

Filename: Commentary.2Nephi.Chapter 21-25  
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## 2 Nephi

### Chapter 21

#### 2 Nephi 21 **Isaiah 11:**

This chapter of Isaiah's writings is particularly significant as evidenced by the fact that it is referenced in all four of the Standard Works the Church accepts as scripture. In addition to the Old Testament and Book of Mormon accounts, portions of these writings are found in the New Testament (Revelation 2:16; 5:5; 19:15; and Romans 15:12) and the Doctrine & Covenants (19:15; 113:1-6; and 133:26-29); and in Joseph Smith's history as found in the Pearl of Great Price, he tells us that the entire chapter of Isaiah 11 was quoted to him by the Angel Moroni (JS-H 1:40). Additionally, on several occasions the Prophet provided commentary on verses in this chapter. (See TPJS, 14-15, 71, 93, 316.) Isaiah's vision included a look at the latter days in which we live, as well as a view of millennial conditions. In fact, when Moroni appeared to young Joseph Smith on the night of 21 September 1823, he informed him that these particular writings of Isaiah were "about to be fulfilled."

[Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., Isaiah Plain & Simple, p. 107]



Moroni appears to Joseph Smith [emp.byui.edu](http://emp.byui.edu)

2 Nephi 21 Moroni quotes Isaiah 11 when he appears to Joseph Smith (Illustration): Moroni appears to Joseph Smith in his bedroom. [emp.byui.edu](http://emp.byui.edu) ]

**2 Nephi 21:1 There Shall Come Forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse (Ludlow Interpretation):**

When Moroni visited Joseph Smith on the night of September 21, 1823, he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah and told Joseph that "it was about to be fulfilled." (JS-H 1:40). The chapter seems to be divided into three logical parts:

1. Verses 1-5, Isaiah prophesies of Christ--the growth of His power in the last days through the Millennium.
2. Verses 6-9, Isaiah describes conditions during the Millennial reign of Christ.
3. Verses 10-16. Israel will be gathered the second time.

In 1838, Joseph asked the Lord about the meaning of three key terms in this chapter. The revealed answers are recorded in D&C 113:

1. Who is the Stem of Jesse spoken of in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses of the 11th

chapter of Isaiah?

2. Verily thus saith the Lord: it is Christ.
3. What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that should come of the Stem of Jesse?
4. Behold, thus saith the Lord: It is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power.
5. What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?
6. Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.

According to Victor Ludlow, 2 Nephi 21:1 appears to be an example of synonymous parallelism, a poetic device used by Isaiah in nearly every chapter. Apparently the reference to two separate individuals (rod = branch; stem = roots) is his way of saying the same thing twice, but in slightly different words:

1. And there shall come forth *a rod* out of the *stem of Jesse*,
2. And *a branch* shall grow out of *his roots*. (KJV)

In section 113 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord identifies two key terms used in this verse: "rod" and "stem of Jesse." The "rod" is "a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim . . . on whom there is laid much power (vs. 3-4) and the "stem" is Christ himself (v. 1-2). The reader should note also that in Revelation 22:16 the Savior calls himself the "root and offspring of David". Also, in John 15, the branches (disciples) of the true vine (Christ) are described. Therefore, 2 Nephi 21:1 could be translated as follows:

And there shall come forth a descendant of Jesse and Ephraim who shall be a powerful servant in the hands of Christ . . . yea a helper from among his children shall come forth.

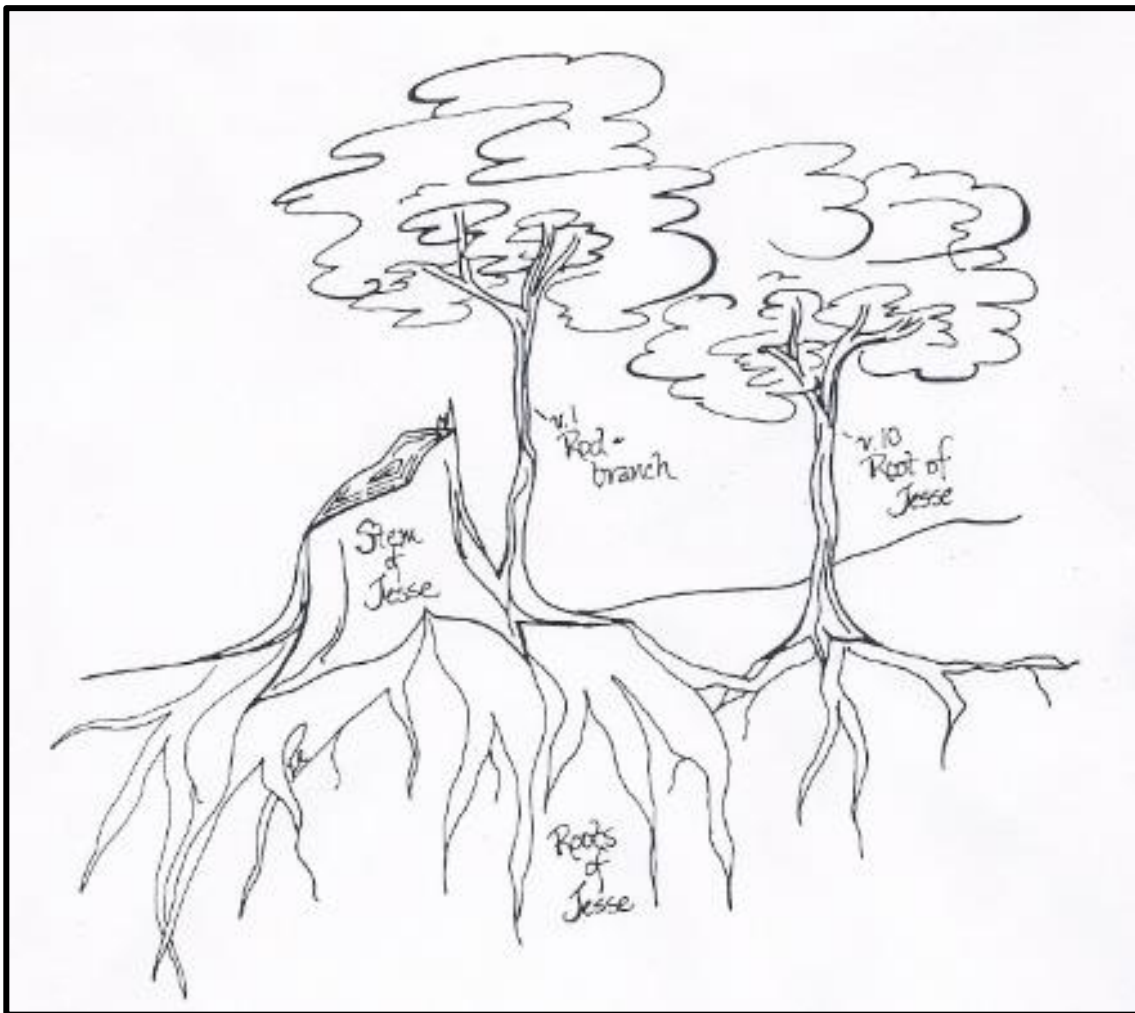
The servant ("rod" and "branch") of Isaiah 11:1 appears to describe the great Jewish leader of the last days who will be called David. He will be an instrument (in somewhat the same manner as was Cyrus anciently--see Isaiah 44:28) used by the Lord to fulfill his divine plan of events before the Millennium.

The term *branch* in the King James text comes from the Hebrew word *natzar* which appears in only one other prophetic book of the Old Testament--Daniel 11:7. In Daniel's vision of the last days, he mentions a "branch" coming from "roots" (see Daniel 11:7-12:1). Many other scriptures mention the "branch" or leader who will build a temple and fight against the wicked king and stand witness of the Lord's final victory in the last days. He is called by many names and titles, including: "my servant, the BRANCH" (Zechariah 3:8-9); "my servant David," a "king" over the Jews (Ezekiel 37:21-28); "a righteous Branch and a King in whose days Judah would be saved (Jeremiah 23:3-8; "a Branch of righteousness" (Jeremiah 33:15); "a leader and commander to the people"

(Isaiah 55:3-4); and "David their king in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4-5).

Modern prophets have also discussed this Jewish leader of the last days. Joseph Smith said, "The throne and kingdom of David is to be taken from him and given to another by the name of David in the last days, raised up out of his lineage." (HC 6:253) In his dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives, Orson Hyde prophesied: "Raise up Jerusalem . . . and constitute her people a distinct nation and government, with David Thy servant, even a descendant from the loins of ancient David to be their king." (HC 4:457)

In summary, the servant of Isaiah 11:1 appears to be David, the great Jewish leader of the last days. [Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, pp. 167-169] [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:10]



2 Nephi 21:1 **There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse (Illustration):** Illustration of Isaiah 11:1, 10: The "rod," "stem of Jesse," "branch," "roots," and "root." [Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, p. 171]



Old olive tree Garden of Gethsemane

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

2 Nephi 21:1 **A rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots (Illustration – not shown):** Old olive trees, Garden of Gethsemane, Jerusalem. Note the rods or branches growing out of the trunk of each tree. When the olive tree is cut down, new shoots grow out of both its old trunk as well as its far-reaching root system. Olive trees grow to a height of about eighteen feet and live for centuries. The trees' thick, gnarled trunks produce numerous branches. Olivewood is a valuable source of lumber for artisans and craftsmen. For instance, artisans carved the cherubim that were housed in the holy of holies of Solomon's temple from olivewood. The cherubim were then overlaid with pure gold. Oil produced from olives was an important food source and was used in oil lamps. Ceremonially, olive oil was used for the coronation of kings and the ritual anointing of persons and things in ancient temples. Photograph by Carrilyn Clarkson. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), pp. 80-81]

2 Nephi 21:1 **There Shall Come Forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse (Sperry Interpretation):**

According to Sidney Sperry, in 2 Nephi 21:1 (Isaiah 11:1) we have the following:

And there shall come forth a rod [shoot, twig] out of the stem [stump, root-stock] of Jesse,  
And a branch [sprout] shall grow out of his roots.

Here we have synonymous parallelism in these lines, so that "rod" corresponds to "branch" and "stem" corresponds to "roots." And "Jesse" makes us think of the Davidic dynasty and then of Christ. Commentators give various explanations, but one gets the impression that they are groping in the dark. Many non-Jewish writers, however, do believe that it has Messianic connotations.

