. The land of Bet-Omri, all its people and their possessions I took away to Assyria.

“They overthrew Pekah their king and I made Hosea to be king of them.” (Keller, *The Bible as History*, p. 245)

[Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, p. 158].

2 Nephi 18:6 **Forasmuch As This People Refuseth the Waters of Shiloah:**

The term, “Shiloh”, is first used to refer to the Messiah in Genesis 49:10. The name means, “he to whom it belongs.” The entire reason that the Lord brought the Assyrians to destroy the kingdom of Israel was because they had rejected the Lord, ‘For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God...And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant’ (2 Kings 17:7,15). It is apparent that ‘the waters of Shiloah that go softly’ represent the Lord and his kindness. These had been rejected in favor of two wicked kings, Rezin and Pekah (Remaliah’s son).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

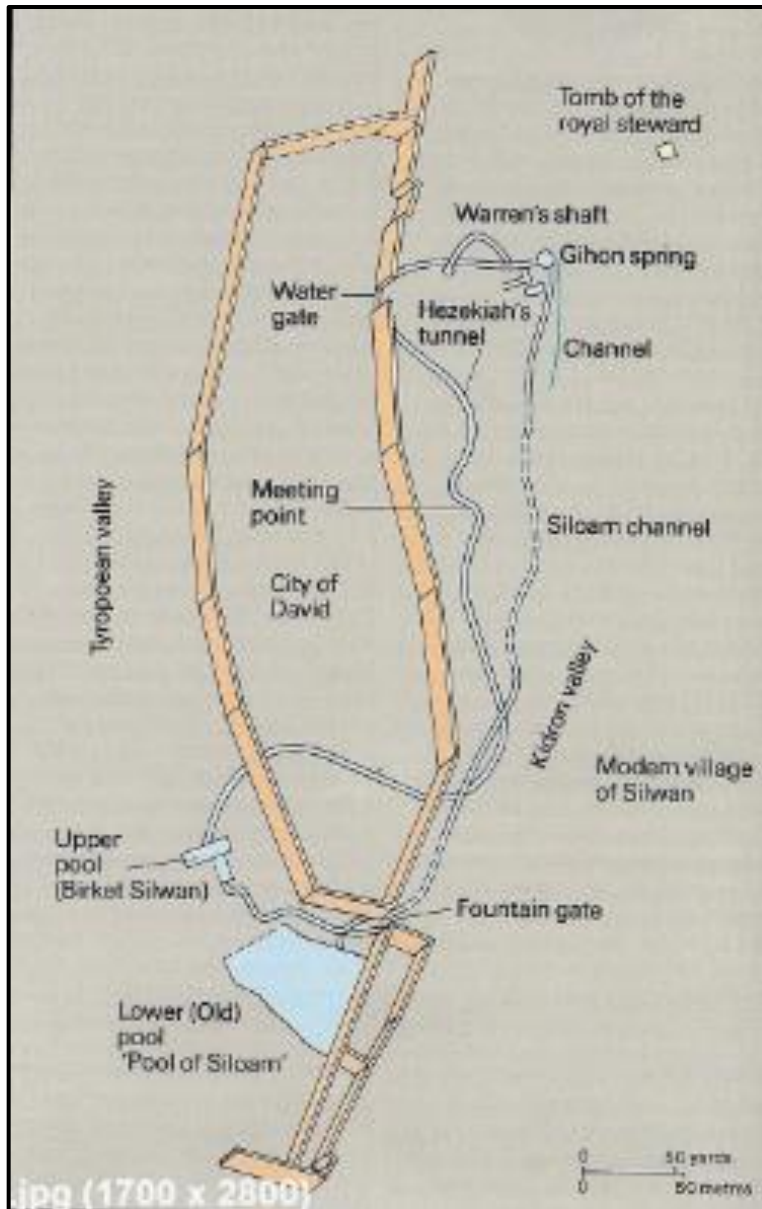


Pool of Shiloah & the end of Hezekiah's Tunnel

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

2 Nephi 18:6 **Waters of Shiloah:**

One of the principal sources of water supply to Jerusalem was the intermittent pool of Gihon ("Virgin's Fountain") below the Fountain Gate (Nehemiah 3:15). This fed water along an open canal, which flowed slowly along the southeast slopes, called *siloah*, ("Sender"; LXX *Siloam*--Isaiah 8:6). It followed the line of the later "second aqueduct" (Wilson) discharging into the Lower or Old Pool. This Old Pool was probably the "Pool of Siloam" in use in New Testament times for sick persons and others to wash (John 9:7-11). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1452]



2 Nephi 18:6 **Waters of Shiloah (Illustration):** Plan of the Siloam area, including the pools and the channels which carried the water into the city of Jerusalem. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1452]

The Bible also indicates that the kings of Israel were buried in a special area near Jerusalem. These tombs were close to the pool of Shelah ("Siloam"--RSV) or ("Siloah" --AV) (see Nehemiah 3:15). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 1416, 1435]

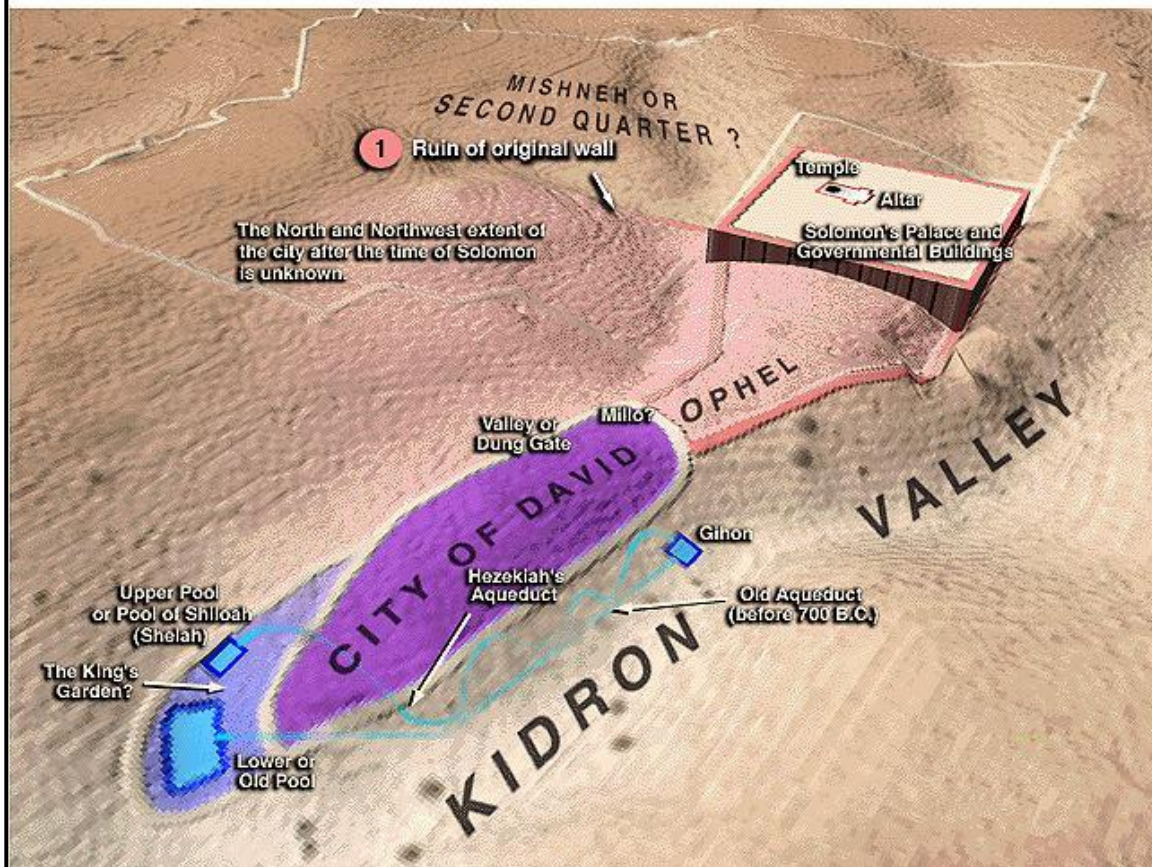


2 Nephi 18:6 **Waters of Shiloah (Illustration):** Plan showing the probable location of the "Sepulchres of the Kings" within the city of David, and the positions of other tombs dating from Solomon to the fall of Judah. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1416]

According to the Talmud (*Sukkoth* 4.9), water was drawn from Siloam's pool in a golden vessel to be carried in procession to the Temple on the Feast of Tabernacles. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1452]

Finally, the waters of Shiloah were near the fuller's field, where garments were cleansed and bleached and spread to dry in the sun (2 Kings 18:17; Isaiah 7:3; 36:2). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 128]

Jerusalem in Israelite Times



Jerusalem Pool of Siloam

biblelight.net



2 Nephi 18:6-7 **The waters of Shiloah (Illustration):** The Pool of Siloam of New Testament times is thought to be the same as the "waters of Shiloah" mentioned by Isaiah. The pool receives its waters from the Gihon Spring that flows through Hezekiah's Tunnel. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 30]



2 Nephi 18:6-7 **The waters of Shiloah (Illustration):** The Gihon Spring at the entrance of Hezekiah's Tunnel, Jerusalem. The Gihon Spring flows from a natural cave on the west side of the valley of Kidron, south of where Solomon's temple once stood to the Pool of Siloam of New Testament times. In the Old Testament period, the spring was the chief source of water for Jerusalem's inhabitants. Solomon was anointed king near the spring in a sacred ceremony. Perhaps other kings were anointed here as well. From this spring King Hezekiah's engineers ran a tunnel under the city to safeguard Jerusalem's water supply from the invading Assyrians. The Gihon Spring is likely the "upper pool" mentioned by Isaiah. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 9]

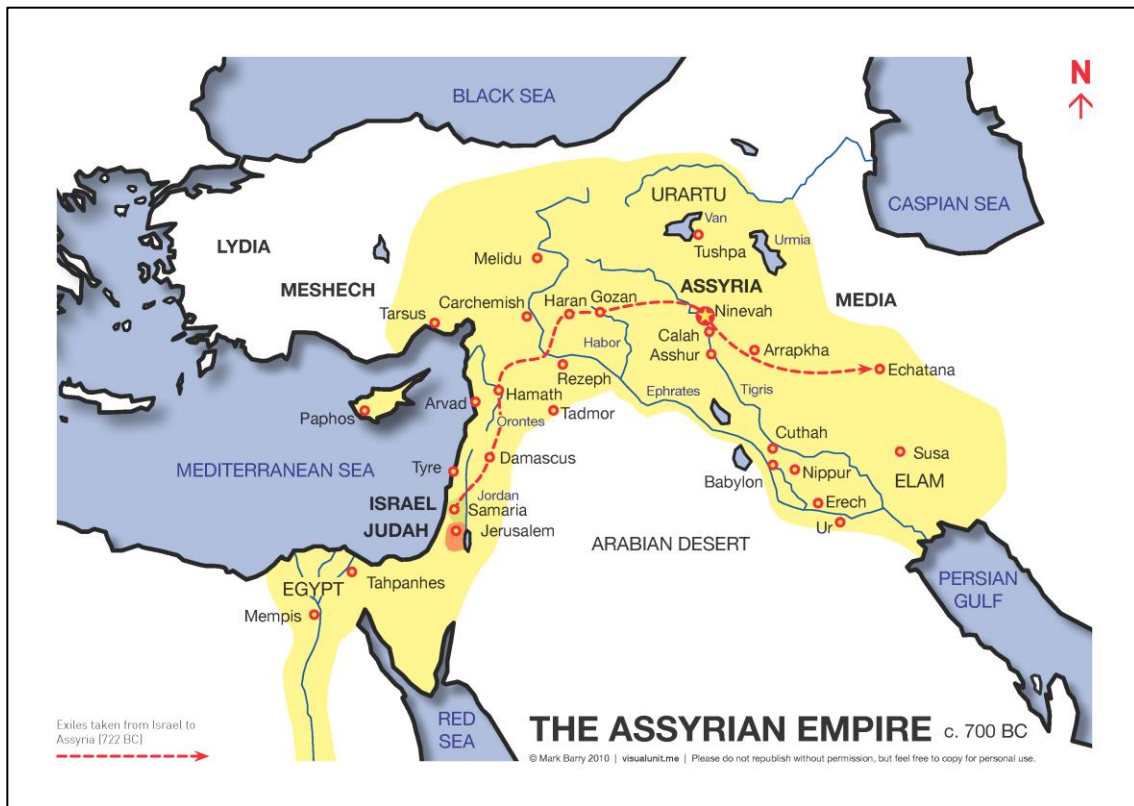
2 Nephi 18:8 **The Lord Bringeth upon Them the Waters of the River . . . Even the King of Assyria:**

In verse 6, the Lord had been referred to as the “waters of Shiloah.” Isaiah continues the water theme by likening the king of Assyria to a great river. The Assyrians were on the other side of the Euphrates River, and this is probably the river to which Isaiah is referring. At any rate, the armies of the Assyrians overcome the kingdom of Israel like the flood of an overflowing river. The destruction would completely overcome them. The kingdom of Judah would also be attacked but would survive the flood of Assyrians. The imagery is that the floodwaters ‘shall reach even to the neck’ (v. 9)—almost drowning Judah. The fact that the head remained above

water means that the head of Judah, Jerusalem, would be spared. (See Commentary for 2 Nephi 17:17).