*By "stem of Jesse" Isaiah has reference to Christ, and by "rod" he has reference to a servant of Christ. But just who is the servant? A careful reading of D&C 113:4-6 convinces me that Joseph Smith is meant, for who fulfills the conditions of these verses, especially verse 6, better than he? Surely he had the lineage to which rightly belongs the priesthood (cf. D&C 86:8-11); he received the keys of the kingdom (D&C 65:2) for an ensign (standard--D&C 45:9) and for the gathering of the Lord's people in the last days (D&C 110:11). Moreover, the situation under which Moroni quoted the chapter from Isaiah favors Joseph Smith as being the "rod." He would logically be the "servant in the hands of Christ" who was to receive the instruction from Moroni and be prepared to understand the ancient prophecies concerning his mission in the latter days. [Sidney B. Sperry, Book of Mormon Compendium, pp. 222-223] [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:10]*

#### **2 Nephi 21:1 A Rod out of the Stem of Jesse (Reynolds and Sjodahl Interpretation):**

According to Reynolds and Sjodahl, "the rod of the stem of Jesse" (2 Nephi 21:1) is the Messiah. Literally, the "stem" means the "stump" of the tree left in the ground after the branches had been cut down and the luxuriant foliage removed. The meaning is that the Messiah would come when the family of Jesse had been reduced to the social status it occupied at the time of its ancestor, before the golden age of David and Solomon. The Messiah would come as a shoot from the stump of the family tree, but the tender twig would grow and become a flourishing fruitful Tree. [George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 357] [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:10]

#### **2 Nephi 21:1 There Shall Come Forth a *Rod* out of the *Stem* of Jesse, and a *Branch* Shall Grow out of His *Roots*:**

According to Avraham Gileadi, several scriptures help us analyze the allegory of an olive tree in 2 Nephi 21 (Isaiah 11). Doctrine and Covenants 113 identifies the "stem" of Jesse as Jesus Christ (v. 1-2). Of the "rod" it says, "it is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power" (v. 4). Knowing these identities, we are able to examine Isaiah's allegory more closely. First, however, we should note that the context that precedes Isaiah 11:1 is the Lord's day of judgment. . . . Isaiah 11 (2 Nephi 21) establishes a latter-day context for the allegory: scattered Israel and Judah return from throughout the earth and the Millennium begins (Isaiah 11:6-12).

Another dimension to Isaiah 11:1 (2 Nephi 21:1) appears, one we don't easily discern in the King James Version: the threefold process of "stem" (*stock*) to "rod" (*shoot*) to "branch" ends with "fruit." This progression means that in the implied context of the allegory--the Lord's day of judgment--the tree has not been bearing fruit. Something new must happen to cause the tree to again bear fruit. . . . In short, what Isaiah represents as happening to the tree eventually leads to fruit. The tree itself, though it may at some point be mostly cut down, renews itself and again becomes acceptable to the Lord.

The Hebrew for "stock/stem" (*geza*) denotes the lower trunk of a tree. Since Doctrine and Covenants 113 identifies this *stock/stem* as Christ, it reminds us of what Jesus said: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:1-2,5).

We perceive that the lower trunk of the tree, Christ, always remains good. The intent of Isaiah 11:1 is to show *how* the branch bears fruit and becomes the new tree. If it does, the resulting context of the allegory becomes paradise: that is, those of the Lord's people who bear fruit live on into the Millennium (compare Isaiah 11:6-9). However, the context of the allegory remains destruction in the day of judgment for those of the Lord's people who do not bear fruit (Isaiah 10:33-34). In the last days, the world will experience only two destinies, one for the righteous and one for the wicked.

In order that the tree bear fruit, a shoot springs up from the trunk of the tree. The Hebrew term for this "shoot/rod" (*hoter*) signifies it to be a water sprout, the sort of growth on fruit trees that farmers lop off in the spring. This water sprout cannot, of itself, bear fruit. A water sprout characteristically grows rapidly straight upward from the lower trunk of the tree. It doesn't bear fruit but instead absorbs much of the moisture of the tree. If, however, the rest of the tree doesn't bear fruit, yet the lower trunk is good, then one could save such a water sprout and graft into it when it grows sufficiently strong. Isaiah depicts that process in Isaiah 11:1.

The third member of the trio, the "branch" (Hebrew *neser*), is the one that bears fruit. The *branch* can do so, however, only when grafted into the shoot/rod. The *branch* grows out of the "graft/caudex" (Hebrew *sorasaw*: KJV "roots") of the water sprout. It completes the process that results in a new tree. Only this *branch* can grow into a full-grown, fruit bearing tree. Unlike the water sprout, which is wild by nature, the *branch* represents a tame, domesticated variety. In depicting the growth of the tree this way, Isaiah expresses something very similar to Zenos' allegory of the olive tree.

There remains something else to consider. In Hebrew prophetic thought, the king of a nation (or leader of a community, or father of a family) answers, in his person, for the entire people. In a figurative sense, he personifies them. If the *stock/stem* of Jesse represents Jesus

Christ, then Christ also represents the tree as a whole--the growth that develops from him (compare John 15:1-2,5). That growth is Christianity. But that Christianity no longer bears fruit. A new thing, or restoration, is necessary so that the tree may again bear fruit. The Prophet Joseph Smith and the Church he organized typify this new thing. As the *shoot/rod*, he represents or personifies figuratively the Latter-day Saints. Partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, his immediate origins (and the Latter-day Saints') lie among the Gentiles, as the water sprout signifies (compare D&C 109:60).

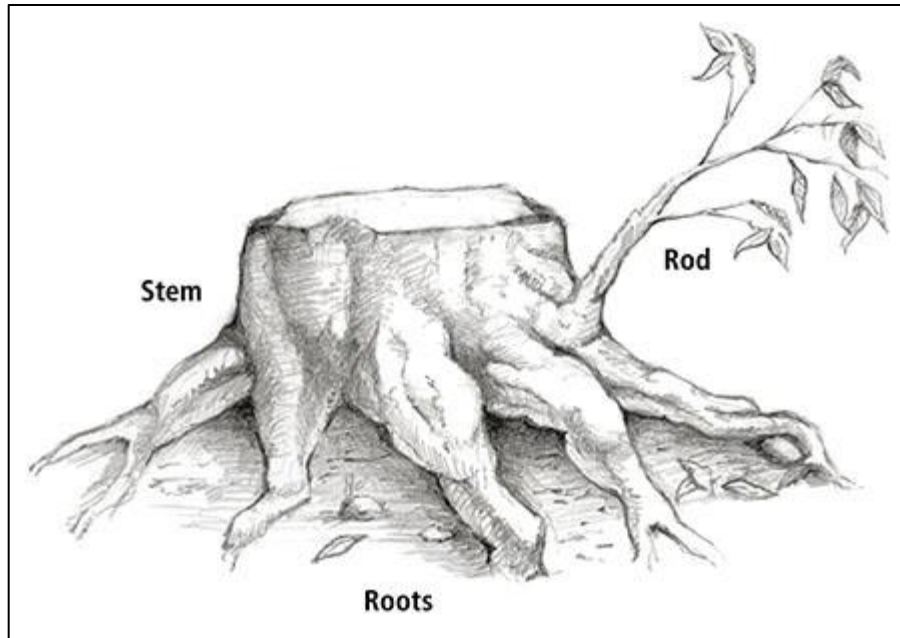
Similarly, the third member of the trio, the *branch*, represents or personifies figuratively the natural branches of the house of Israel--the Jews, the Nephites/Lamanites, and the Ten Tribes. These natural branches are not permanently cut off, as many Christian denominations claim, but are the very reason for the tree's continued existence. When they come into the tree, it again bears fruit; Israel appears in her strength.

The *branch* not only represents in his person the house of Israel but also serves as the Lord's agent of their grafting into the tree. . . .

In summary, Isaiah's allegory, like Zenos', predicts Gentile interaction with the house of Israel. Isaiah's allegory, however, like the rest of his prophecies, points specifically to the last days for its fulfillment. The water sprout (the Gentiles) thrives with the tree (Israel) for a time. But in the day of judgment the Lord largely cuts off the water sprout to make room for the grafting in of the natural branch. Only the part of the water sprout that nourishes the graft remains with the tree. The water sprout's nourishment of the natural branch epitomizes the latter-day role of savior that the Gentiles perform (compare Isaiah 49:22-23).

[Avraham Gileadi, The Last Days: Types and Shadows from the Bible and the Book of Mormon, pp. 127-131





**2 Nephi 21:1 There Shall Come Forth a *Rod* out of the *Stem* of Jesse, and a *Branch* Shall Grow out of His *Roots*:**

Isaiah's veiled meanings should not be veiled to the latter-day saints. Therefore, we will try to make sense of all of Isaiah's references in this chapter. The easiest way to look at this chapter is as a description of the missions of two individuals: Christ (v. 2-9) and Joseph Smith (v. 10-16). In this chapter, one of the hardest verses to understand is verse 1.

For a scripture that was specifically interpreted in the Doctrine and Covenants, this is still a confusing verse. The D&C specifically explains who is the "stem of Jesse" and hints at the identity of the "rod" (see DC 113:1-4). But there are still terms in the verse which need explaining. For instance, who is the "branch"? Should we interpret the "branch" to be the same individual as the "rod"? What does the term "his roots" mean? Does the word "his" in verse 1 refer to the same person as the word "him" in verse 2?

For the sake of clarification, let's make a list of terms and their interpretation:

1. rod = a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power (DC 113:4).  
But who is this servant?
2. stem of Jesse = Christ (DC 113:2).
3. branch = ?

4. his roots = ?

We can see from this list that all we know for sure from DC 113 is that the “stem of Jesse” is Christ. The next question, then, is “who is the servant spoken of in DC 113:4?” Let’s assume for the time being that the servant is Joseph Smith. This interpretation has been made by others and will be discussed later.

The next problem is identifying the “branch.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie has explained in no uncertain terms that the “branch” refers to Jesus Christ (see quotation given below).

At this point we have explained almost everything, but we still need to know what is meant by the term “his roots.” The tendency to equate this term with the term “stem of Jesse” must be avoided. To understand this term we need to understand one of Isaiah’s literary devices: inverted parallelism. Isaiah uses inverted parallelism in many of his couplets. The fact that the parallelism is inverted is the key to understanding the passage.

Consider the following examples of inverted parallelism:

Isaiah 2:3	“for out of <b>Zion</b> shall go forth the <b>law</b> , And the <b>word</b> of the Lord from <b>Jerusalem</b> .”
Isaiah 11:13	“ <b>Ephraim</b> shall not envy <b>Judah</b> , And <b>Judah</b> shall not vex <b>Ephraim</b> .”
Isaiah 63:2	“Wherefore art thou <b>red</b> in thine <b>apparel</b> , And thy <b>garments</b> like him that treadeth in the <b>winefat</b> ?”
Isaiah 11:1	“a <b>rod</b> out of the <b>stem</b> of Jesse, And a <b>branch</b> shall grow out of <b>his roots</b> .”

Note that the concepts in blue match each other, as do the concepts in red. Now we can understand that the term “his” refers to the same person as the “rod” or Joseph Smith. The term “his roots” refers to the lineage of Joseph Smith through Jesse, David’s father (as described in DC 113:6). This explanation is entirely reasonable because Christ (as the Branch) also came through the ancestry of Jesse.

This interpretation equates the “stem of Jesse” and “the Branch” which both refer to Christ. And it demonstrates the common lineage of Joseph Smith and Jesus Christ that was alluded to in DC 113:6. Using this scheme, let’s try to fill in the interpretation for our list of terms.