“Isaiah describes and then contrasts two forms of waters—the soft, rolling waters of Shiloah, located near the temple mount of Jerusalem, and the waters of the Euphrates, a great river that often floods out of control. The waters of Shiloah are controlled and inviting, whereas the Euphrates is dangerous and destructive. The waters of Shiloah bring life to those who drink them; the Euphrates brings death to those who are swept up in its flood. Isaiah's images of the two waters are symbolic: the former represents Jesus, the King of Heaven, who is likened to the waters of life; the latter is the king of Assyria, who leads his great, destructive armies and ‘cover the earth [like a flood . . . and] destroy the inhabitants thereof’ (Jer. 46:8). Inasmuch as the inhabitants of Judah had rejected Jesus, or the waters of Shiloah, the Lord set upon them the king of Assyria, or the strong and mighty waters of the river that would overflow their banks and cover the entire land with its destruction.” (Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah*, p. 83]

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]



The Assyrian Empire c. 700 BC

visualunit.me



2 Nephi 18:6-7 **The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria (Illustration):** The waters of the river represent the king of Assyria who leads his great, destructive armies "like a flood" to "cover the earth" (see Jeremiah 46:8). Tiglath-pileser III's Flood Metaphor. Map: The Assyrian Empire, 9th to 7th Centuries B.C. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 31]

2 Nephi 18:8 **He [Assyria] Shall Reach Even to Thy Neck:**

Assyria fulfilled this prophecy before being stopped via death by plague of 185,000 soldiers:

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord.

For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

And it came to pass that night that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned and dwelt at Nineveh. (2 Kings 19:32-36)

2 Nephi 18:14 **A Stone of Stumbling:**



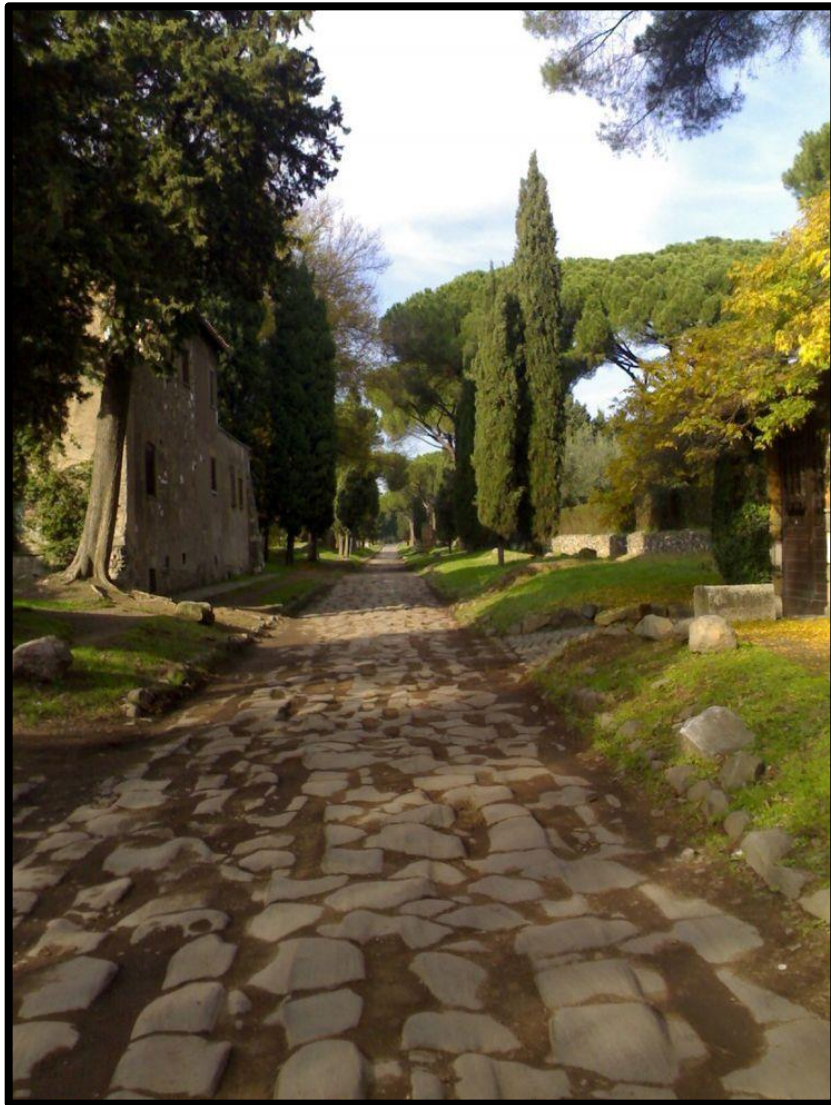
2 Nephi 18:14 **A stone of stumbling (Illustration):** This well-worn path near Montfort, northern Israel, is filled with stumbling stones that may cause path users to trip and fall. Stumbling stones were much more common for travelers in the ancient world than now, with today's numerous cement sidewalks and paved roads. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 77]

2 Nephi 18:14 **A Stone of Stumbling:**

In Isaiah 8:14 it says that the Lord would be a sanctuary, or a protection for the covenant faithful,
“but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense, and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,” or an impediment for those that disobeyed the Lord’s covenant way. Thus the

children of Israel would stumble because they rejected, and would reject the “Stone of Israel” (D&C 50:44), also referred to as “The Chief Cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20).

These titles come from a different point in time than the times of Isaiah, and so perhaps another perspective can be taken on the words of Isaiah. In the times of Jesus and the Apostles there were well-constructed Roman roads. The Roman roads began at Rome and extended to the borders of their domain — hence the expression, "All roads lead to Rome"



The Appian Way

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

One of the most famous Roman roads was called The Appian Way. It was built in 312 B.C. and was one of the first long roads built outside the smaller region of greater Rome. It was built mainly for defense.

The Roman army depended for its success on the use of bases. Bases allowed the

Romans to keep a large number of soldiers in the field for military purposes. However, the bases needed to be connected by good roads for easy access and supply from Rome. The Appian Way was used as a main route for military supplies.

If the condition of this road was neglected, and its stones became “stumbling stones,” then the defensive powers of the nation were diminished. In the same manner as the Romans the covenant children of Israel might say: “All roads lead to Zion.” If that “covenant way” is neglected, then the whole nation can be in peril.

[Alan Miner Personal Notes]

2 Nephi 18:8 **The Breadth of Thy Land, O Immanuel:**

Immanuel means “God with us,” and refers to the mortal Messiah (2 Ne 17:14) The Lord spent most of his mortal ministry in the land of Galilee—the same area which is about to be overrun by the Assyrian armies. Therefore the term “thy land, O Immanuel” is referring to the area where the Lord will perform his work as the Messiah. The same interpretation applies to 2 Ne 19:1-2.

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 18:9-13 **Associate Yourselves, O Ye People, and Y Shall Be Broken:**

The theme of these five verses is that the Lord does not approve of the military alliances which the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are making. The Lord has taught them in the past to trust in Him. He has even fought their battles. In a battle between the children of Israel and the Amorites ‘the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon...the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword...And Joshua said unto to them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom he fight’ (Joshua 10:10-11,25).

If the children of Israel had continued to worship the Lord, He would have continued to fight their battles in just as dramatic a fashion. When the Lord is fighting your battles, you do not need the help of neighboring nations. Nevertheless, the kingdom of Israel had made an alliance with Syria, and the kingdom of Judah had made an alliance with Assyria. They had begun to put their trust in the arm of flesh instead of the Lord. Hence the counsel, ‘Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear and let him be your dread’ (v. 13).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 18:14 **A Stone of Stumbling, and For a Rock of Offense:**

A man who stumbles on a rock falls on his face. He may get up again, curse, and kick the offending stone, but in doing so he only further bruises himself. The rock is never injured; the man has neither the power nor the strength to destroy the rock. His misfortune has come by looking beyond the mark, whereby he misses the rock completely, stumbles clumsily, and falls spiritually. For the Israelites, the path of righteousness was obstructed by just such a 'stone of stumbling' and 'rock of offense.'

The Lord of Hosts became a stumbling block for the Jews both in the days of Isaiah and in the days of his mortal ministry. They were offended with by the wisdom, power, and authority of Jesus of Nazareth. This stumbling came because they did not understand the reason the Law of Moses was given. As Paul explained 'Because they (the Jews) sought it (the law of righteousness) not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed' (Rom 9:32-3).

'But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand. Wherefore, because of their blindness, which blindness came by looking beyond the mark, they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble.' (Jacob 4:14)

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 18:17 **I Will Wait upon the Lord:**

To "wait upon the Lord" is defined by Isaiah in the same verse—"to look for him" (Isaiah. 8:17; 2 Nephi 18:17). Apparently the word "wait" here has the same connotation as in the word "waiter" in a restaurant, or as a servant. Again Isaiah declares: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31). Those who "wait upon the Lord" look to Him for direction, and are actively involved in doing the things which he might require of them.

[Alan Miner Personal Notes]

2 Nephi 18:18 I and the Children Whom the Lord Hath Given Me Are For Signs and For Wonders:

Isaiah, a name which means “Jehovah saves,” was established as a prophet to the nations. His sons were given “for signs and wonders” because they were given names of prophetic significance. Shearjashub means “the remnant shall return,” and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, which means “to speed the spoil, he hasteneth the prey,” was given to the children of Israel as a sign from the Lord that they would soon be destroyed.

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 18:19-22 They Shall Say unto You: Seek unto Them That Have Familiar Spirits:

“The expression ‘familiar spirits’ is not an accurate term to convey the significance of the Hebrew term used anciently. The Hebrew word ob means ‘a leather bottle or bag’ (see William Gesenius, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, p. 15). This object was used by the practitioners of necromancy, a deceptive craft of pretended communication with the dead. The art involved a kind of ventriloquism wherein the voice or message of the ‘departed spirits’ was called forth from the bag or sometimes a pit. (See G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, 1:131, 133-34) The peeping (chirping) and muttering (twittering) somewhat like birds was intended to invoke the departed spirits or to convey the pretended message (see Young, Book of Isaiah, 1:318). The Lord warned Israel and Judah of such deceptions early in their history (see Leviticus 19:31; 20:27; Deut 18:10-11). President Joseph Fielding Smith in commenting on these ancient practices gave this warning that applies even today:

“To seek for information through...any way contrary to the instruction the Lord has given is a sin. The Lord gave positive instruction to Israel when they were in the land of their inheritance that they were to go to him for revelation and to avoid the devices prevalent among the heathen nations who occupied their lands...

“All through the Bible, the New Testament as well as the Old, the Lord and his prophets have expressed their displeasure when the people turned from the Lord to ‘familiar spirits.’” (Answers to Gospel Questions, 4:33)

[1981 LDS [Old Testament Institute Manual](#), pp 145-146]

2 Nephi 18:19 You Seek unto Them That Have Familiar Spirits, and unto Wizards That Peep:

A number of scriptures refer to "familiar spirits." It was believed anciently that these particular spirits had supernatural power and could appear in human or animal form. Apparently, a familiar spirit would attend a witch, wizard, medicine man, etc., and could be called upon for service at any time by their master.



Wizard with crystal ball

yattermatters.com

In the remote past, it was believed that these specific spirits could bring up the spirits of the dead to converse with mortals. This belief is evident in the following scripture: "And when they shall say unto you: Seek unto *them that have familiar spirits*, and unto wizards that peep and mutter--should not a people seek unto their God for the living to hear from the dead?" (2 Nephi 18:19; see also Isaiah 8:19) Even if familiar spirits have the power to bring up the spirits of the dead, those who truly love the Lord will seek to the Creator of Spirits to communicate with the dead rather than to a source that is forbidden by Him. Under the law of Moses, Israel was commanded not to go to "a consulter with familiar spirits" (Deuteronomy 18:11). [Vicki Alder, *Mysteries in the Scriptures: Enlightenment through Ancient Beliefs*, pp. 264-265]

Note* Perhaps a proper discussion could be placed here regarding Joseph Smith's use of "peep stones." Anti-Mormons love to bring the subject up, only to look at it from the wrong perspective. A simple explanation here might help to defend the Book of Mormon. A more detailed

explanation is positioned with the commentary on the translation process. See also the commentary on the brother of Jared.

Chapter 19

2 Nephi 19:1 **Land of Zebulun:**

Generally speaking, the land of Zebulun occupied a broad wedge in southern Galilee between Asher and Naphtali with Manasseh to the southwest and Issachar to the southeast. In the great covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem, Zebulun was assigned an inferior place with Reuben and the "handmaiden" tribes (Deuteronomy 27:13).

Zebulun suffered severely in the Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 15:29; cf. Isaiah 9:1), many of its inhabitants were deported and its territory was assimilated into the Assyrian empire. However, its tribal identity survived, and its inhabitants are included among the participants in Hezekiah's Passover (2 Chronicles 30:10-22). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 1676-1677] [See Matthew 4:13-16]



Land of Zebulun and Naphtali broadneckbaptist.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 19:1 **Land of Zebulun (Illustration – not shown):** The territory of Zebulun with approximate boundaries. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1676]

2 Nephi 19:1 **The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali (Illustration – not shown):** The lands of Zebulun and Naphtali are in Galilee, where Jesus lived much of His youth. Artist: Tom Child. [Thomas R. Valletta ed., The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families, 1999, p. 117]

2 Nephi 19:1 **Land of Naphtali:**

Naphtali was the sixth son of Jacob. In most of the administrative lists the tribe of Naphtali comes last (*e.g.* Numbers 1:15, 42ff.; 2:29ff.; 7:78; 10:27). The Blessing of Moses commands Naphtali to "possess the lake and the south" (Deuteronomy 33:23) and following the settlement its tribal portion comprised a broad strip west of the Sea of Galilee and the upper Jordan, including the greater portion of east and central Galilee. This territory is roughly delineated in Joshua 19:32-39.