1. rod = servant in the hands of Christ = Joseph Smith

2. stem of Jesse = Christ
3. branch = Christ
4. his roots = Joseph Smith's roots (i.e. lineage through Jesse)

This interpretation requires that we accept the revealed truth that Joseph Smith was both a descendant of Joseph of Egypt and a descendant of Jesse (or of the tribe of Judah). Victor Ludlow explains:

“The Book of Mormon contains an important prophecy about a descendant of the ancient Joseph who would also be named Joseph and who would do a great work of salvation among the Israelites to bring them to the knowledge of God’s covenants in the last days. (2 Ne. 3:6-11, 14-15.) Joseph Smith, Jr., is this Joseph. His patriarchal blessing identifies him as the heir to the promises of Ephraim (son of the ancient Joseph), and he is called a pure Ephraimite by Brigham Young. (DS 3:250-54; WTP, pp. 125-27)

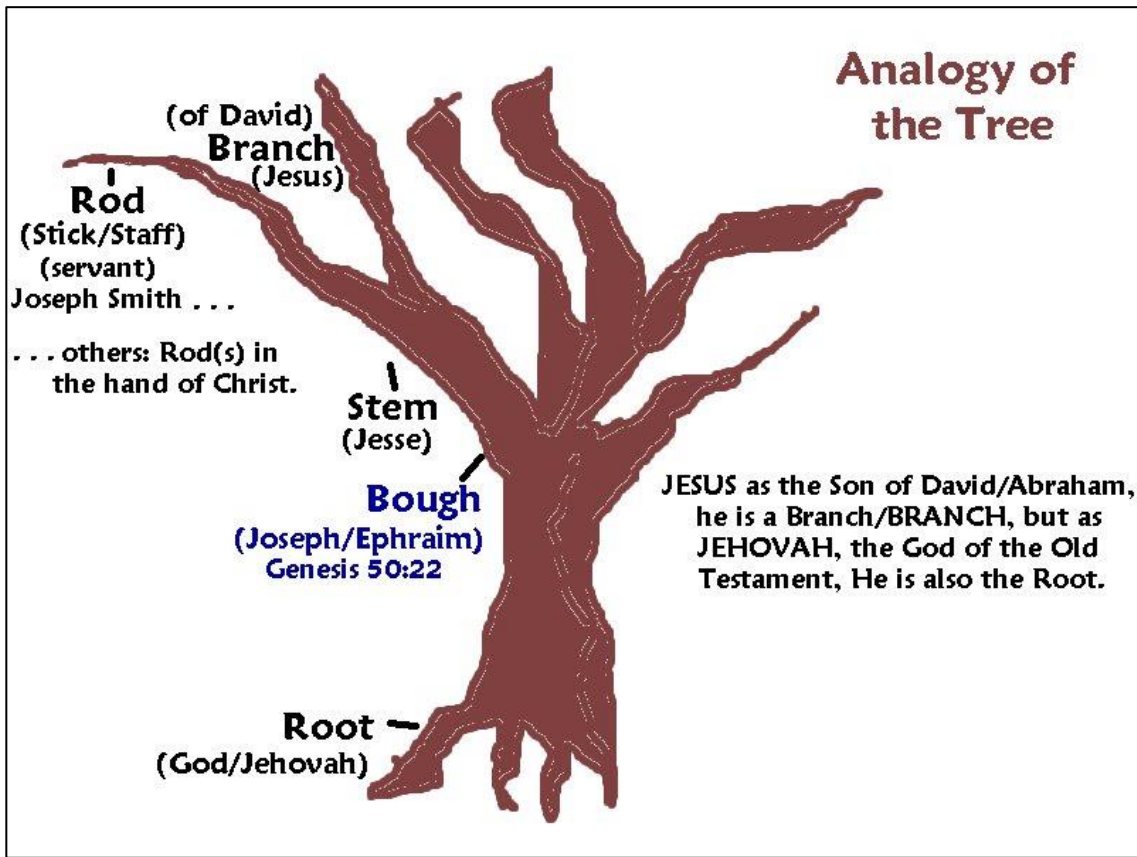
“There is not the same recorded evidence of Joseph Smith being a descendant of Jesse through the tribe of Judah. However, there were occasions in earlier Church history when a number of the brethren, including Joseph Smith, claimed that they shared lineage with Jesus in the tribe of Judah. (See Life of Heber C. Kimball [1988], p. 185; JD 4:248; Journal of President Rudger Clawson, pp. 374-75; Ivins Journal, p. 21.)

“In short, Joseph Smith fulfills the requirements as a descendant of Joseph through his son Ephraim. He was also a descendant of Judah through Jesse, and he may have descended through the same lineage as Jesus.” (Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, by Victor L. Ludlow, p. 172)

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

2 Nephi 21:1 **There Shall Come Forth a *Rod* out of the *Stem* of Jesse, and a *Branch* Shall Grow out of His *Roots*:**

See VERN SWANSON ON THE LINEAGE OF CHRIST !!!!!!! partly from Joseph



The Tree in Isaiah 11

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

2 Nephi 21:6 **Wolf (Illustration):**



Wolf Israel

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

2 Nephi 21:6 **The Wolf . . . shall dwell with the lamb ( Illustration):**



[Voicerev-sharemyjourney.blogspot.com](http://Voicerev-sharemyjourney.blogspot.com)

2 Nephi 21:6 **The Leopard Shall Lie Down With the Kid:**



Israel Arabian Leopard

[flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/14811170@N00/10111111111/)

2 Nephi 21:6 **The leopard (Illustration – not shown):** Leopard, Hai-Bar Yotvata Nature Reserve. The leopard, a spotted cat found in the Holy Land, feeds on lambs and other small animals, thus posing a threat to the livelihood of shepherds. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, [Visualizing Isaiah](#), p. 102]



Goat with kid

[truth2u.org](https://www.truth2u.org/)

2 Nephi 21:6 **The kid (Illustration – not shown):** Six goat kids foraging on a hillside near Bethel. Domesticated goats served many useful purposes to Old Testament peoples, providing meat, milk, leather, and goat-hair for cloth and tents. The kids were especially valued as food. Goats, unlike cattle, were able to feed on moderately barren ground. They were easy prey for carnivorous beasts. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 102]

2 Nephi 21:6 **The Leopard Shall Lie Down With the Kid:**



Leopard with a kid [marissabaker.wordpress.com](http://marissabaker.wordpress.com)

2 Nephi 21: The Calf and the Young Lion . . . [Shall Be] Together:



Calf (young antelope) and the young lion

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

2 Nephi 21:7 The Cow and the Bear Shall Feed:



Syrian Brown Bear

[forum.nationstates.net](http://forum.nationstates.net)



**2 Nephi 21:7 The Lion Shall Eat Straw Like the Ox:**



Ox eating straw

[beaktivedantamanor.co.uk](http://beaktivedantamanor.co.uk)

**2 Nephi 21:8 The Suckling Child Shall Play on the Hole of the Asp:**

The Israeli burrowing asps are specialized burrowers, with shiny-scaled, cylindrical bodies, small heads, a countersunk lower jaw, indistinct neck, short tail, and small eyes. The venom apparatus of burrowing asps is formidable. Their venom glands are immense, extending into the neck region and for a length approximating 20% of the total body length in some species (Underwood & Kochva 1993), Wollberg, et al, 1998). Occurring throughout much of Africa (with the exception of the north and south-west) as well as the Sinai and Arabian peninsulas as far north as Israel, there are about 12 burrowing asp species, but their taxonomy is unsettled and requires sorting out. They are between 30o and 50 cm long. They have a distinctive aromatic smell (Branch 1988). No one knows why.



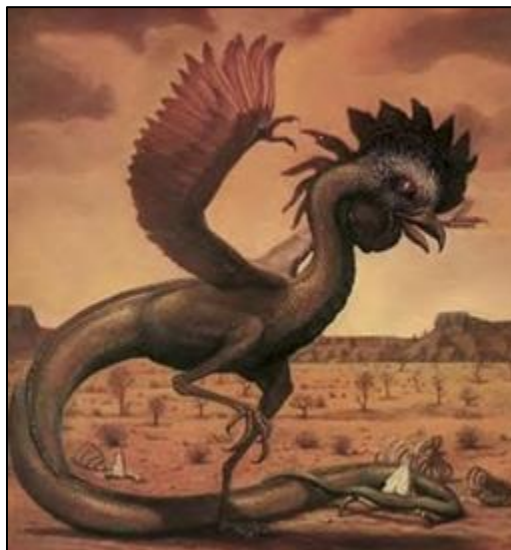
Burrowing Asp snake

[israeljewishnews.blogspot.ca](http://israeljewishnews.blogspot.ca)

## 2 Nephi 21: 8 **The Weaned Child Shall Put His Hand on the Cockatrice's Den:**

"Cockatrice" or "Adder" in Isaiah 11:8 et al.?

Critics claim that the cockatrice is one of the mythological creatures in the KJV. The cockatrice is typically described as a rooster-like creature with a lizard-like tail. Such a creature does not exist today. However, the cockatrice may have been an actual creature that has become extinct. In fact, it resembles the Archaeopteryx - an extinct bird with a lizard-like tail.



What is a cockatrice in the bible? [souljournaler.blogspot.co.uk](http://souljournaler.blogspot.co.uk)

If there is evidence that a bird with a lizard-like tail once existed, is it fair to dismiss the cockatrice as mere myth?

Otherwise, the biblical cockatrice may simply be a deadly venomous serpent, most likely the cobra. The cockatrice is equivalent to the basilisk, which comes from the Greek “βασιλίσκος,” which means “little king.” The basilisk was called “little king” because it had a “mitre” on its head. A snake that wears a “mitre” is the cobra. Jeremiah 8:17 speaks of cockatrices as serpents. Isaiah 59:5 equates cockatrice eggs to viper eggs, indicating that the cockatrice is a viper. In an era before “cobra” was imported into the English vocabulary, “cockatrice” referred to the hooded venomous serpent.  
Kjvtoday.com

## 2 Nephi 21:9 **The Earth Shall Be Full of the Knowledge of the Lord:**

David Seely writes that the evolution of technology by which the word of the Lord has gone forth to the world is something to be appreciated. Old Testament manuscripts were written laboriously on scrolls of parchment or papyrus or on plates of brass. Early manuscripts of the New Testament were also written primarily on parchment and papyrus, adopting the form of the codex--the early form of the book. The technology of writing improved only slightly in the centuries which followed with more efficient pens, refined inks, and better writing surfaces. Some monasteries even practiced a form of mass production of manuscripts. Books were rare and expensive. They were only owned and read by wealthy nobles, the clergy, and students and professors of universities.

In the middle of the 1400's in Mainz, Germany, however, Johannes Gutenberg changed the history of the transmission of texts forever. Gutenberg invented the first working Western moveable-type printing system. He did not, as is commonly supposed, invent printing or even moveable type. What he did invent was a system of moveable type that was fast, efficient, and economical, and that could replicate the aesthetic standards of the beautiful manuscript traditions. He started with a modification of the screw press. He then invented a hand-held typesetter into which one could pour an alloy of lead, tin, and antimony creating individual reusable pieces of type. Finally Gutenberg invented a highly viscous ink made from lead and copper oxides mixed with boiled linseed oil--a thick paste, thicker than the ink used in writing manuscripts--that would stick to the type and transfer to the paper.<sup>1</sup> Gutenberg's first commercial job was to produce two hundred Bibles, which were completed in a fraction of the time required to copy manuscripts by hand.



Gutenberg Printing Press

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

His invention quickly changed the world. It is estimated that by the mid-sixteenth century there were "well over eight million printed books"<sup>iii</sup> in circulation in Europe that included Greek and Roman classics, scientific and other academic texts, and religious works. Soon books were more easily available and literacy rates increased to match the newly available reading material--for the first time in history Europe had a literate middle class. Gutenberg's invention accelerated the diffusion of ideas, thought, invention and discovery that characterized the Renaissance.

Although Bibles (mostly the Latin Vulgate) were more accessible to the masses, they still yearned for the word of the Lord in their own language. In 1517 Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg and with their distribution, the Reformation became an international event. The courageous translators of the bible were soon able to see their work printed on Gutenberg-inspired presses into German, French, and English, and the word of the Lord went forth to many nations in their native languages for the first time.

On a spring morning in 1820, Joseph Smith was reading James 1:5 in the Smith family Bible--a Bible that had been produced with the Gutenberg printing system. Joseph followed the counsel of James and retired to the Sacred Grove. Thus began the Restoration of the gospel in the last dispensation. In 1823 the angel Moroni revealed to Joseph Smith that there was a book deposited in a hill near his home that contained "the fulness of the everlasting Gospel," and that Joseph Smith had been called to translate the book (JS-H 1:34-35, 51). By the end of June 1829, Joseph Smith had completed the translation of the Book of Mormon, and proceeded to hire the services of a local printer, E. B. Grandin of Palmyra, New York. The printing press in the Grandin print shop was one very much like the one designed by Gutenberg, and provided the means for

the voices of Nephi, Alma, Mormon, and Moroni to speak from the dust, restoring the plain and precious things lost from the Bible.<sup>iii</sup>

Only now, 545 years after the completion of the Gutenberg Bibles, has much of the technology for printing finally changed. Gutenberg would not recognize the electronic and computerized printing processes of the modern world. However, as the millennium changed to 2000, historians and journalists chose Gutenberg as the "Man of the Millennium"<sup>iv</sup> and Life Books proclaimed Gutenberg's printing of the Bible as the "No. 1 Event of the Millennium."<sup>v</sup> Ironically, Gutenberg received little recognition for his inventions in his own lifetime. In fact, in 1445 he went bankrupt, and his business was taken over by a creditor. Yet in the explosion of knowledge initiated with Gutenberg's system of printing, we can indeed see the beginning of Isaiah's vision: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9; 2 Nephi 21:9).

[David R. Seely, "The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: The Restoration of the Gospel and the History of Printing," in Religious Studies Center Newsletter, Vol. 16 No. 1, Fall 2001, pp. 1-4] [See the commentary on Mormon 8:34]

**2 Nephi 21:10 In That Day, There Shall Be a Root of Jesse, Which Shall Stand for an Ensign of the People (Ludlow Interpretation):**

As has been explained previously in the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:1, when Moroni visited Joseph Smith on the night of September 21, 1823, he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah and told Joseph that "it was about to be fulfilled." (JS-H 1:40). The chapter seems to be divided into three logical parts:

- (1) vss. 1-5, Isaiah prophesies of Christ--the growth of His power in the last days through the Millennium.
- (2) vss. 6-9, Isaiah describes conditions during the Millennial reign of Christ.
- (3) vss. 10-16. Israel will be gathered the second time.

In 1838, Joseph asked the Lord about the meaning of three key terms in this chapter. The revealed answers are recorded in D&C 113:

1. Who is the Stem of Jesse spoken of in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses of the 11th chapter of Isaiah?
2. Verily thus saith the Lord: it is Christ.
3. What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that should come of the Stem of Jesse?
4. Behold, thus saith the Lord: It is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power.
5. What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?

6. Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.

According to Victor Ludlow, the servant of Isaiah 11:1 appears to be David, the great Jewish leader of the last days. In 2 Nephi 11:10 (Isaiah 11:10) another major figure of the last days is introduced: a "root of Jesse," who shall stand as an ensign for the people to which the Gentiles shall seek. The Lord identifies this "root of Jesse" as a "descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days." (D&C. 113:5-6)

*This servant is often identified as the Prophet Joseph Smith*<sup>vi</sup> In comparing Joseph Smith with the "root of Jesse," each aspect of his calling will be analyzed:

1. *Joseph: Descendant of Jesse and Joseph:*

The Book of Mormon contains an important prophecy about a descendant of the ancient Joseph who would also be named Joseph and who would do a great work of salvation among the Israelites to bring them to the knowledge of God's covenants in the last days (see 2 Nephi 3:6-11, 14-15). Joseph Smith, Jr., is this Joseph. His patriarchal blessing identifies him as the heir to the promises of Ephraim (son of the ancient Joseph), and he is called a pure Ephraimite by Brigham Young<sup>vii</sup> even though all his ancestors were not of Ephraim.<sup>viii</sup>

There is not the same recorded evidence of Joseph Smith being a descendant of Jesse through the tribe of Judah. However, there were occasions in earlier Church history when a number of the brethren, including Joseph Smith, claimed that they shared lineage with Jesus in the tribe of Judah.<sup>ix</sup>

In short, Joseph Smith fulfills the requirements as a descendant of Joseph through his son Ephraim. He was also a descendant of Judah through Jesse, and he may have descended through the same lineage as Jesus.

*Joseph Smith: Rightful Heir to the Priesthood:*

The early priesthood holders of this dispensation were lawful heirs to their power through their lineage (see D&C 86:8-11). Indeed, Isaiah prophesied that the strength of Zion in the last days would be the authority of the priesthood to which Zion "has a right by lineage" (Isaiah 52:1; D&C 113:8; see also 107:40-41, 56-57). Joseph Smith held the priesthood and through it organized the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation (see D&C 13; 20; 23; 84; 107; 124:123).

*Joseph Smith: Holder of the Keys of the Kingdom:*

With the priesthood, the Prophet also received certain keys. First, he received the office of an apostle under the hands of Peter, James and John, who held the keys of "the kingdom of heaven" (see Matthew 16:19; D&C 27:12-13). Later, through Moses, Elias,<sup>x</sup> and Elijah, he received

the keys necessary for this dispensation and was told that thus the world would know that the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" was near at hand (D&C 110:11-16). With these keys for the gathering of Israel, missionary work, the sealing powers of the temple, and other powers, Joseph Smith had the authority to usher in the dispensation of the fullness of times.<sup>xi</sup>

*Joseph Smith: His Work to Be an Ensign to the Nations:*

In 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith stated:

The Savior said . . . the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. . . . The testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the priesthood to a witness over all people . . . a special messenger--ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. (HC 6:363-64)

Joseph recorded that Moroni had told him "that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues" (JS-H 1:33). The gospel (the everlasting covenant) has since spread worldwide, thereby becoming a *light* to the world, a *standard* (or ensign) for the Lord's people and for the Gentiles to seek and a *messenger* to prepare the way before Christ's second coming.<sup>xii</sup>

*Joseph Smith: His Role in the Gathering of Israel in the Last Days:*

On April 3, 1836, Joseph Smith received from the resurrected Moses the keys for the "gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north." (D&C 110:11)<sup>xiii</sup> A few years later, in 1841, the Prophet sent Orson Hyde to Palestine to dedicate the land for the return of the Jews, and since 1881, the Jews have returned to Israel from over a hundred nations.

[Victor L. Ludlow, Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, pp. 170-174]

Note\* The age-old question the world has faced is whether Jesus of Nazareth would be, was, and is the anointed Messiah according to all that has been written, prophesied, and symbolically shaped in the history of the world. Those of any religion or people who beg to differ must come up with a more satisfactory explanation as to who or what might better explain such beliefs. A similar scenario can be applied for those who seek a satisfactory solution to Isaiah's criteria for the "rod" and the "root of Jesse" as found in Isaiah 11:1, 10 (2 Nephi 21:1,10). The qualifications of Joseph Smith with regards to those criteria are compelling. [Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes]

**2 Nephi 21:10 In That Day, There Shall Be a Root of Jesse, Which Shall Stand for an Ensign of the People (Sperry Interpretation):**

As has been explained previously in the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:1, when Moroni visited Joseph Smith on the night of September 21, 1823, he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah

and told Joseph that "it was about to be fulfilled." (JS-H 1:40). The chapter seems to be divided into three parts: divides into three logical parts:

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- (3) vss. 10-16. Israel will be gathered the second time.

According to Sidney Sperry, starting in verse 10, having prophesied concerning the millennial peace that shall come to the earth, Isaiah now speaks of a subject that chronologically should have preceded it, namely, the Lord's setting his hand to recover the remnant of Israel in the latter days. As was shown earlier (see the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:1) *I equate the "rod" of verse 1 and the "root of Jesse" of verse 10 as referring to the same individual, that is to say, Joseph Smith the Prophet.* Many authorities do give the same meaning to "rod" and the "root of Jesse," but some others, following, as they suppose, the lead of the Apostle Paul in Romans 15:12, believe that the "root of Jesse" refers to Christ. But for Latter-day Saints to believe that it is Christ, the same individual as the "stem of Jesse" (Isaiah 11:1), would be inconsistent and contrary to the information given to us in the Doctrine and Covenants (113:1-6).

If the Apostle Paul, when he quoted Isaiah 11:10, really believed that the "root of Jesse" was Christ, he was in error, an error quite easily explained. Examination of Romans 15:12 demonstrates that Paul was closely following the Septuagint (LXX--Greek translation) text of Isaiah 11:10 rather than the Hebrew. As a matter of fact, the Septuagint version is only a paraphrase of the original Hebrew. We notice that the Greek version of Isaiah 11:1 translates the Hebrew text, "stem of Jesse," as the "root of Jesse" and uses the same phrase in Isaiah 11:10. Of interest is the fact that the Greek word *riza* (root) is used in both verses to translate different Hebrew words. Paul would be quick to discern that the "root of Jesse" of the Septuagint text of Isaiah 11:1-5 was the Christ. And when he observed that the phrase "root of Jesse" was used again in verse 10, he would naturally assume that it too, had reference to the Christ. Hence the reason for his quotation in Romans 15:12.

[Sidney B. Sperry, Book of Mormon Compendium, pp. 226-227] [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 21:1]

Note\* While Sperry's explanation of why the Apostle Paul was in error is logical, one must contemplate whether we have the right to make such a definitive judgment. Paul, the great debater, might take exception or qualify what he said, but he is not here to defend himself. In the meantime I feel that we should leave ourselves open to clues that might explain Paul's interpretation. For example, the reader is referred to Richard Anthony's commentary on 2 Nephi 7 and the commentary of Bruce Sutton on Omni 1:18.

[Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes] [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 7--JST of Isaiah 50 . . . (Joseph & Moses)]



**2 Nephi 21:11 The Lord Shall Set His Hand Again the Second Time to Recover the Remnant of His People:**

In 2 Nephi 21:11-13 we find the following:

And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people . . .

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations . . .

The envy of Ephraim also shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

While this prophecy concerns all the tribes of Israel, it is interesting to note the circumstances regarding the tribe of Judah. According to Cleon Skousen, an early apostle of the restored Church, Orson Hyde was assigned by direct revelation to dedicate Palestine for the return of the Jews and the other tribes of Israel.



Orson Hyde

emp.byui.edu

In 1840 he was sent on his mission to Palestine. His companion abandoned him, but he went on alone and, after much privation and suffering, dedicated that land on October 24, 1841. . . . With his mission completed, Orson Hyde made his way slowly back to America and thence to Nauvoo. When Joseph Smith received Orson Hyde's report he was highly pleased. The tiny acorn had been planted for the gathering and growing of a mighty oak of Judah.

In 1845, following the death of Joseph Smith, the Quorum of the Twelve issued a proclamation to all the world (see *Messages of the First Presidency*, Vol. I, pp. 253-266). After bearing witness of the restoration of the Gospel, the proclamation read:

"And we further testify that the Jews among all nations are hereby commanded, in the name of the Messiah, to prepare to return to Jerusalem in Palestine, and to rebuild

that city and temple unto the Lord. And also to organize and establish their own political government under their own rulers, judges, and governors, in that country. . . . Be it known unto them that we now hold the keys of the Priesthood and kingdom which are soon to be restored unto them. Therefore, let them also repent, and prepare to obey the ordinances of God."

[W. Cleon Skousen, Treasures from the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, pp. 1329-1330]

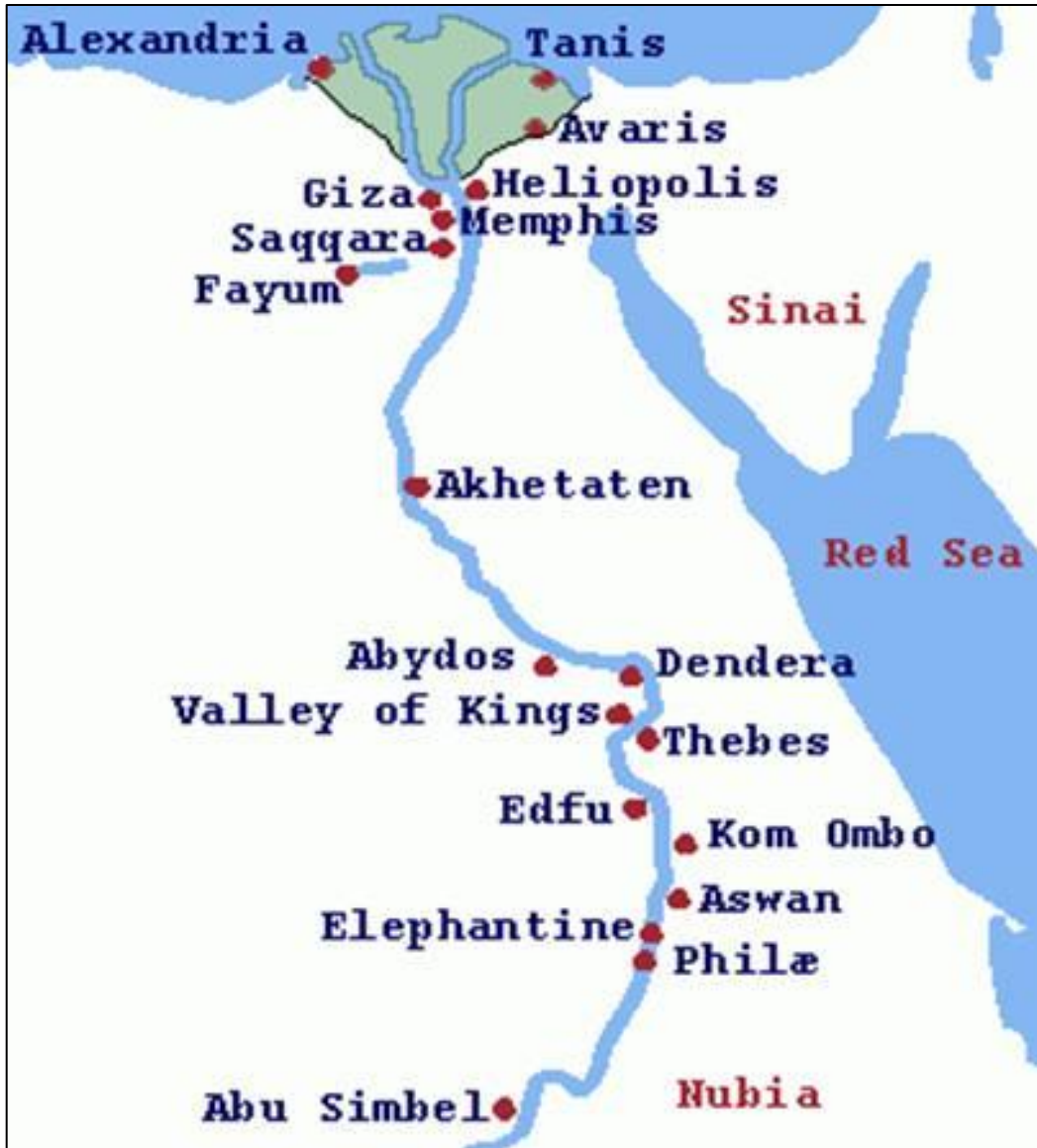
2 Nephi 21:11 **The Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people**  
**(Illustration – not shown):** Orson Hyde (1805-1878). [W. Cleon Skousen, Treasures from the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, pp. 1329]

2 Nephi 21:11 **Assyria:**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 17:17]

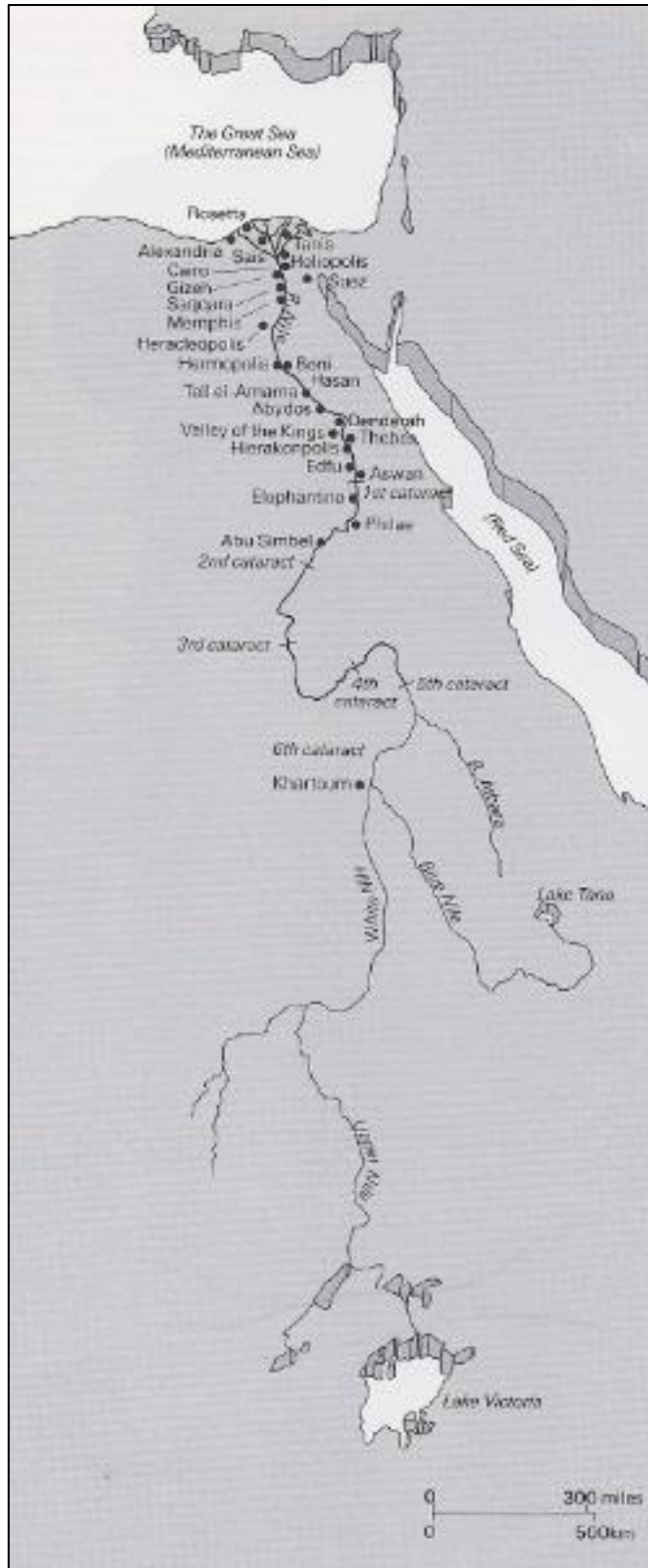
2 Nephi 21:11 **Pathros:**

Pathros is Egyptian p't'--rs(y), "the Southland," in essence Upper Egypt, the long Nile valley extending north-south between Cairo and Aswan. Thus, the terms Mizraim for Egypt (Genesis 10:14; 1 Chronicles 1:12), especially Lower Egypt, Pathros for Upper Egypt and Cush for "Ethiopia (North Sudan) occur in this significantly geographical order both in a prophecy of Isaiah (11:11) and in a subsequent inscription of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria. Jeremiah similarly identifies Pathros with Egypt (Jeremiah 44:15) and specifically Upper Egypt as distinct from the cities (and land) of Lower Egypt (Jeremiah 44:1). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1159]



Pathros = from Heliopolis (Cairo) on the north to Aswan on the south [unityinchrist.com](http://unityinchrist.com)

2 Nephi 21:11 Pathros (Illustration):



2 Nephi 21:11 **Pathros (Illustration)**: The Course of the River Nile. “Pathros” was the region from Cairo to Aswan. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 1087]

2 Nephi 21:11 **Cush:**

The region south of Egypt, in essence, Nubia or Northern Sudan. Originally the name of a district somewhere between the second and third cataracts of the Nile (about 2000 B.C.), "Kush" became also a general term for Nubia among the Egyptians, which wider use Hebrews, Assyrians and others took over.

Throughout Isaiah (11:11; 18:1); 20:3-5; and 43:3; 45:14), Egypt and Ethiopia are closely linked--for in the prophet Isaiah's time the "Ethiopian" 25th Dynasty ruled over both.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 349-350]



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

2 Nephi 21:11 **Cush (Illustration – not shown):** Old Testament Africa. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 18]

2 Nephi 21:11 **Elam:**

The ancient name for the plain of Khuzistan, watered by the Kerkh river, which joins the Tigris just north of the Persian Gulf. . . . The mountainous region to the north and east was known as Anshan and, from an early period, formed a part of Elam. Sumerian and Semitic plainsmen looked upon these ranges as the abode of evil spirits. . . .