Naphtali included also the largest Canaanite city, Hazor, which dominated a vital trade route. Hazor, although destroyed by the Israelites under Joshua (Joshua 11:10f.), reasserted itself and, whilst never regaining its former prestige, it was not finally vanquished until well into the Judges' period (Judges 4:2, 23f.). Another important city was Kedesh, a levitical city and one of the cities of refuge (Joshua 20:7; 21:32). The strong Canaanite element is reflected in Judges 1:33, "Naphtali . . . dwelt among the Canaanites."

Naphtali was vulnerable because of its frontier situation and suffered attacks from the north. The tribe of Naphtali was the first west of the Jordan to be deported in 734 B.C. (2 Kings 15:29). A probable reconstruction of Tiglath-pileser III's account of this campaign notes his annexation of the region, ". . . the wide land of Naphtali, in its entire extent, I united with Assyria." Isaiah 9:1 alludes to the same event.

The territory of Naphtali included some of the most fertile areas of the entire land. Jesus spent the greatest part of his public life in this area which, because of its checkered history of deportations and infusion of new settlers, was greatly despised by the Jews of Jerusalem. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 1053-1054] [See Matthew 4:13-16]

2 Nephi 19:1 **Land of Naphtali (Illustration – not shown):** The land occupied by the tribe of Naphtali. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 1054]

2 Nephi 19:1 **[Red] Sea?:**

In 2 Nephi 19:1 we find the following:

Nevertheless, the dimness [or affliction referred to in 1 Nephi 18:22] shall not be such as was when at first he [or apparently the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser and Sargon II] lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun [or the Nazareth area] and the land of Naphtali [in Northern Israel], and afterwards did more grievously afflict [northern Israel] by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

The Book of Mormon student should take note that the word "Red" appears in 2 Nephi 19:1, whereas it is absent in the corresponding verse of Isaiah 9:1. Critics of the Book of Mormon

have jumped on this supposed addition to the text as a foolish geographical mistake by Joseph Smith, for the Red Sea is well to the south of Galilee some 250 miles.

According to a posting by "mikeyom" on April 7, 1998, there are three points to consider when trying to evaluate the impact on interpretation made by the inclusion of the term "Red Sea" in 2 Nephi 19:1.

Point #1: In 2 Nephi 19:1 the Hebrew word *kabad* is translated as "grievously" ("and afterwards did more *grievously* afflict"). Some commentators have taken the position that in this instance the word "grievously" actually means "to gloriously bless" or "exalt." This has led them to make this verse a messianic prophecy. However, perhaps the primary meaning of the word *kabad* should remain just as it was translated--"grievously." In Genesis 18:20 we also find the word "kabad" ("And the Lord said, because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because *their sin is very grievous*"). Clearly, the Lord is not saying that the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah are honourable. In Exodus 5:9, 8:15, 8:32, 9:7, etc., the word "kabad" is also associated with grievous trials which men must go through. Matthew Henry's Commentary on Isaiah 9:1 has a similar view: "Note, God tries what less [lighter afflictions] will do with a people before he brings greater [or more grievous] judgments.

Point #2: The phrase "by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan" implies a route. Commentators have commonly linked the phrase in Isaiah ("the way of the sea") to either a route along the Mediterranean, a route passing by the Sea of Galilee, or both. However, the phrase "by the way of the Red Sea" might imply a route of the king's highway, a major travel route that extended from the northern tip of the Red Sea (Gulf of Aqaba) all the way to Damascus (see map).



Point #3: Apparently the area beyond Jordan (the route of the King's Highway) was the area from which a *second* vexation afflicted the northern kingdom of Israel. Reading 2 Nephi 19:1 again we find the following:

Nevertheless, the dimness [or affliction referred to in 1 Nephi 18:22] shall not be such as was when **at first [1]** he [or the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser and Sargon II] lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun [or the Nazareth area] and the land of Naphtali [in Northern Israel], and **afterwards [2]** did more grievously afflict [northern Israel] by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

There are reputable commentators who suggest that a second vexation did indeed come from east of Jordan ("beyond Jordan"). The tenth chapter of 2 Kings can be cited in support:

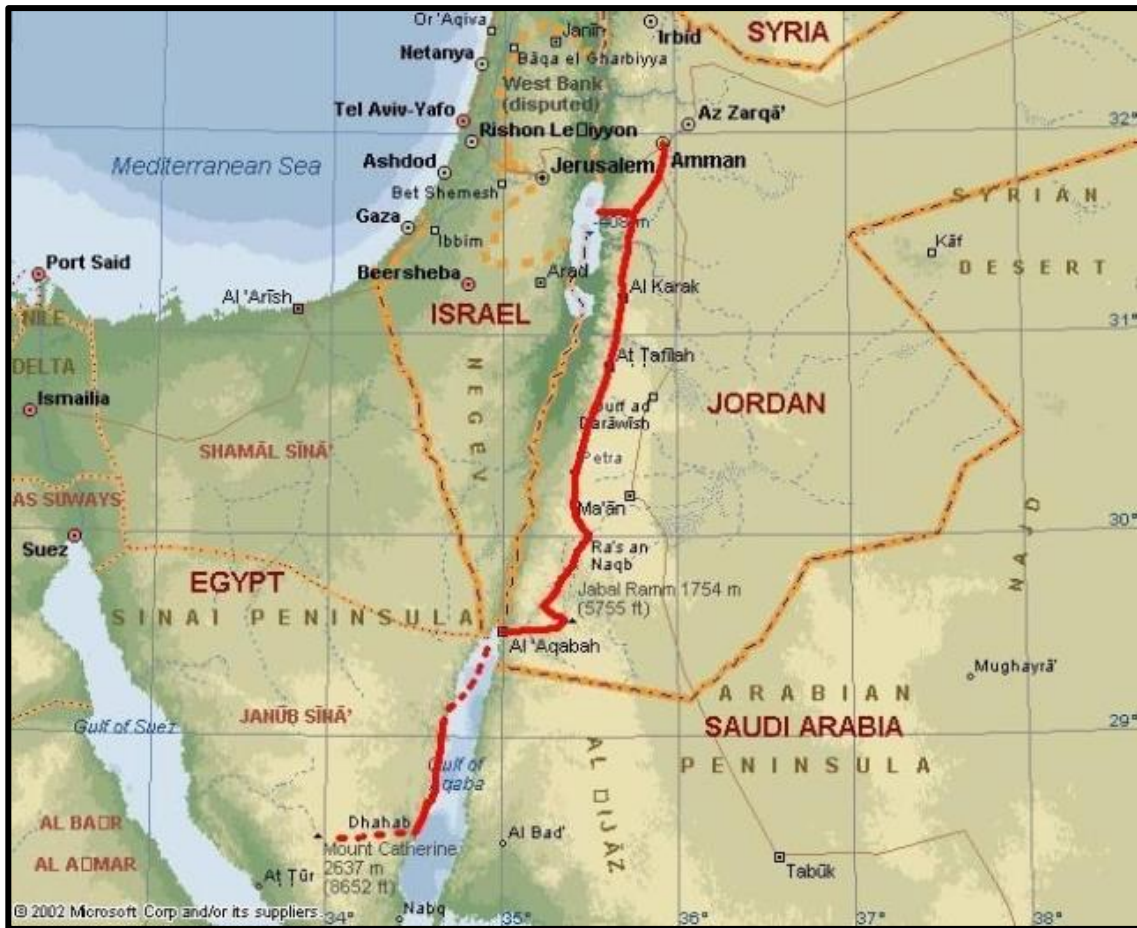
In those days [the days of king Jehu, king over northern Israel in Samaria] the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; From the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. (2 Kings 10:32-33)

An analysis of any Bible Atlas reveals that all of the above named locations were east of (or "beyond") Jordan, along the King's Highway. Thus one might conclude not only that there were two vexations, but that the second vexation came from "beyond Jordan" from the area or route of

the King's Highway.

[mikeyom, <http://exmormon.org/boards/honestboard/messages/19.html>; <http://lds-mormon.com, 7/14/2001>]

Note* Now it says or prophesies in 2 Nephi 19:2 that the people (that have been in darkness) have seen (or will see) a great light (Christ). It is interesting that when Christ came and dwelt in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali, a prophecy concerning that part of his life is said to have been fulfilled (see Matthew 4:13). Could the "great light" that was to shine on the people of northern Israel "by way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan" have reference to the coming first of John the Baptist out of the wilderness to prepare the way (he taught beyond Jordan). And could the answer to the second vexation come when Christ emerged from the wilderness and presented himself to John to be baptized as John was baptizing "beyond Jordan"? Is it possible that during Christ's preparation in the wilderness he had traveled south to the Red Sea, specifically to Mt Horeb (Sinai) in Arabia?



The way of the Red Sea??

images.exploder.org

Note on the above illustration* The route (in red) goes all the way to the traditional Mt. Sinai (Mt. Catherine) in the Sinai Peninsula. However, others think that Mt. Sinai was in the land of Midian, on the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba (Red Sea) – in Arabia. Their location for Mt. Sinai would be somewhat near to "Al Bad" on this map, in the "Dijaz" or Hijaz mountains. [Alan Miner Personal Notes]

Many things in Moses' life were a pattern for that of Christ. Moses was prepared for his ministry at Sinai. He spent 40 days and nights preparatory to receiving the law. Was Sinai also "the wilderness" by the Red Sea where Jesus was instructed and communed with his father for forty days? Did Jesus retrace the path of Israel from Sinai into the promised land by way of the Red Sea? Jesus was baptized of John in the waters of Jordan at Bethabara. This is the area where Joshua crossed through the waters of Jordan as he led the covenant children of Israel into the Promised land.

[Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes] [See the commentary on the location of Mt. Sinai in 1 Nephi 4:2; 3 Nephi 25:4]

2 Nephi 19:1 **The RED Sea:**

Donald Parry makes Isaiah 9:1 part of an extended section from Isaiah 8:16 to 9:2 (compare 2 Nephi 18:16-19:2) and gives it the title "Sealing the Testimony and the Law." It reads as follows:

Sealing the Testimony and the Law (8:16-9:2)

Bind up the testimony,
seal the law among my disciples. (8:16)

And I will wait upon the Lord, who hides his face from the house of Jacob,
and I will hope for him. (8:17)

Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and for wonders in

Israel from the Lord of Hosts,
who dwells in mount Zion. (8:18)

And when they will say unto you, seek unto them that have [spirits of the dead],^{viii}
and unto wizards that peep and mutter--

should not a people seek unto their God
for the living to [hear from]^{ix} the dead? (8:19)

To the law and to the testimony; [and]^x if they speak not according to this word,
it is because there is no light in him. (8:20)

And he will pass through the land, distressed and hungry;
and it will come to pass that when he becomes hungry,

he will become enraged,
and curse his king and his God,

and he will look upward. (8:21)
And he will look to the earth;

And behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish;
and he will be thrust into darkness. (8:22)
But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish.

In former times he held the land of Zebulun
and the land of Naphtali in contempt,

but afterwards he honored Galilee of the nations, by the way of the [Red]^{xi} Sea,
along the Jordan. (9:1)

The people who are walking in darkness have seen a great light;
those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has the light
shined. (9:2)

The Messiah---The Son Becomes the New King (9:3-7)

You have increased the rejoicing,
you have^{xii} magnified the joy;

[and]^{xiii} they rejoice before you as one rejoices at harvest time,
and as one rejoices when dividing the booty, (9:3)

[Donald W. Parry, Harmonizing Isaiah, pp. 62-64]

2 Nephi 19:1 **Afflict by the Way of the Red Sea:**

John Tvedtnes compares the Isaiah verses in the Book of Mormon with the King James Bible and comes up with the following:

KJV: "afflict *her* by the way of the sea" (Isaiah 9:1)
BM: "afflict by the way of the Red Sea" (2 Nephi 19:1)

He writes that the deletion of italicized "*her*" is understandable, since it is not in the Masoretic Hebrew Text. However, the Book of Mormon text must be wrong in speaking of the "RED Sea", which is certainly not "beyond Jordan, in Galilee", nor near the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. This appears to be a case of scribal overcorrection [by whom?] due to prior mention of the Red Sea in the Book of Mormon text. In Matthew 4:12-16 we have this verse of Isaiah apparently quoted as follows:

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.
[John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," FARMS, p. 45]

Note* For a differing view in regards to "scribal overcorrection" or "faults" in the text of the Book

of Mormon see my commentary for the Title Page under "faults."

2 Nephi 19:1 **Jordan:**

The Jordan depression is unique among the features of physical geography. Formed as a result of a rift valley, it is the lowest depression on earth. The headwaters of the river Jordan, fed by springs, collect into Lake Huleh, 70 meters above sea-level. Ten kilometers south at Lake Tiberius the river is already nearly 200 meters below the Mediterranean, while at the northern end of the Dead Sea the floor of the trench has plunged to 393 meters below sea-level. Thus the name "Jordan" aptly means "the descender."

While on the north the Jordan has a vivid green vegetation cover and is the haunt of wild animals, moving southward it becomes increasingly more arid until at the head of the Dead Sea there is scarcely more than 5 cm. mean annual rainfall.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 809-812] [See 1 Nephi 10:9; 17:32]



2 Nephi 19:1 **Jordan (Illustration – not shown):** The Jordan valley in Old Testament times.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 811]



The Jordan Valley – modern times

icpa.org

2 Nephi 19:1 Galilee of the Nations:

The name Galilee denotes the regional name of part of northern Palestine, which was the scene of Christ's boyhood and early ministry. The term Galilee occurs occasionally in the Old Testament (*e.g.* Joshua 20:7; 1 Kings 9:11), and notably in Isaiah 9:1. The latter reference probably recalls the region's history: it originally formed part of the lands allocated to the twelve tribes, but, owing to the pressure from peoples farther north, its Jewish population found themselves in a kind of northern salient, surrounded on three sides by non-Jewish populations--"the nations."

Galilee consists of an upland area, bordered on all sides save the north by plains. Much of Upper Galilee is at 1,000 meters above sea-level. In New Testament times it was a forested and thinly inhabited hill-country. Lower Galilee is at 450-600 meters above sea-level, but falls steeply to more than 180 meters below sea-level at the Sea of Galilee. It is to the area of Lower Galilee that most of the Gospel narrative refers.

Outside the main stream of Israelite life in Old Testament times, Galilee came into its own in the New Testament. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, p. 537]



historicjesus.com

2 Nephi 19:1 **Galilee of the Nations (Illustration – not shown):** New Testament Galilee: the scene of Christ's childhood and early ministry. [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, p. 539]

2 Nephi 19:2 **The People That Walked in Darkness Have Seen a Great Light:**

The dimness and spiritual darkness of the kingdom of Israel is contrasted to the great light that will be seen in the exact same geographic location when the Lord begins His ministry. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali encompass what was known in Christ's day as Galilee. Compare the land of inheritance of Zebulun and Naphtali with the region of Galilee where Jesus ministered (maps 5 & 14 in 1990 LDS editions; maps 3 and 11 in newer 1999 LDS edition of maps). It is apparent that Isaiah is prophesying the location where the great light of Jesus Christ will be made manifest to his people. It will be made manifest in Galilee, in the towns of Cana, Capernaum, Nazareth, Chorazin, Gennesaret, etc. This prophecy was referred to by Matthew who wrote:

'And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.' (Matt 4:13-16).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 19:3 **Thou Hast . . . Increased the Joy:**

Notice the difference between verse 3 in the Book of Mormon version and verse 3 in the Isaiah version. The Book of Mormon version makes more sense and is more consistent with the interpretation described above.

"In the King James Version this verse states that the people would NOT increase their joy, but the Book of Mormon gives the correct rendition. In fact, the King James translators inserted a marginal note indicating there was some question about the word 'not.' The Revised Standard Version leaves out the 'not' just as the Book of Mormon did nearly a century earlier. The word 'not' obviously contradicts the next two phrases, which say that the joy of the people will be so exuberant that it will be similar to the happiness which always accompanies the gathering in of the harvest, or the happiness of those occasions when the booty is about to be distributed after a long, hard-fought campaign for victory." (W. Cleon Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks to Modern Times*, p. 222)

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 19:4 The Yoke Of His Burden, and the Staff of His Shoulder, the Rod of His Oppresor:

In biblical times, the staff and rod were used by taskmasters to beat slaves. A yoke was designed to harness together slaves. A staff could also be used on the shoulder to tie the hands of a slave. These three items--the yoke, staff, and rod--signify oppression. (see also Isaiah 10:5, 24-27). The language of this verse would awaken memories of the slavery the children of Israel suffered in Egypt before being led out of bondage by Moses. These scenes were to reappear when Northern Israel was taken captive to Assyria, and when Judah was taken captive to Babylonia.

[Alan Miner [Personal Notes](#)]



Slave yoke

celebrationpublications.org



Charlton Heston Ten Commandments [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)



Slave beaten with a rod [youthapologetictraining.com](https://www.youthapologetictraining.com)

2 Nephi 19:4 **Thou Hast Broken the Yoke of His Burden:**

Isaiah is often hard to understand because he will switch time periods without notifying the reader. Without the benefit of hindsight, we would not be able to determine which of his prophecies had reference to Christ's first coming and which had reference to his second. Verses 3-5 speak of both time periods simultaneously. They speak of the release of spiritual oppression (yoke of Israel's burden) that the mission and atonement of the Messiah will bring to Israel. They also speak of the release from political oppression that the Second Coming of the Messiah will bring to Israel.

When Isaiah speaks of the 'yoke of his burden,' he is also referring to a destruction which is to come upon the nation of Israel in the last days (See verse 1 of Isaiah chapters 15, 17, 19, 21, 23). "In biblical times, the staff and rod were used by taskmasters on slaves. These three items—the yoke, staff, and rod—signify oppression, or the burdens placed on Israel by its neighbors" (Donald Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, 79. The Lord will come to destroy Israel's enemies, and 'this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.' In the great battle the Lord will confuse the enemies of Israel and come with red apparel, or 'garments rolled in blood.' As Isaiah had prophesied elsewhere, 'their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come' (Isa. 63:3-4).

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

2 Nephi 19:6 **And the Government Shall Be Upon His Shoulder:**

Isaiah is prolific in his writings about the Messiah. However, his prophecies are often misunderstood because he does not always clarify the time period when the prophecy will be fulfilled. In this verse we see a classic example. The phrases "unto us a son is given" and "the government shall be upon his shoulder" are juxtaposed as if they were temporally related. In reality, the Savior was not to control the government of the earth or his people until the Second Coming. That is not made clear in Isaiah's prophecies. No wonder all the Jews of Christ's day expected him to free them from Roman authority. What else were they to think given Isaiah's writings?

Isaiah would have been more plain and simple with the Jews if they were righteous enough to deserve such plainness. Instead they sought for things which are hard to understand. Isaiah accommodated them. 'But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand' (Jacob 4:14).

That Jesus Christ will indeed rule both spiritually and politically is without question. This political authority is his right by birth. He descended from the royal line of David. But he did not

seek political reign during his mortal ministry, 'My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence' (Jn 18:36). Although he prayed that his father's kingdom would come on earth as it is in heaven, that prayer will only be answered when he comes on earth to reign during the Millennium.

'And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.' (Dan 7:14)

'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.' (Rev 11:15)

'For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver.' (DC 45:59)

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 19:10 The Bricks Are Fallen Down, But We Will Build With Hewn Stones:



2 Nephi 19:9-10 **The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones (Illustration):** Fallen bricks with hewn stones in the background at Hisham's Palace, near Jericho. In Isaiah's time, bricks were made of mud or clay mixed with sand, straw, or other material, and then baked in a kiln or dried by the sun. Bricks were inferior to hewn stone because bricks were more breakable. Additionally, hewn stone was more expensive to prepare. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 11]

2 Nephi 19:10 **The Sycamores Are Cut Down But We Will Change Them into Cedars:**

Sycamore trees are not highly valued commercially. The wood is not very strong and breaks easily. This makes sycamore wood not very useful in building furniture. It may be found in some less expensive pieces of furniture, but will not hold up to pressure or high usage for very long.



Sycamore wood

thelumbershack.com

Cedar is a lightweight and dimensionally stable wood that lies flat and stays straight,

which means it resists the natural tendency to crack and check as you might find in many other wood species. Its distinct cell structure discourages moisture rot by allowing it to dry out faster than outdoor furniture made from tropical hardwoods. Its bacterial and fungal resistance coupled with the fact that Cedar is 80% the strength of Oak, makes it the most desirable wood to use for building outdoor furniture.



Cedar chest

dutchcrafters.com

2 Nephi 19:9-10 **The sycamores are cut down (Illustration – not shown):** The fruit of a sycamore tree is abundant and nearly ripe, Jericho. The sycamore is a fruit-bearing tree valued for its figs and lumber. The Egyptians used its wood to make coffins, but apparently sycamore wood was not as precious as that of a cedar (Isaiah 9:10). The sycamore grows to a height of forty feet. Its branches spread widely from a short trunk. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 11]

2 Nephi 19:12 **The Syrians before [to the northeast of Israel] and the Philistines Behind [to the southwest]:**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 12:6]



2 Nephi 19:18 **For Wickedness Burneth . . . It Shall Devour the Briers and Thorns:**

The destruction promised to the kingdom of Israel is a type for the destruction of the wicked in the last days. 'For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up' (Mal 4:1).

'As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' (Matt 13:40-42)

2 Nephi 19:18 **Briars and Thorns:**



Briars

mcmiracle.com



Thorns

[flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/14811111@N00/10111111111/)

2 Nephi 19:20 They Shall Eat Every Man the Flesh of His Own Arm:

Cannibalism is the pinnacle of depravity. This deplorable condition was also prophesied by Moses. When Moses was about to bring the people into the land of Canaan, he repeated the promises of the Lord to the people. He also repeated the punishments that they would suffer if they rejected the Lord. These curses are contained in Deuteronomy 28 and very closely reflect the prophecies of destruction that Isaiah has been proclaiming.

‘The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption...and with an extreme burning, and with the sword...

The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies...and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth....

Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword...

The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth...a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young...

And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters’ (Deut 28:22,25,37,49-50,53)

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

Chapter 20

Note* Chapter 19 of Isaiah is set against an historical background recorded in 2 Kings, chapters 18 and 19. These chapters record a conflict between Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and the king of Assyria. They also show the relationship between King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah chapter 10, this relationship between prophet and king is juxtaposed against the relationship of Isaiah and king Ahaz. Many of the doctrinal themes contained in 2 Kings chapters 18 & 19 are also found in Isaiah chapter 10 (2 Nephi chapter 20). Thus, what follows below is a summary of 2 Kings chapters 18 & 19:

2 Kings Chapter 18 Summary Review

Super King

In the third year of Hoshea's reign in Israel, Ahaz's son Hezekiah rules as king in Judah.

Unlike his father, Hezekiah is a good king. In fact, he's an uncommonly good king.

Beginning at age twenty-five, he reigns twenty-nine more years, during which time he removes the sacred poles, pillars, and high places.

He also destroys the bronze serpent Moses had used (in a good, divinely-sanctioned way) in Numbers to help save the Israelites from fiery, flying serpent attacks. The serpent was called Nehushtan.

None of the kings of Judah were like Hezekiah in righteousness and piety before or after him.

He keeps all God's commandments, follows the ways of Moses, rebels against Assyria, and fights the Philistines.

Poolside Chillin'

In the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign, the King of Assyria, Shalmaneser (he finally gets a name in this chapter), besieges Samaria and destroys it.

In the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign, the Israelites of the northern kingdom are sent into exile as punishment for ignoring God's laws as given to Moses.

In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib, the new Assyrian King, decides to invade Judah. He captures all the fortified cities.

Hezekiah asks Sennacherib to lay off, saying that he'll take whatever penalty the Assyrians want him to pay.

Sennacherib wants Hezekiah to give him three hundred talents of silver and thirty of gold. Hezekiah agrees to pay up, stripping gold and treasure from the Temple.

But Sennacherib sends a massive army with his envoy, the Rabshakeh, to Jerusalem to collect the tribute.

They meet Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah (Hezekiah's envoys) at a pool.

An Unsavory Meal

The Rabshakeh boasts and mocks them, sending a message from Sennacherib.

He says that no one can resist the king. They shouldn't think that making an alliance with Egypt (which they've done) can help them.

He challenges them to find horsemen to saddle two thousand of the Assyrians' own horses and fight. Relying on the Lord won't help, he says, since the Lord commanded Sennacherib to attack.

The nervous trio of messengers ask the Rabshakeh to speak to them in Aramaic and not Hebrew so that the people in Jerusalem won't understand what is being said.

The Rabshakeh says that everyone—the people along with the king and the royalty—are doomed to eat their own excrement and drink their own urine when the Assyrians starve out the city. Um, ew.

He calls out to the people in Hebrew, saying that reliance on Hezekiah won't help them. They should surrender to the Assyrians and let them take them away to Assyria with them, which is a nice place. God, says the Rabshakeh, won't help them either. None of the other nations' gods could save people from the Assyrians.

The people and the three messengers say nothing in response (which is what Hezekiah told them to do) and the trio return to Hezekiah, tearing their clothes and telling him what the Rabshakeh said.

[2 Kings Summary Chapter 18 shmoop.com/2-kings/summary]

2 Kings Chapter 19 Summary Review

Pride before the Fall

Hezekiah is disturbed by his servants' news, tears his own clothes (man, doesn't anyone respect the threads around here?), dons sackcloth and ash, and heads into the Temple. He sends Shebna, Eliakim, and some priests to talk to the prophet Isaiah.

They ask Isaiah to say a prayer to God to save the people of Judah from the clutches of the

Isaiah tells them not to worry and to tell Hezekiah that God will put a spirit into the King of Assyria, making him return to his own land.