Elamite history is obscure from about 1000 B.C. until the campaigns of Sargon of Assyria (c. 721-705 B.C.). Sennacherib and Ashurbanipal subjected the Elamites and deported some of them to Samaria, taking Israelites to Elam (Ezra 4:9; Isaiah 11:11). After the collapse of Assyria, Elam was annexed by the Medo-Persian empire. Elam is called upon by Isaiah to crush Babylon (Isaiah 21:2) and this was carried out (Daniel 8:2). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 433-434]



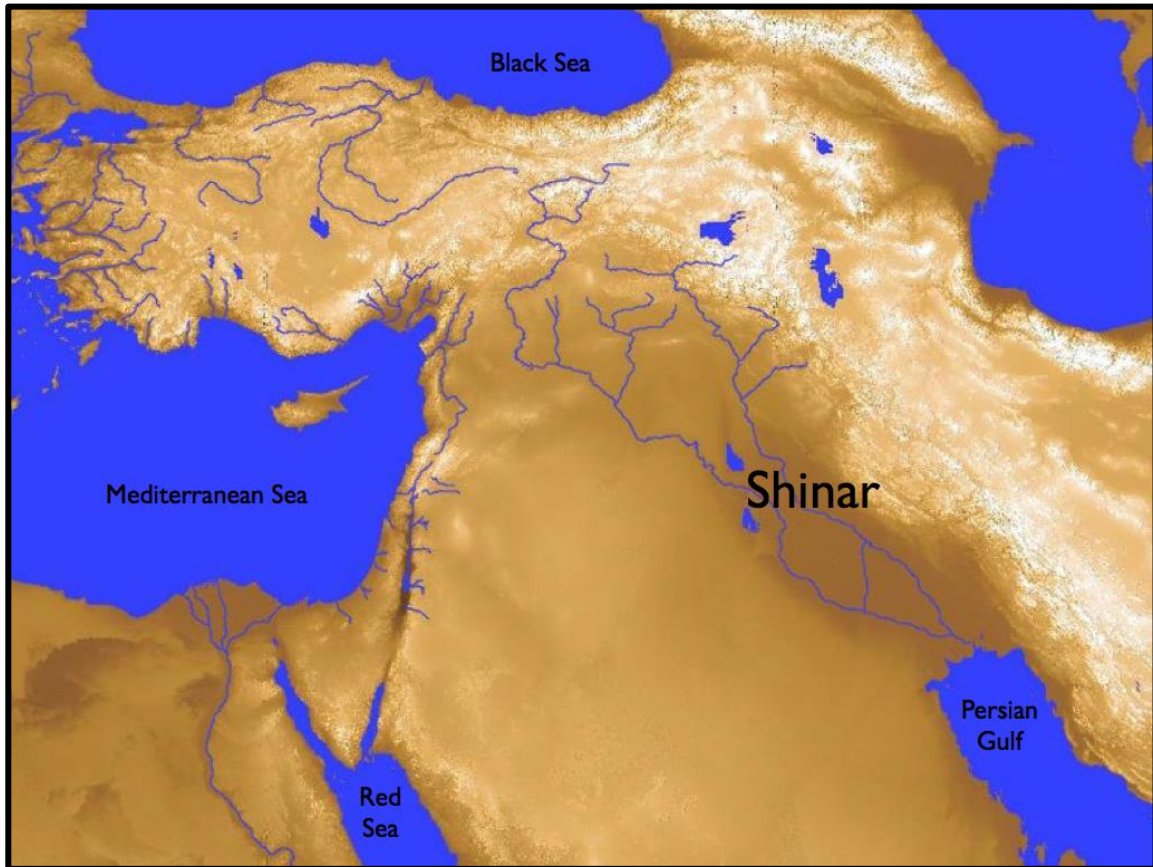
Elam

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

2 Nephi 21:11 **Elam (Illustration – not shown):** Elam, the ancient name for the plain of Khuzistan. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 433]

2 Nephi 21:11 **Shinar:**

The land in which were situated the great cities of Babylon, Erech and Akkad (Genesis 10:10). It lay in a plain to which early migrants came to found the city and tower of Babel (Genesis 11:2) and was a place of exile for the Jews (Isaiah 11:11; Daniel 1:2). The LXX interprets it as "Babylonia" (Isaiah 11:11). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1439]



Shinar

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

2 Nephi 21:12 **And He [the Lord] Shall . . . Gather Together the Dispersed of Judah from the Four Corners of the Earth:**

Hugh Nibley makes an interesting statement regarding the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. He says the following:

Remember, until very recently all the Christian churches absolutely insisted that the Jews

would never return to Jerusalem because the veil of the temple was rent, and the Lord said the temple was destroyed and the Jews would never go back to Jerusalem. It was like that all the time up until 1948 when Harry Truman sent an ambassador. He visited the pope on the way, and the pope said, "Absolutely nothing doing; the Jews must never go back to Jerusalem. It would frustrate all prophecy." They thought the Jews would never go back. I have an article on that in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. I had to look up a lot of this stuff, and, believe me, the Christian world was against it. The only people that ever believed the Jews would go back to Jerusalem, of course, were the Mormons. We always preached that they would go back to Jerusalem, just as we would have Zion over here. (see Joseph Smith--Matthew 1:20).

[Hugh W. Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 1, p. 133]

#### 2 Nephi 21:13 **Ephraim:**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 17:2]

#### 2 Nephi 21:13 **Judah:**

[See the commentary on 1 Nephi 1:4, 2 Nephi 17:6]

#### 2 Ne 21:10 **There Shall Be a Root of Jesse, Which Shall Stand for an Ensign**

The root of Jesse spoken of is interpreted in DC 113:6 as follows, 'it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.' This individual must be Joseph Smith. He is also spoken of as the "rod" in verse 1.

"Quite obviously the 'root of Jesse' is a man, a descendant of Jesse and Joseph (as the Lord explains), who seems to have a great mission to perform in connection with gathering the remnant of Israel, as explained in Isaiah 11:11-16. I suggest that the 'rod' of verse 1 and the 'root of Jesse' of verse 10 refer to the same man, Joseph Smith. If the 'rod' in D&C 113:4 is the 'servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph', note that in verse 6 he seems to be more closely defined as a 'descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.' (Italics added.) Who better fits the description of the words in italics than Joseph Smith (see D&C 27:12-13; 86:8-11; 110:1-16; 115:18-19)? He rightly holds the priesthood and its keys by lineage, and surely no one disputes the fact that the keys of the 'gathering of my people' were conferred on him by Moses in the Kirtland Temple, April 3, 1836." ("The problem of the 'Rod' and the 'Root of Jesse' in



Isaiah 11,” Improvement Era, Oct. 1966, pp. 869, 914-15. as taken from the D&C Institute Manual, 1981, pp. 283-4)

### 2 Nephi 21:14 **They Shall Fly Upon the Shoulders of the Philistines:**

West of the land of Israel was the land of the Philistines. The Philistines were famous for their shipping trade throughout the Mediterranean. They were such prolific shippers that Isaiah uses them as a symbol for travel. He explains that those who are gathered to Israel in the last days will ‘fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines.’

Orson F. Whitney comments:

“‘they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the West.’ We recognize the fulfillment of that prophecy in the founding of this Church by Joseph Smith, a lineal descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who thus lifted the Ensign for the gathering of their descendants from their long dispersion among the nations. But a part of the fulfillment rests with the Gentiles. Their steamships, their railroads, their means of rapid transit and communication—these are ‘the shoulders of the Philistines,’ upon which the children of Ephraim have been and are being brought to the West, to the land of Zion, where the New Jerusalem is to rise, where the pure in heart will assemble, and the necessary preparation be made for the coming of the Lord in his glory. God works outside as well as inside his Church, and uses big things and little things for the accomplishment of his purposes.” (Conference Report, Oct. 1919, p. 69)

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

### 2 Nephi 21:14 **Edom, Moab, and the Children of Ammon:**

These three peoples, the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, represent the greatest enemies of the children of Israel. Therefore, the Lord is promising them great military victory. In the last days, the children of Israel will be given power over their worst enemies.

### 2 Nephi 21:14 **Edom:**

The term Edom denotes either the name of Esau, given in memory of the red pottage for which he exchanged his birthright (Genesis 25:30; 36:1,8,19), or the Edomites collectively (Numbers 20:18,20-21; Malachi 1:4), or the land occupied by Esau's descendants, formerly the land of Seir (Genesis 32:3; 36:20-21,30; Numbers 24:18). It stretched from the Wadi Zered to the Gulf of Aqabah for about 160 kilometers and extended to both sides of the Arabah or wilderness of Edom (2 Kings 3:8,20), the great depression connecting the Dead Sea to the Red Sea (Genesis 14:6;

Deuteronomy 2:1,12; Joshua 15:1; Judges 11:17-18; 1 Kings 9:26, etc.). It was a rugged, mountainous area, with peaks rising to 1,067 meters. While not a fertile land, there are good cultivable areas (Numbers 20:17,19). In Bible times the king's highway, which ran from the Gulf of Aqabah to Damascus in Syria, east of the Dead Sea and Jordan valley, passed along the east plateau of Edom (Numbers 20:14-18). The capital of Edom, Sela, lay on a small plateau behind Petra. Other important towns were Bozrah and Teman.

At the time of the Exodus, Israel sought permission to travel by the king's highway, but the request was refused (Numbers 20:14-21; 21:4; Judges 11:17-18). Notwithstanding this discourtesy, Israel was forbidden to abhor his Edomite brother (Deuteronomy 23:7-8).

Joshua allotted the territory of Judah up to the borders of Edom (Joshua 15:1, 21), but did not encroach on their lands.