The Rabshakeh returns to the King of Assyria, who is fighting in Lachish. The King of Assyria hears that the King of Ethiopia wants to fight him, now, but he tells Judah that God is wrong when he claims that Jerusalem won't fall to Assyria. Sennacherib isn't giving up that easy.

Sennacherib boasts about how many other gods he's defeated, saying that Judah's won't be an exception.

Divine Smackdown

Hezekiah receives this message in letter-form. He then goes into the Temple and spreads out the letter before God.

He prays, asking God for salvation from Assyria. He says he knows that God is the Creator and distinct from the gods Assyria has already defeated. Hezekiah asks God to repay Sennacherib for mocking God.

Isaiah relays a reply from God, answering Hezekiah's prayer.

God says that Zion is like a virgin daughter scorning Assyria as a suitor, voting in favor of God.

God very poetically discusses Sennacherib's over-the-top boasts of power. He says that he (God) planned all this out and directed exactly what Sennacherib would do.

But since Sennacherib has raged against him—and since God knows every move Sennacherib makes—God will put a hook in his lip and send him back to Assyria, where he came from.

God promises Judah that they won't starve and will eat plentifully for the next few years. Sennacherib won't even be able to fire a single arrow against Jerusalem.

Thus, in the middle of the night, God's angel of destruction comes and kills one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian soldiers, leaving the land around Jerusalem strewn with their dead bodies.

When Sennacherib returns home, defeated by God, his sons murder him in a conspiracy. (Out of the frying pan...)

2 Nephi 20 (Chiastic Structure):

As shown in the following outline, in 2 Nephi 20, Isaiah presents eight initial themes or ideas in verses 1 through 21 and then repeats them in verses 22-34, but in reverse order:

- A. The wicked will bow down (vs. 1-4)
- B. Assyria raised by the Lord (5)
- C. The Assyrian king speaks against Jerusalem (6-11)
- D. The Lord will punish proud Assyria (12-14)
- E. An ax is used as a tool (15)
- F. The Lord is a burning fire in the land (16-17)
- G. Out of all the [multitudes]--only a remnant remains (18-19)
 - H. *A remnant of Israel shall return to the Lord* (20-21)
- G'. Out of the "sand of the sea"--only a remnant returns (22)
- F'. A divine consumption is in the land (23)
- E'. A rod is used as an instrument (24-26)
- C'. Assyrian army approaches Jerusalem (28-32)
- B'. Assyria humbled by the Lord (33)
- A'. The haughty will be cut down (34) (Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, p. 161)

[Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., Isaiah Plain & Simple, pp. 96-97]

2 Nephi 20:5 **O Assyrian, the Rod of Mine Anger:**

The kings of Assyria are likened to a rod in the hand of the Lord. It was through these kings that the Lord brought judgment upon the kingdom of Israel. This phrase refers to more than one king as at least three were spoken of at this time, Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, and Sennacherib. Later in the chapter the kings of Assyria are likened to other tools—the ax, the saw, the rod, and the staff (v. 15).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

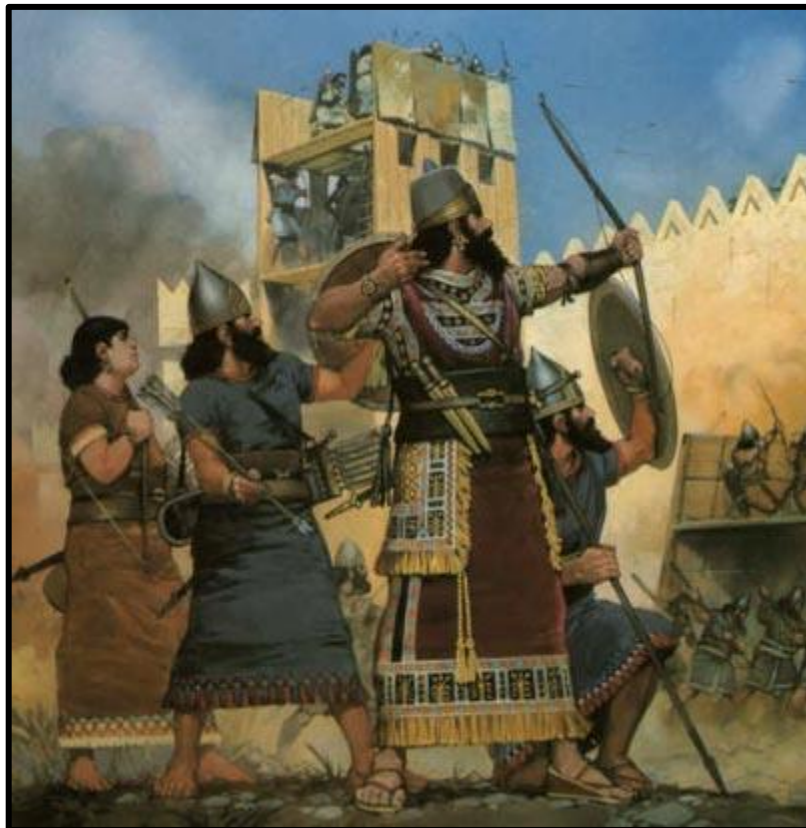
2 Nephi 20:6 **I Will Send Him Against a Hypocritical Nation:**

The hypocritical nation spoken of is the kingdom of Israel. It is likely that at the time this prophecy was given, this hypocritical nation had already been sacked and taken northward. This is recorded in 1 Kings 17:6, 'In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.' This is how the 10 tribes get lost; they are taken to the north by the Assyrians. Other than the description here, we have no idea where they have been taken. It is commonly understood that they were subsequently scattered all over the earth and probably a cohesive group was led further north.

“...the Other Tribes did become ‘lost’ to Judah’s record-keepers—not simply because they were taken captive, but also because they left their captivity and went forth ‘into a land further distant,’ numerous of them undoubtedly choosing to settle in the lands through which they traveled.

“Since that time—particularly in the last few centuries—attempts to locate and identify the Other Tribes have been numerous. At different times and by a variety of Christian authors the Other Tribes of Israel have been identified with the Japanese, Chinese, Turks, Ethiopians, Persians, Yemenites, Nestorians, Afghans, Arabians, Britons, Kassites of Russia, Hindus and Buddhists of India, Scythians, Cimmerians, Celts, Kareens of Burma, North and South American Indians, Australians, and Eskimos. Indeed it is possible that remnants of the Other Tribes may have spread out and became part of all these peoples in fulfillment of the prophecies that Israel would spread itself throughout many countries.”

Vern G. Swanson, “Israel’s ‘Other Tribes,’ ” Ensign, Jan. 1982, pp. 29–30]



Ancient Assyrian Army

laspapasfritas-peggy.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 20:5-6 **O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation**
(Illustration – not shown): Assyrian Warfare. Illustrations by Anne Stewart. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 32]

2 Nephi 20:6 **To Tread Them Down Like the Mire of the Streets:**



"mire of the street"

swim.neighbornews.com

2 Nephi 20:5-6 **To tread them down like the mire of the streets (Illustration – not shown):** Mire on the pathways of the Biblical Zoo, Jerusalem. Many streets in the biblical period lacked asphalt, cement, or even paving stones. They became deep mud, or mire, during the rainy season, January through March. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 33]



anglicansablaze.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 20:7 **The Light of Israel . . . shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day (Illustration – not shown):** Thorns near Bethel. Thorns are prickly and fruitless plants that exist in the dry countryside of the Holy Land. The Bible mentions the vexatious nature of thorns (Genesis 3:18; Numbers 33:55; Joshua 23:13). Thorns are valuable only as quick burning fuel. Hence Isaiah's prophecy that the wicked, at Jesus' second coming, would burn as easily as thorns are consumed. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 123]

2 Nephi 20:9 **Is Not Calno As Carchemish? Is Not Hamath As Arpad?:**

Now the king of Assyria is beginning to brag about his military conquests. To paraphrase, he is saying, “didn’t I destroy Calno just as I did Carchemish? Haven’t I beaten those of Hamath like I beat those of Arpad?”

During the reign of Hezekiah, after Israel had been captured, the Assyrian king sent emissaries to the Jews to subject them to their king. Three men (named Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh) came to the Jews to taunt them and command them to submit to Assyrian authority or be destroyed as the other nations had been. Part of their argument was that the Jews had no one who could help them. Egypt would not save them. Certainly, their god could not save them. They mocked the Jews declaring that their god was no more able to save them from the Assyrians than the gods of the other nations were able to save them. They asked, ‘Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? Have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?’ (2 Kings 18:34) This is the same argument as in verse 11, ‘Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and to her idols.’ The response of the Jews and Hezekiah is to seek protection from the Lord and counsel from Isaiah. They are promised the Lord’s protection and receive it in a most dramatic way (v. 26).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 20:9 **Calno:**

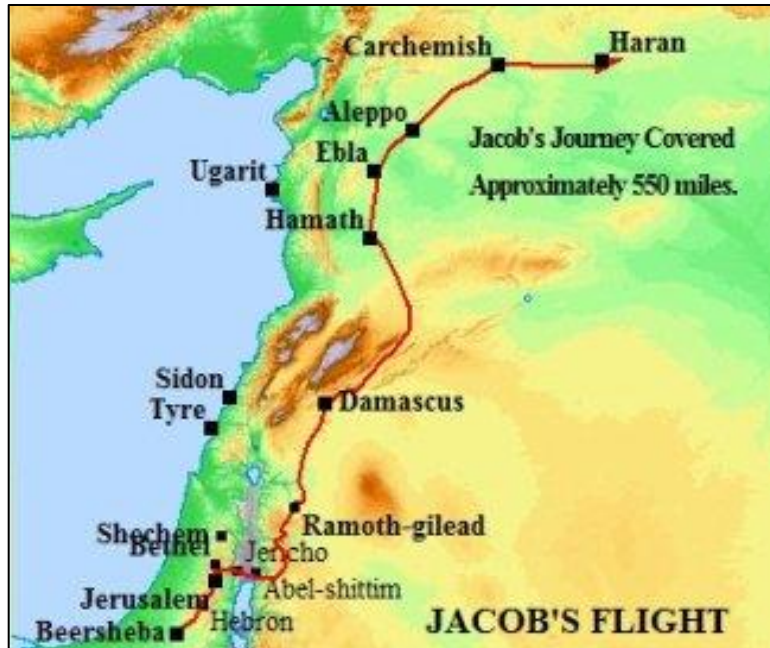
Calno (Kalno), Isaiah 10:9 (2 Nephi 20:9). A town Kullania mentioned in Assyrian tribute lists. Associated with Arpad. [Arpad was just north of Aleppo.] Modern Kullan Koy 16 kilometers **southeast of Arpad**. [Thus **Calno would have been in the vicinity of Aleppo**.] Its destruction symbolized the overwhelming might of Assyria (Isaiah 10:9). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, p. 227]



kerugmas.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 20:9 **Carchemish:**

Carchemish (2 Nephi 20:9) was a city (modern Jerablus) which guarded the main ford across the river Euphrates about 100 kilometers northeast of Aleppo. As a Syrian city-state it had treaties with Ugarit and other states during the 2nd millennium B.C. After a defeat by Sargon II in 717 B.C., Carchemish was incorporated as an Assyrian province. The event is noted in Isaiah 10:9. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, p. 252]



kerugmas.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 20:9 **Hamath:**

Hamath (2 Nephi 20:9) was a city on the east bank of the Orontes river, lying on one of the main trade-routes to the south from Asia Minor. It was conquered by Jeroboam II (about 780 B.C., 2 Kings 14:28) and Sargon (about 721 B.C., 2 Kings 18:33; Isaiah 36:18; 37:13). Its destruction symbolized the overwhelming might of Assyria (Isaiah 10:9). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 2, p. 605]

2 Nephi 20:9 **Arpad:**

Arpad (2 Nephi 20:9) was the name of a city and Aramaean province in northern Syria, now Tell Rif'at, **about 30 kilometers northwest of Aleppo**. Annexed by Tiglath pileser III after a 2-year siege in 740 B.C., it rebelled with Hamath, Damascus and Samaria in 720, and was reconquered by Sargon II. This lies behind the boast of Rabshakeh to Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:34; Isaiah 36:19; 37:13, AV "Arphad"). Its destruction symbolized the overwhelming might of Assyria (Isaiah 10:9; Jeremiah 49:23). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, p. 118]



2 Nephi 20:9 **Calno, Carchemish, Hamath, Arpad (Illustration):** Centers of Aramaean settlement. Aramaeans are usually called "Syrians" in the English Old Testament. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 91]

2 Nephi 20:9 **Samaria (Capital of Israel – ten tribes):**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 17:9]

2 Nephi 20:9 **Damascus (Capital of Syria):**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 17:8]

2 Nephi 20:12 **I Will Punish the Fruit of the Stout Heart of the King of Assyria :**

The pride of the Assyrian king is repugnant to the Lord. He will not allow him to destroy the kingdom of Judah. Instead, he promises Assyrian destruction. This comes because the Assyrian king had taken all the credit for his military successes, 'For he saith: by the strength of my hand and by my wisdom I have done these things; for I am prudent.'

This pride is similar to the pride of the wicked Nephites in the last battles with the Lamanites:

‘And in the three hundred and sixty and second year they did come down again to battle. And we did beat them again, and did slay a great number of them, and their dead were cast into the sea.

And now, because of this great thing which my people, the Nephites, had done, they began to boast in their own strength, and began to swear before the heavens that they would avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren who had been slain by their enemies.

And they did swear by the heavens, and also by the throne of God, that they would go up to battle against their enemies, and would cut them off from the face of the land.

And it came to pass that I, Mormon, did utterly refuse from this time forth to be a commander and a leader of this people, because of their wickedness and abomination.’ (Mormon 3:8-11)

2 Nephi 20:15 **Shall the Ax Boast Itself Against Him That Heweth Therewith:**

One of the greatest sins that a servant of the Lord can commit is the sin of ingratitude. This sin encompasses a spiritual blindness to the works of the Lord. In the latter days, the Lord has eloquently expressed this concept, ‘And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments’ (DC 59:21). This is the sin of the king of Assyria—that he did not recognize the hand of the Lord in his military successes.



2 Nephi 20:15 **The ax (Illustration):** An ax leaning against a threshing sledge, Qatzrin, an ancient village

from the talmudic period (ca. A.D. 200-500). Axes were common tools used anciently for trimming or felling trees, clearing heavy brush, or quarrying stone. Similar to its modern counterpart, the ax had a wooden handle with an iron head. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 34]



2 Nephi 20:15 **The saw (Illustration):** A saw leaning on a post near a home, Qatzrin. The saw served in biblical times to cut both wood and stone. Blades were usually made of bronze or iron. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 34]

2 Nephi 20:17 **The Light of Israel Shall Be For a Fire:**

The Assyrian army is going to attack Jerusalem only to be devoured by the Lord as a flame would devour thorns and ‘briers in one day.’ The significance of this event is underscored by the chapter heading which reads, the “Destruction of Assyria is a type of destruction at the Second Coming.”

“He describes Assyria as coming from the North; oppressive and ruthless; a law unto itself; militaristic and bent on world domination; imposing its yoke of servitude on other nations; encroaching on the world by degrees, swallowing up territories; and setting all the surrounding peoples in fear of it. When the world is ripe in iniquity, Assyria suddenly bursts forth like a flood. With its alliance of nations, it sweeps over the entire earth, conquering, destroying by fire and by the sword, leaving havoc and disaster in its wake—capturing the whole world. Only Zion/Jerusalem, a safe place for the Lord’s righteous, does Assyria not conquer. Assyria invades even Egypt, the other great superpower; Assyria penetrates Egypt and ravages her land.

“After a few years of war and oppression, Assyria lays siege to Zion/Jerusalem, where a remnant of Israel take refuge. Then occurs Assyria’s demise. Because of his covenant with Israel, and because the righteous of his people remain faithful through much trial and tribulation, the Lord utterly destroys the Assyrian army. The 185,000 men who perished overnight in the days of King Hezekiah...serve as the historical type of a latter-day Armageddon....”

[Abraham Gileadi, The Book of Isaiah: A new Translation with Interpretive Keys from the Book of Mormon, pp. 72-73

2 Nephi 20:22 **For Though Thy People Israel Be As the Sand of the Sea:**



Mediterranean Beaches

ahideawayinfrance.com

2 Nephi 20:22 **Thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea (Illustration – not shown):** Sand dunes on the Mediterranean seashore, near Gaza. The great stretch of sandy seashore next to the Mediterranean Sea together with the immense deserts of sand throughout the Near East have made sand the subject of many similes in the scriptures. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 101]

2 Nephi 20:24 **O My People That Dwellest in Zion, Be Not Afraid of the Assyrian:**

Reviewing the political situation of Hezekiah, the Jews were threatened by the Assyrian emissaries (see commentary for 2 Ne 20:9-12). At the time, the Assyrians were much more powerful than the kingdom of Judah. Hezekiah’s response was as follows, ‘he rent his clothes,

and covered himself with sackcloth, and went in the house of the Lord' (2 Kings 19:1). Hezekiah then did the right thing—he asked the prophet, Isaiah, for advice. Isaiah responded, 'Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land' (2 Kings 19:6-7).

Hezekiah next received another messenger from the Assyrian king, repeating the threats of his servants. Next, 'Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and...prayed...O Lord God of Israel...I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only' (2 Kings 19:14-19). That the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled and the prayer of Hezekiah was answered will be seen in the next verses.

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 20:25 For Yet a Very Little While, and the Indignation Shall Cease:

Isaiah speaks of the Assyrian king's invasion of the kingdom of Judah. He had very brief success against some of the cities north of Jerusalem as listed in verses 28-32 (Aiath, Migron, Michmash, Geba, Ramath, Gibeah, Gallim, Laish, Anathoth, Madmenah, Gebim). This is the indignation spoken of. The Lord would not let this success continue for long. Through Isaiah, He had promised Hezekiah, 'He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there...For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake' (2 Kings 19:34).

2 Nephi 20:26 A Scourge . . . According to the Slaughter of Midian:

The judgment of the Lord is about to come upon the Assyrian king and army. The destruction prophesied is likened to two other events in which the Lord showed a mighty hand in defeating the enemies of the children of Israel—the slaughter of Midian and the exodus from Egypt.

As the slaughter of Midian may not be as familiar as the story of the exodus, it is useful to review what the Lord did in this battle. The story is found in Judges 7. It tells the story of when Gideon led the armies of Israel against the Midianites and the Amalekites. Gideon led an army of 32,000 against an enemy that was so numerous that the scriptures describe it as follows, [they] 'lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude' (Judges 7:12). Nevertheless, the Lord wanted to show the Israelites his great power. He instructed Gideon to send home any who were scared. 22,000 troops left, leaving him with an army of 10,000. The Lord replied, 'The people are yet too many' (Judges 7:4), so He commanded that Gideon use only those troops who drank water like a dog, lapping it up with their tongues. Gideon was left with an army of

300 men. This army of 300 then surrounded the enemy, each with a trumpet in one hand and a torch in the other hand. In unison, they blew their trumpets. The opposing army, thinking they were surrounded by the enemy, arose in a great confusion. They began to kill each other in a great slaughter. Those that remained fled, only to be cut down by Gideon's pursuing band of 300.

This is an excellent example to strengthen the courage of the Jews as they were greatly outnumbered by the Assyrians. How the Lord destroyed such a great Assyrian army is described as follows, 'And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh' (2 Kings 19:35). So we see that the prophecies of Isaiah were fulfilled to perfection for he said that the 'Holy One...shall devour his thorns and his briars in one day' (v. 17 italics added) and 'the Lord of Hosts shall lop the bough with terror; and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down' (v. 33).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 20:26 **Midian:**

The people of Midian (2 Nephi 20:26) were linked to Abraham through Midian, the son of the concubine Keturah. The Midianites inhabited the desert borders in Transjordan from Moab down past Edom. They were desert-dwellers associated with Ishmaelites and Medanites (Genesis 37:28, 36) when Joseph was sold into Egypt. In the time of the judges, through Gideon and his puny band (Judges 6-8; 9:17), God delivered Israel from the scourge of camel-riding Midianites, Amalekites and other "children of the east," an event remembered by psalmist and prophet (Psalms 83:9; Isaiah 9:4; 10:26). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 997-998]



Land of Midian

[keyway.ca](http://www.keyway.ca)

2 Nephi 20:26 **Midian (Illustration – not shown):** The Territory of the Midianites. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 998]

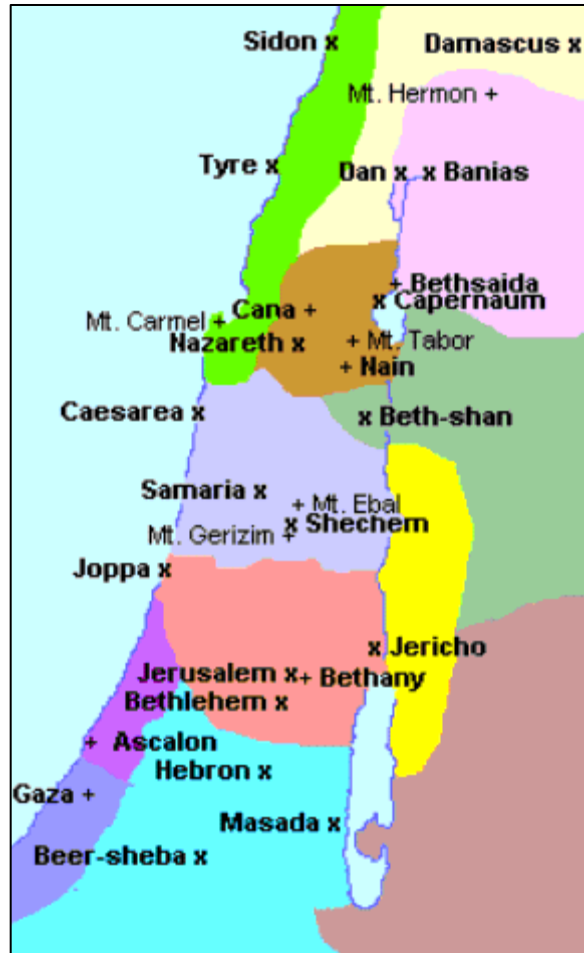
2 Nephi 20:26 **Rock of Oreb:**

Oreb was a Midianite prince in an army routed by Gideon (Judges 7). The Ephraimites cut off the enemy's retreat at the Jordan fords, presumably opposite Jezreel; Bethbarah might be a ford some 20 kilometers south of the Sea of Galilee. The rock of Oreb was named after this slain prince, and remembered for the great defeat of Midian (Judges 7:25; Isaiah 10:26). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 1121]



The location of Bethabara

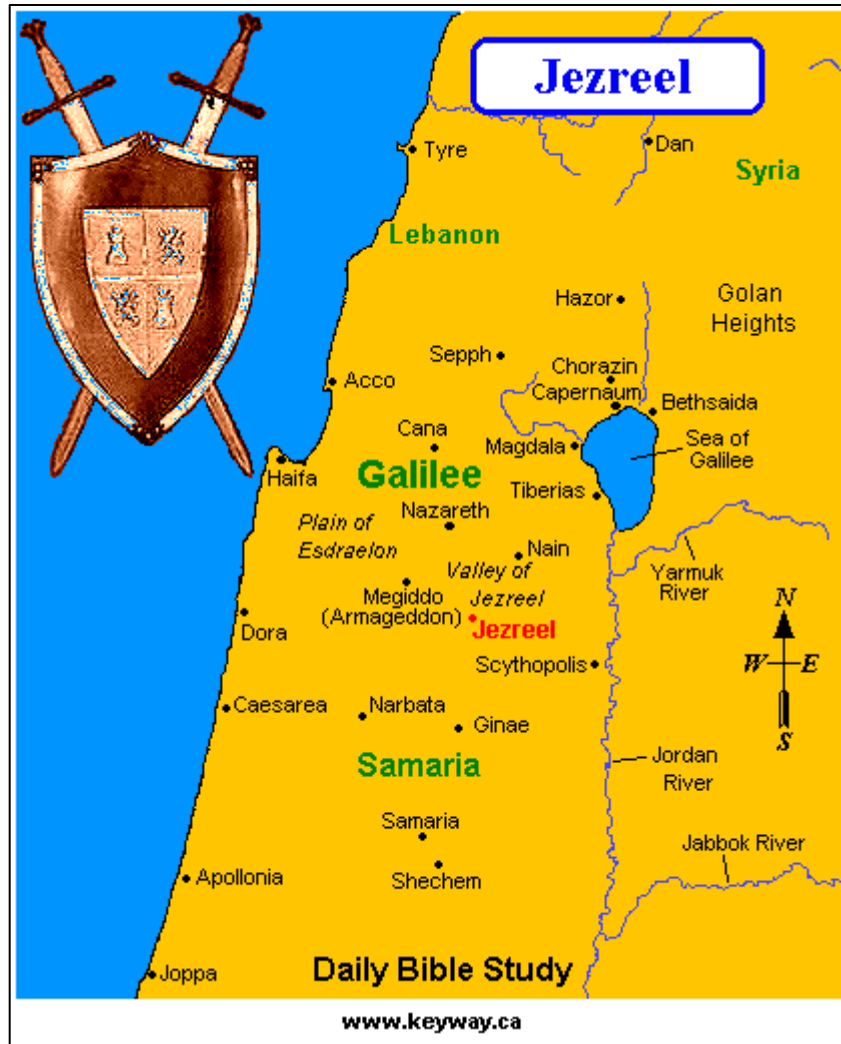
bible-history.com



The location of Beth-shan

kukis.org

The rock of Oreb was probably the place now called Orbo, on the east of Jordan, near Bethshean [Bethshan]. (*Easton's Bible Dictionary*) [Infobases, [LDS Collectors Library '97](http://LDSCollectorsLibrary.org)] [See the commentary on Bethbara--1 Nephi 10:9]



The area around Jezreel

[keyway.ca](http://www.keyway.ca)

2 Nephi 20:26 **Rock of Oreb (Illustration):** The land around Jezreel. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 789]

[Question* Could the name of this Midianite “Oreb” have any relation to the name “Horeb” ? And since Mt. Horeb is another name for Mt. Sinai, could this be a clue to locating Mt. Sinai in Midian?