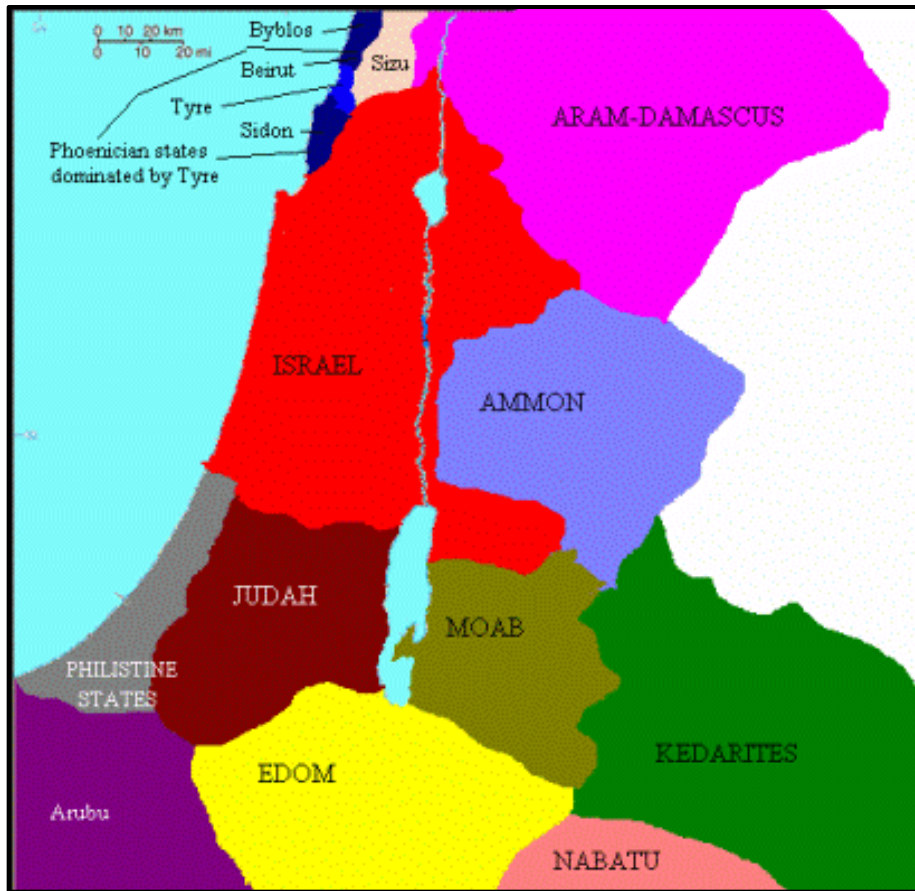
David conquered Edom and put garrisons throughout the land (2 Samuel 8:13-14). This conquest of Edom enabled Solomon to build a port at Ezion-geber, and to exploit the copper-mines in the region, as excavation shows (1 Kings 9:26-28).

In Jehoshaphat's time the Edomites joined the Ammonites and Moabites in a raid on Judah (2 Chronicles 20:1), but the allies fell to fighting one another (vv. 22-23). Jehoshaphat endeavored to use the port at Ezion-geber, but his ships were wrecked (1 Kings 22:48).

Under Joram (Jehoram), Edom rebelled, but, although Joram defeated them in battle, he could not reduce them to subjection (2 Kings 8:20-22; 2 Chronicles 21:8-10), and Edom had a respite of some 40 years.

Amaziah later invaded Edom, slew 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, captured Sela their capital and sent 10,000 more to their death by casting them from the top of Sela (2 Kings 14:7; 2 Chronicles 25:11-12). Uzziah, his successor, restored the port at Elath (2 Kings 14:22), but under Ahaz, when Judah was being attacked by Pekah and Rezin, the Edomites invaded Judah and carried off captives (2 Chronicles 28:17). the port of Elath was lost once again. Judah never again recovered Edom. Assyrian inscriptions show that Edom became a vassal-state of Assyria after about 736 B.C.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 410-411]



Location of Edom, Moab and Ammon

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

2 Nephi 21:14 **Edom (Illustration):** (1) The land of the Edomites between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqabah. (2) The mountains of Edom, near Petra. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 411]

2 Nephi 21:14 **Edom (Illustration – not shown):** The route of the ancient "King's Highway." [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 860]

#### 2 Nephi 21:14 **Moab:**

Moab was the son of Lot. Both the descendants and the land were known as Moab, and the people also as Moabites. The core of Moab was the plateau east of the Dead Sea between the wadis Arnon and Zered, though for considerable periods Moab extended well to the north of the Arnon.

The Bible has preserved the names of many Moabite towns (Numbers 21:15,20; 32:3; Joshua 13:17-20; Isaiah 15-16; Jeremiah 48:20ff.).

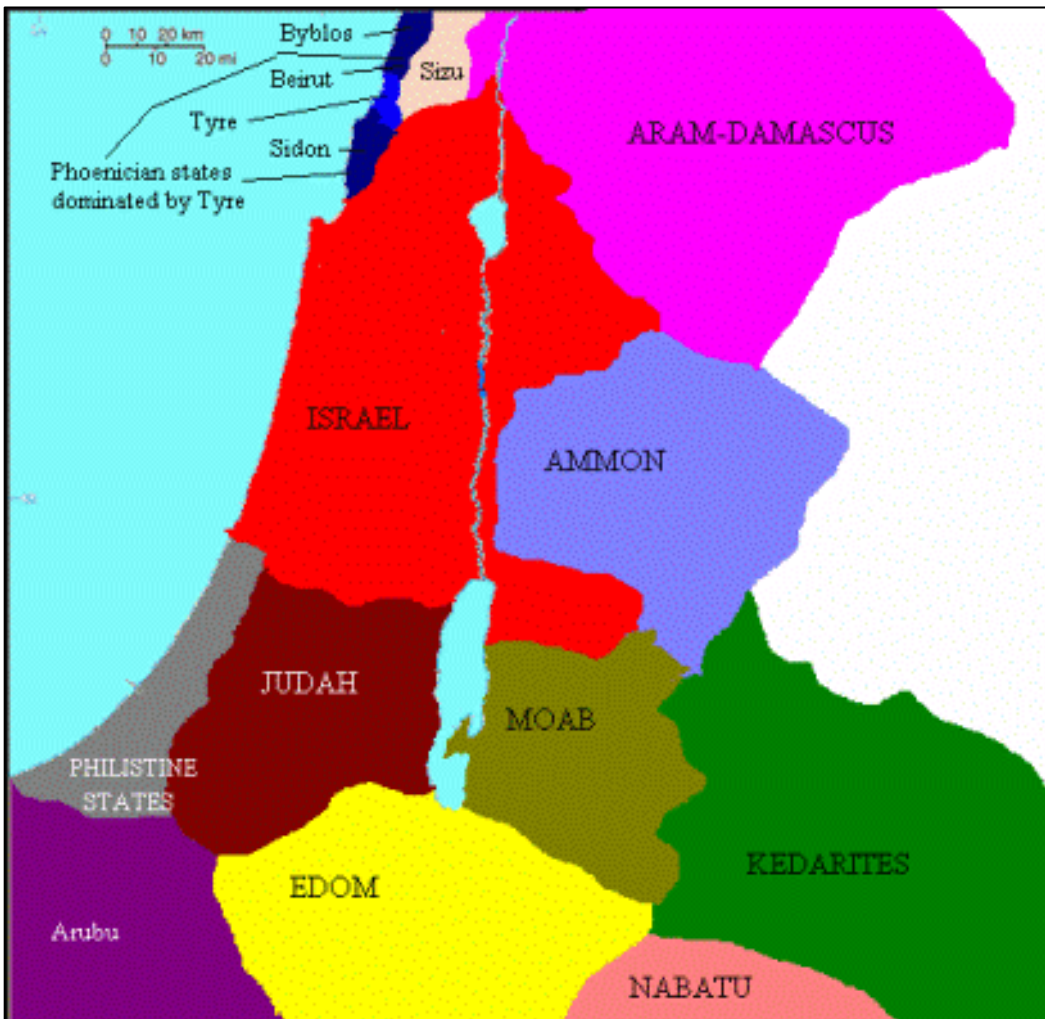
Moses was forbidden to attack Moab despite their unfriendliness (Deuteronomy 2:28-29), although Moabites were henceforth to be excluded from Israel (Deuteronomy 23:3-6; Nehemiah

13:1).

As Israel prepared to cross the Jordan, they camped in the "plains of Moab" (Numbers 22:1; Joshua 3:1) and were seduced by Moabite and Midianite women to participate in idolatrous practices (Numbers 25; Hosea 9:10).

David subdued Moab, but towards the close of Ahab's life Moab began to break free again. Later, Judah was invaded by a confederacy of Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, but confusion broke out and the allies attacked one another so that Judah was delivered (2 Chronicles 20:1-30).

In the prophets the Moabites are often mentioned and divine judgment pronounced on them (see Isaiah 15-16; 25:10; Jeremiah 9:26; 25:21; 27:3; Ezekiel 25:8-11). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, pp. 1014-1016]



Location of Edom, Moab and Ammon

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2 Nephi 21:14 **Moab (Illustration – not shown):** Moab and possible sites of the "city of Moab." [Tyndale

House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 1014]

2 Nephi 21:14 **Ammon:**

The Ammonites were regarded as relatives of the Israelites, who were commanded to treat them kindly (Deuteronomy 2:19). At an early date the Ammonites occupied the territory between the Arnon and Jabbok rivers (Deuteronomy 2:20-21, 37). At the time of the Exodus, Israel did not conquer Ammon (Deuteronomy 2:19, 37; Judges 11:15). However, the Ammonites were condemned for joining the Moabites in hiring Balaam, and were forbidden to enter the congregation of Israel to the 10th generation (Deuteronomy 23:3-6). Their chief town was Rabbath (Rabbah), modern Amman.

In the days of the Judges, the Ammonites assisted Eglon of Moab to subdue Israelite territory (Judges 3:13). In the time of David the Ammonites went to war against Israel. The Israelites captured Rabbah, the Ammonite capital (2 Samuel 12:26-31; 1 Chronicles 20:1-3) and put the people to work. Later, Solomon included Ammonite women in his harem, and worshipped Milcom (Molech) their god (1 Kings 11:1,5,7,33). An Ammonitess, Naamah, was the mother of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:21,31; 2 Chronicles 12:13). In the days of Jehoshaphat, the Ammonites joined Moabites and Edomites in a raid on Judah (2 Chronicles 20:1-30).

The Ammonites were bitterly attacked by the prophets as inveterate enemies of Israel (Jeremiah 49:1-6; Ezekiel 21:20; 25:1-7).

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 1, pp. 40-42]

2 Nephi 21:14 **Ammon (Illustration – not shown):** The territory of the Ammonites, to the east of the river Jabbok. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 41]