In response to the above question, I checked and what follows below comes from biblehub.com:

Pulpit Commentary

Verse 25. - Oreb, a raven, and Zeeb, a wolf. The rock known afterwards as the rock of Oreb (Isaiah 10:26), and the wine-press (see Judges 6:11) known as the wine-press of Zeeb, were so called from being the places where these two princes were taken and slain by the

Eph-raimites. In like manner the well of Harod is called by the name it afterwards received (ver. 1), and the palm tree of Deborah in like manner (Judges 2:5), and Lehi (Judges 15:9). These are valuable indications (to which many more might be added) of a living tradition older than the written history. The capture of Oreb and Zeeb is celebrated in Psalm 83:11 and Isaiah 10:26. On the other side Jordan, i.e. the east side of the river, which Gideon had now crossed, as is related in Judges 8:4. The narrative runs on here to complete the history of the doings of the men of Ephraim, and goes back at Judges 8:4 to take up the thread of the history of Gideon (see Judges 2:1-6, note).

Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb,.... The one signifies a "raven", and the other a "wolf"; which were either nicknames given them because of their voraciousness and cruelty, or which they took themselves, or their ancestors before them, to make themselves terrible to others; so the Romans had the families of the Corvini, &c.

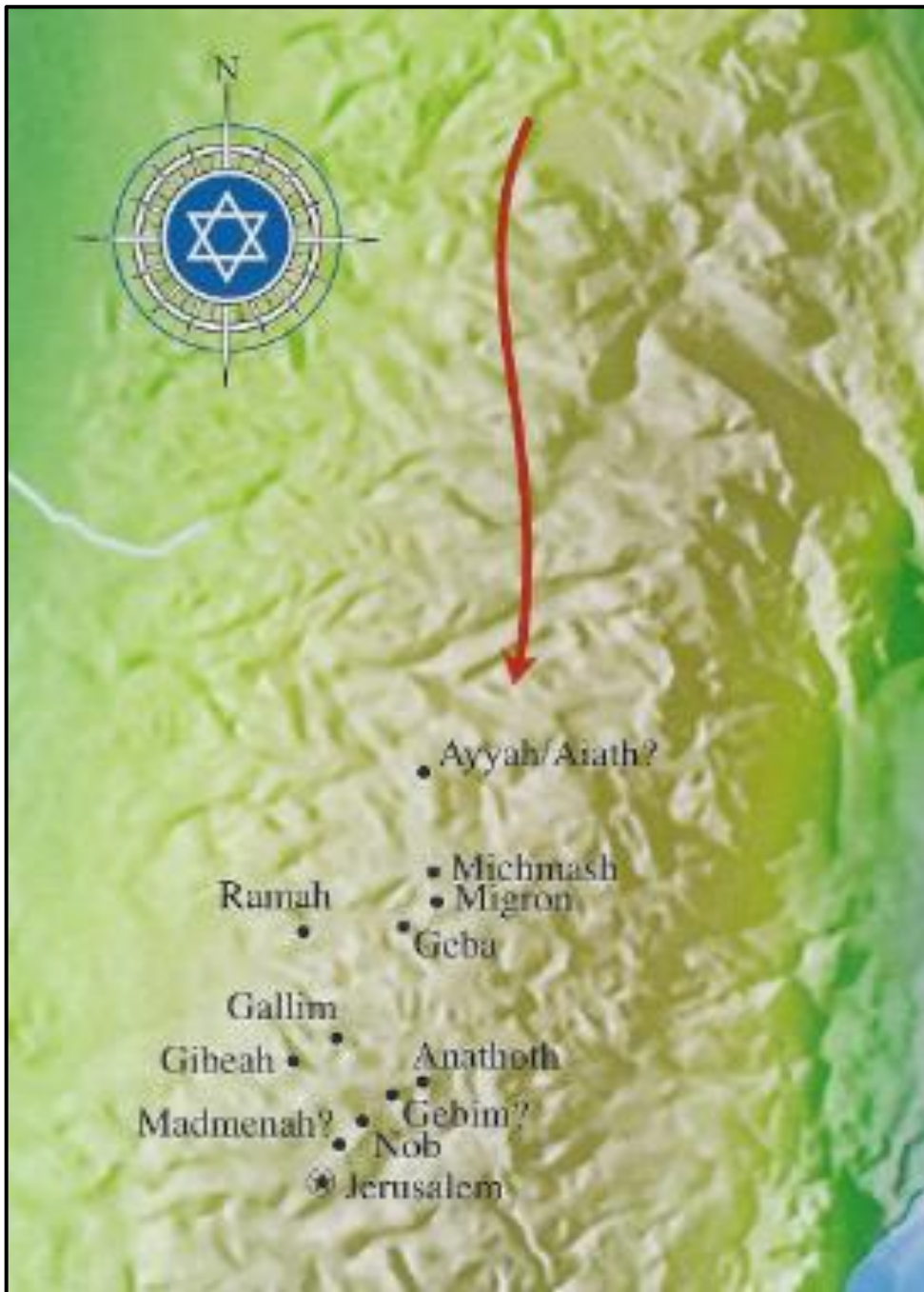
and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb; perhaps they found him in a cave of the rock, and dragging him out slew him, from whence the rock afterwards had its name. So we read of the rock Corax in Homer (p), which was in Ithaca, and another high mountain of the same name in Aetolia, mentioned by Livy (q) and which signifies the same as Oreb. This is a different rock or mountain from Horeb, the same with Sinai, from whence the law was given; which always ought to be written with an "H" or "Ch", to distinguish it from this; though that is written Oreb by Lactantius (r), and so by Milton (s), contrary to the propriety of the language:

and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb; the Targum is, the plain of Zeeb, which, as Kimchi and Ben Gersom suppose, was in the form of a winepress, having high lips or hills around it, and which afterwards took its name from this prince being slain in it:

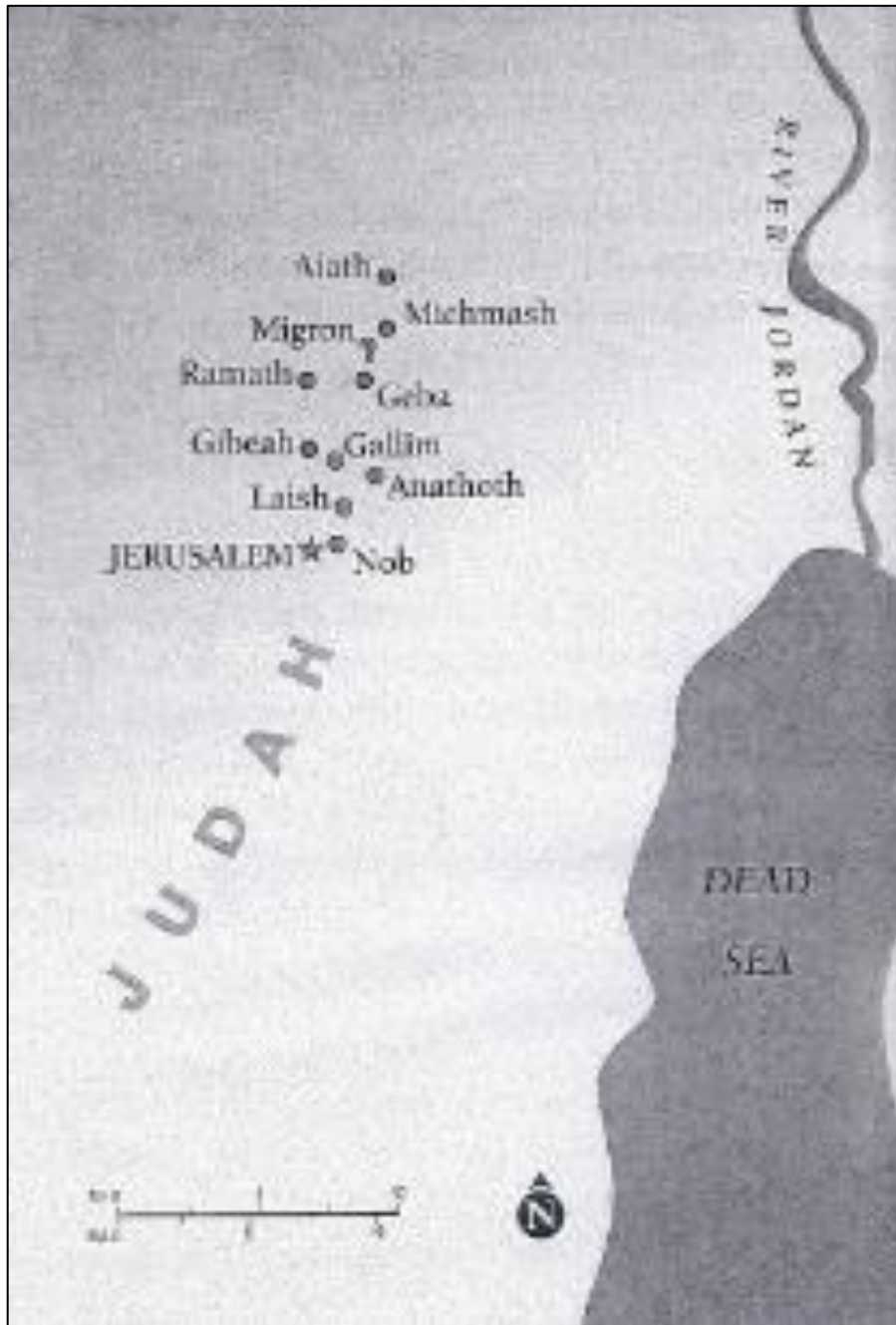
and pursued Midian; the rest of the Midianites, even beyond Jordan, those that got over it:

and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan; that is, when he had passed over it the next morning, as Jarchi remarks; for after this we read of Gideon's going over Jordan, Judges 8:4 unless this is said by way of anticipation; though the phrase will bear to be rendered, "on this side Jordan", for it signifies both. It seems they cut off the heads of those two princes, and presented them to Gideon, as it has been usual to bring the heads of enemies to kings and conquerors; see 1 Samuel 17:54.

2 Nephi 20:28-32 **Aiath, Migron, Michmash, Geba, Ramath, Gibeah, Gallim, Laish, Anathoth, Madmenah, Gebim, Nob, Jerusalem:**



2 Nephi 20:28-32 (**Assyria Marches to Jerusalem**): Map: Assyria Marches to Jerusalem. Arrow indicates possible route of Assyrian army. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 29]



2 Nephi 20:28-32 **Aiath, Migron, Michmash, Geba, Ramath, Gibeah, Gallim, Laish, Anathoth, Madmenah, Gebim, Nob, Jerusalem (Illustration):** The Assyrian forces approach and threaten Jerusalem but are defeated by the Lord of Hosts. Artist: Tom Child. [Thomas R. Valletta ed., The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families, 1999, p. 120]

2 Nephi 20:28 **Aiath:**

The proposed city of Ai ("Aiath"--2 Nephi 20:28) lay east (about 3 kilometers) of Bethel and the altar which Abram built (Genesis 12:8) and north of Michmash (Isaiah 10:28). The Israelite attack upon it, immediately following the sack of Jericho, was at first repulsed, but after Achan's sin had been punished a successful stratagem was employed. The people of Ai were killed, their king executed, and their city burned and made into a heap (Joshua 7:1--8:29).

This city of Ai became an Ephraimite town (1 Chronicles 7:28, "Ayyah"), but was inhabited by the Benjaminites after the Exile (Nehemiah 11:31). Isaiah pictured the Assyrian armies advancing on Jerusalem by way of Ai (Isaiah 10:28, "Aiath").

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 27]

2 Nephi 20:28 **Aiath (Illustration – not shown):** The situation of Ai in relation to Jericho. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 26]

2 Nephi 20:28 **Migron:**

Migron (2 Nephi 20:28) was a locality mentioned in the march of the Assyrian army advancing on Jerusalem in Isaiah 10:28. The proposed site is situated north of Michmash.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 999]

2 Nephi 20:28 **Michmash:**

Michmash (2 Nephi 20:28) was a city of Benjamin east of Bethel and 12 kilometers north of Jerusalem, 600 meters above sea level, on the pass from Bethel to Jericho. In Geba, just south of this pass, Jonathan the son of Saul, made a successful foray against the Philistine garrison (1 Samuel 13:3).

In his prophetic description of the coming attack on Jerusalem Isaiah (10:24, 28) represents the taking of Michmash by the Assyrians.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 997]

2 Nephi 20:28 **Michmash (Illustration – not shown):** The location of Michmash, Geba, Gibeah and Bethel in relation to Jerusalem. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 997]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Geba:**

Geba (2 Nephi 20:29) was a town belonging to Benjamin, 11 kilometers north of Jerusalem and 5 kilometers from Gibeah from which it is to be distinguished; (Joshua 18:24, 28; Isaiah 10:29). It was assigned to the Levites under Joshua (Joshua 21:17; 1 Chronicles 6:60). It was here that Jonathan the son of Saul, made a successful foray against the Philistine garrison (1 Samuel 13:3).

In the days of Asa, king of Judah, it was fortified, and then regarded as the northern limit of Judah.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 554-555]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Geba (Illustration – not shown):** Geba, a town of Benjamin. After fortification by King Asa it was regarded as the northern limit of Judah. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 544]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Ramath:**

John Tvedtnes writes that in comparing the Isaiah text from the King James Bible with the Book of Mormon, we find that while 2 Nephi 20:29 has the word "Ramath," the KJV (Isaiah 10:29) has "Ramah" and the Massoretic Hebrew Text has "*Rmh*." "Ramath" would be the more ancient form of the name, with the old feminine *-ath* suffix which, in later (even Biblical, usually) Hebrew disappeared in pausal form of the noun. It is interesting that in 2 Nephi 20:28 (compare Isaiah 10:28) both the KJV and the Book of Mormon have the name "Aiath" with the same old feminine ending. This is particularly interesting, because in the IQIsa (Qumran) manuscript the name is written as "Aiah" but a superscript letter is added to show the older form "Aiath" This provides evidence that the Brass Plates was from an older source than the Massoretic Hebrew Text. The oldest copies of the Massoretic Text date to the 8th century A.D. The Qumran text is dated to the first centuries B.C.

[John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," FARMS, p. 50]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Ramath:**

The name Ramah (Heb. "to be high") was used of several places, all of them on elevated sites. Ramah of Benjamin, was near Bethel, in the area of Gibeon (Joshua 18:25) was a restingplace on the road north. When Asa of Judah and Baasha of Israel were at war, Baasha built a fort here, but when the Syrians attacked Israel Asa destroyed it and built Geba and Mizpah with the materials (1 Kings 15:17, 21-22; 2 Chronicles 16:1, 5-6). Here Nebuzaradan gathered the exiles after the fall of Jerusalem and released Jeremiah (Jeremiah 40:1).

Ramah (Ramath--2 Nephi 20:29) features in the messages of some of the prophets (Hosea 5:8; Isaiah 10:29; Jeremiah 31:15). It is probably to be identified with Er-Ram, 8 kilometers north of Jerusalem. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1318] [See the commentary on Ether 15:11]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Ramath (Illustration – not shown):** The Possible locations for biblical Ramah. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1318]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Gibeah of Saul:**

The city of Gibeah ("Gibeah of Saul"--2 Nephi 20:29) was a city in Benjamin (Joshua 18:28), evidently north of Jerusalem (Isaiah 10:29). As a result of a crime committed by the inhabitants, the city was destroyed in the period of the Judges (Judges 19--20). It was famous as the birthplace of Saul (1 Samuel 10:26), hence "Gibeah of Saul" (1 Samuel 11:4), and it served as his residence while he was king (1 Samuel 13--15). When David was king it was necessary to allow the Gibeonites to hang up the bodies of seven of Saul's descendants on the walls of Gibeah to make amends for his slaughter of them (2 Samuel 21:6). . . . There was a fortress there which was rebuilt with a watchtower, possibly by Hezekiah, and destroyed soon after (Isaiah 10:29).

Biblical Gibeah of Saul is almost certainly to be identified with the mound of Tell el-Ful, about 5 kilometers north of Jerusalem.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 557-558]

2 Nephi 20:29 **Gibeah of Saul (Illustration - not shown)**: The hill of el-Jib, the modern site of the ancient city of Gibeon. (2) The water-system at Gibeon consisted of a water-chamber cut into the rock, reached by a spiral staircase, and an Iron Age tunnel of 93 steps leading to the spring outside the city wall. Section through the east side of the hill, showing the stepped tunnel and spring. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 558-559]

2 Nephi 20:30 **Gallim**:

Gallim (2 Nephi 20:30) was the native place of Phalti, to whom Michal was given by Saul. It was probably in Benjamin, to the north of Jerusalem. (*Easton's Bible Dictionary*)

[Infobases, LDS Collectors Library '97]

2 Nephi 20:30 **Laish**:

Laish (2 Nephi 20:30) was a place mentioned in Isaiah 10:30. It has been supposed to be the modern el-Isawiye, about a mile north-east of Jerusalem. (*Easton's Bible Dictionary*)

[Infobases, LDS Collectors Library '97]

2 Nephi 20:30 **Anathoth**:

Anathoth (2 Nephi 20:30) was a town in the territory of Benjamin assigned to Levites (Joshua 21:18). It was the home of Abiathar (1 Kings 2:26) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:1; 11:21. . . . Conquered by Sennacherib (Isaiah 10:30). The modern site, Ras el-Harrubeh, about 5 kilometers north of Jerusalem, lies near the village of Anata.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 49]

2 Nephi 20:31 **Madmenah**:

Madmenah (2 Nephi 20:31) was a place mentioned only in Isaiah's description of the route whereby an invading army approached Jerusalem from the north (Isaiah 10:31). Shu'fat, 2 kilometers north of Mount Scopus, is the supposed site.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 929]

2 Nephi 20:31 **Madmenah (Illustration – not shown)**: Proposed site for Madmenah. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 930]

2 Nephi 20:31 **Gebim**:

A small place north of Jerusalem, whose inhabitants fled at the approach of the Assyrian army (Isaiah 10:31). It is probably the modern el-Isawiyeh. (*Easton's Bible Dictionary*)
[Infobases, LDS Collectors Library '97]

2 Nephi 20:32 **Nob:**

A locality mentioned in three passages of the Old Testament, all of which may refer to the same place. In 1 Samuel 22:19 it is referred to as a city of priests; presumably Yahweh's priests had fled there with the ephod after the capture of the ark and the destruction of Shiloh (1 Samuel 4:11). David visited Nob after he had escaped from Saul when Ahimelech was priest there and ate holy bread (1 Samuel 21:6). When Saul heard that the priest of Nob had assisted the fugitive David he raided the shrine and had Ahimelech, along with eighty-five other priests, put to death (1 Samuel 22:9, 11, 18-19).

Isaiah prophesied that the Assyrian invaders would reach Nob, between Anathoth, 4 kilometers northeast of Jerusalem, and the capital (Isaiah 10:32). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 1093]

2 Nephi 20:32 **He Shall Shake His Hand Against the Mount of the Daughter of Zion:**

Sennacherib's army had taken stronger cities than Jerusalem. He had no reason to think he would not be successful as he approached the city. So when he arrives just north of the city, he shakes 'his hand against' Jerusalem. But Isaiah had a message for this boastful ax and shaking rod:

'This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning him; the virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.

...therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest...

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return.' (2 Kgs. 19:21-33)

Zechariah 14:4 **And his [Christ's] Feet Shall Stand ion That Day upon the Mount of Olives:**

David J. Ridges writes that there might be a duality in the fulfillment of this prophecy found in 2 Nephi chapter 20. That is, this prophecy might have more than one fulfillment. It also could refer to the attacks on Jerusalem and Israel in the last days, as powerful nations gather

together to attempt to destroy them. In this case also, the Jews and Jerusalem will be spared because of the Savior. He will appear on the Mount of Olives, which will split in two. The Jews will flee into the valley caused by the split and will see their Savior—their Messiah there. They will ask questions and He will answer. We will use prophecies recorded in the book of Zechariah to review these future events.

Zechariah 12:8-9

8. In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.

9. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Zechariah 14:4-5

4. And his [Christ's] feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before [or across the Kidron Valley from] Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

5. And ye [the Jews] shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

Zechariah 13:6

6. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the [covenant] house of my [covenant] friends.

[David J. Ridges, Your Study of Isaiah Made Easier in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, Second Edition, 2009, pp. 251-252]

Note* The following might be interesting and pertinent to the discussion here. It reads as follows:

The Christ Quake

Postby Gman » Sun Nov 10, 2013 8:31 am

Some interesting new information is being investigated into the actual quake recorded in the Gospels at the time of Christ's death. Much of this is focused on earthquake activity at the Dead Sea, located 13 miles from Jerusalem. The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 27, mentions that an earthquake coincided with the crucifixion:

Matthew 27:50-51 “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open.”



The Great Valley Rift Fault Line

godsandscience.org

The Great Valley Rift fault line at the Dead sea runs very close to Jerusalem as shown here. This area is known for it's numerous earthquakes.

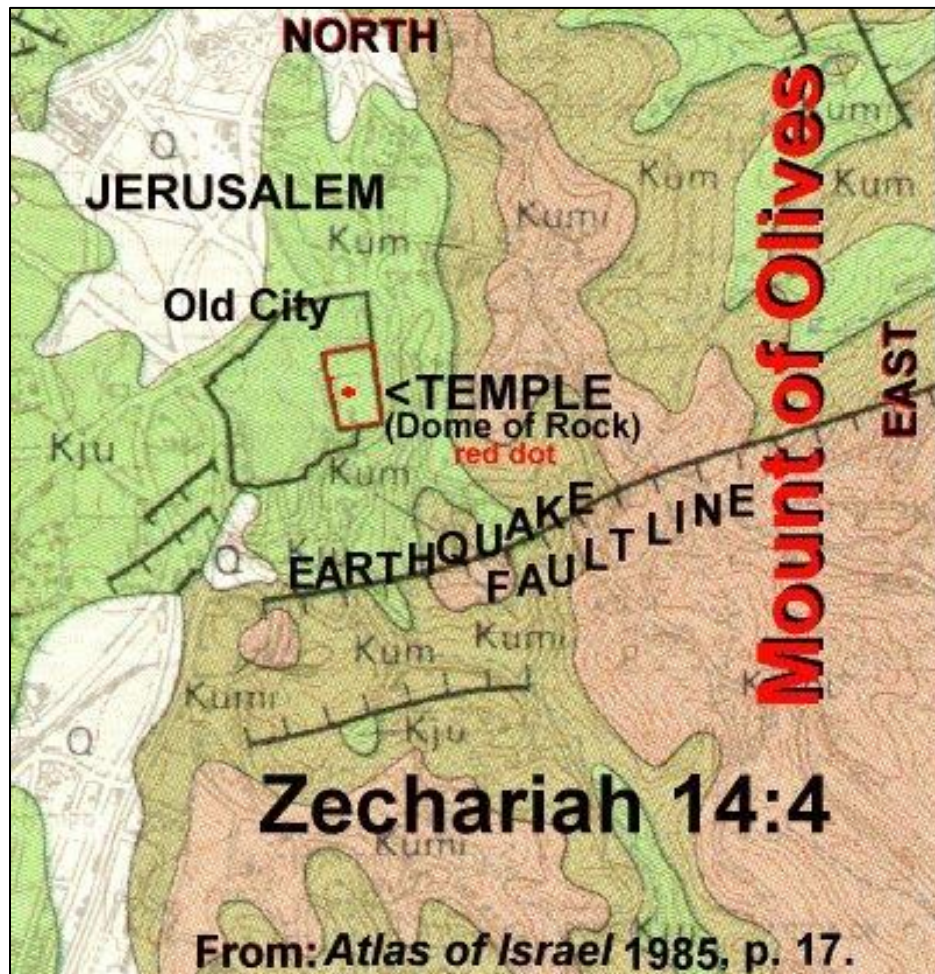
To analyze earthquake activity in the region, geologists studied three cores from the beach of the Ein Gedi Spa adjacent to the Dead Sea. "Varves, which are annual layers of deposition in the sediments, reveal that at least two major earthquakes affected the core: a widespread earthquake in 31 B.C. and a seismic event that happened sometime between the years 26 and 36."

You can find out more about the project and trailer here: <http://www.christquake.com/>

Interestingly many geologists do confirm a fault line that runs through the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem right next to the temple mount.

In fact when Christ returns the Mount of Olives will split into two sections.

Zechariah 14:4 says, "On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south."



Fault lines of the Mount of Olives, Israel godsandscience.org

Also a fault line was discovered under the Seven Arches hotel on the top of the Mount of Olives during the time of its construction. "Its presence prohibited the Intercontinental Hotel (now called the Seven Arches Hotel) from being built on the brow of the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem as originally planned. It was re-located to the south and built on more stable ground where it stands today."



The Mount of Olives Fault Line

biblesearchers.com

[God and Science godsandscience.org]

Notes

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- i. *Old Testament: Genesis-2 Samuel*, student manual, 2d. ed. (Salt Lake City: Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 176-77.
- ii. See, for example, Victor Horowitz, "Isaiah's Impure Lips and Their Purification in Light of Akkadian Sources," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 60 (1989): 39-89.
- iii. *Ibid.*, 54.
- iv. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 453.
- v. While it is true that the statement "Here am I" is often used in a prophetic context of devotion, the same Hebrew expression is frequently used to signify a simple "yet" response. See, for example, Genesis 22:1, 7, 11; 27:1, 18; 31:11; 37:13; 46:2; Exodus 3:4; 1 Samuel 3:4-6, 8, 16; 12:3; 22:12; 2 Samuel 1:7; 15:26; Isaiah 58:9.
- vi. See, for example, Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976), 86-91; E. Theodore Mullen Jr., *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1980).
- vii. S. B. Parker, "Council," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel Van Der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Peter W. Van Der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 204.
- viii. I.e., mediums. The Hebrew word 'ovot (1QIsa, MT) is difficult to translate. M. Dietrich connects it to the Ugaritic word *ilib*, meaning "spirit of the dead." *Ugaritische Forschungen* 6 (1974):450-51. The Hebrew word 'ovot appears again in Isaiah 19:3 and 29:4.
- ix. JST, 2 Nephi 18:19. Not in 1QIsa, MT.
- x. JST, 2 Nephi 18:20. Not in 1QIsa, MT.
- xi. JST, 2 Nephi 19:1. Not in 1QIsa, MT.
- xii. JST, 2 Nephi 19:3. 1QIsa, MT () read "not."
- xiii. JST. Not in 2 Nephi 19:3, 1QIsa, MT.