2 Nephi 21:15 **The Tongue of the Egyptian Sea:**

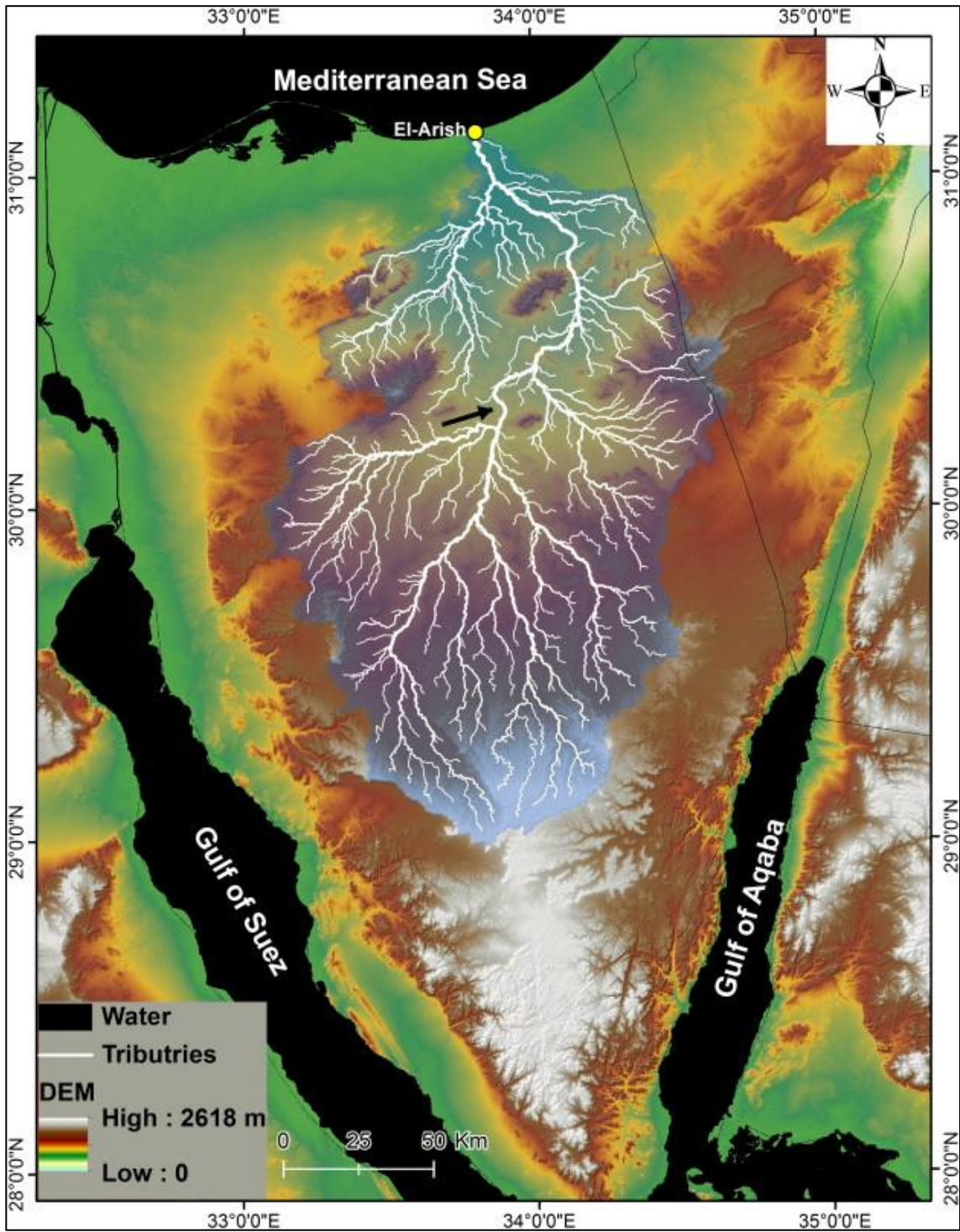
The "tongue of the Egyptian Sea" (2 Nephi 21:15) is also termed a "river." The term "river of Egypt" is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament (Numbers 34:5; Joshua 15:4,47; 1 Kings 8:65; 2 Kings 24:7; etc.). The word translated *river* is really *brook*; consequently the name denotes not the Nile, but the Wady el-Arish, a desert stream on the border of Egypt. [LDS Bible, Bible Dictionary, p. 661]



2 Nephi 21:15 **The Tongue of the Egyptian Sea (Illustration):** Egypt, showing the Wadi el-'Arish [Option #1] and the river Shihor [Option #2], which was part of the Land of Goshen. Both are possible identifications with the "River of Egypt." [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, pp. 431]

2 Nephi 21:15 **Tongue of the Egyptian Sea [Options #1 and #2]:**

Option #1 El-Arish



Wadi El Arish River Sinai Peninsula

[bu.edu](http://bu.edu)

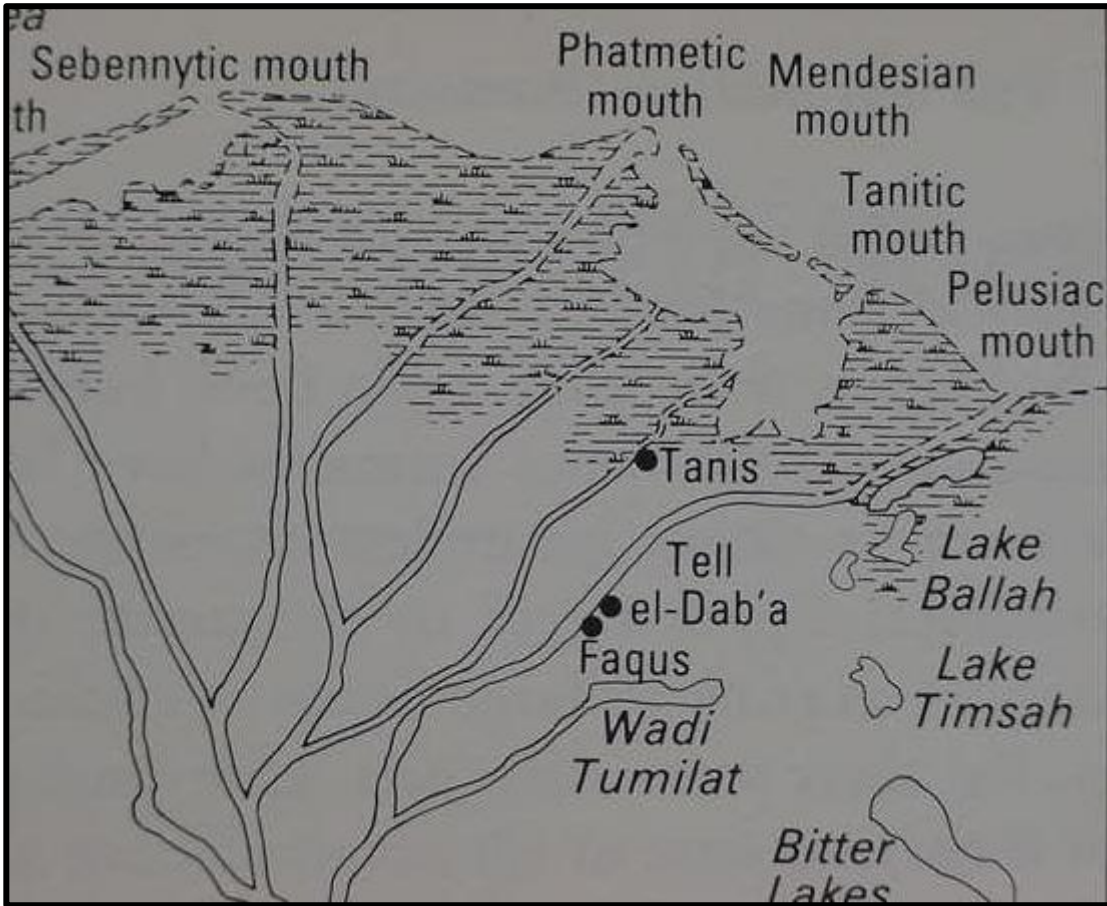
2 Nephi 21: 15 **The Seven Streams [or rivers] of Lower Egypt (Option #2) :**



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



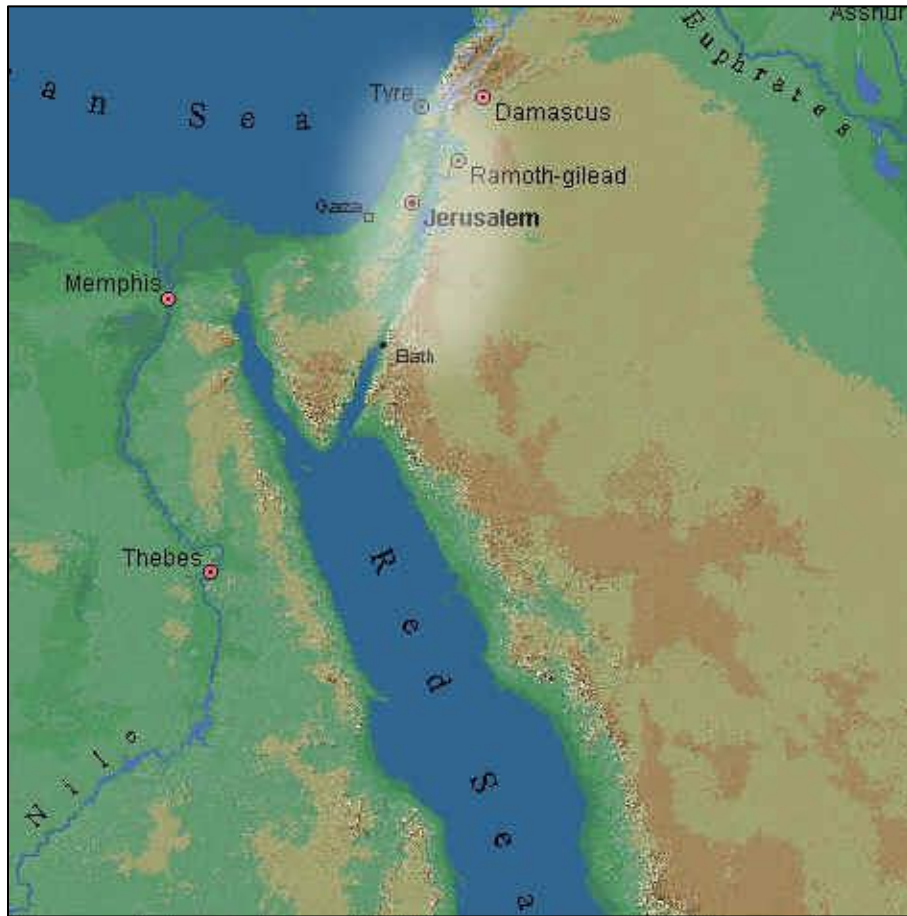
Option #2 The Ancient Land of Goshen -



Ancient Land of Goshen

[Religion.wikia.com](http://Religion.wikia.com)

2 Nephi 21:15 **The Tongue of the Egyptian Sea:**



[bible-codes.org](http://bible-codes.org)

Note\* Notice how the Red sea projects into Egypt in the shape of a viper's forked tongue. Was this concept included in the meaning of "the tongue of the Red Sea"? [Alan Miner, Personal Notes]

2 Nephi 21:15 **The Lord Shall Destroy the Tongue of the Egyptian Sea:**

"The word tongue should be translated 'gulf.' This phrase recalls the occasion when Moses and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea on dry ground (Ex. 14:21-22), an event that anticipates the gathering in the last days, when no powerful nation, mortal tyrant, or army will stop the promised events of the gathering of the saints around God's standard."

[Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina Peterson, Understanding Isaiah, p. 124]

## Chapter 22

### 2 Nephi 22:2 **The Lord JEHOVAH Is My Strength:**

The name “Jehovah” only appears in the Old Testament four times (Gen 22:14, Ex 6:3, Ps 83:18, Isa 12:2) and once in an abbreviated form, JAH (Ps 68:4). The first of these examples demonstrates that the “Lord” of the Old Testament is, in fact, Jehovah. ‘And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen’ (Gen 22:14). Obviously this means that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is none other than Jehovah, the pre-mortal Jesus Christ. The fact that “Jehovah” is a name for the pre-mortal Christ is clear to latter-day saints. This comes from teachings in latter-day scriptures and the temple. To the rest of the world, it is less obvious and a source of misunderstanding. With some work, one can demonstrate, using only the Bible, that the God of the Old Testament is the same individual as Jesus Christ. Comparing the following pairs of scriptures will be helpful: Ex 3:13 and Jn 8:58; Isa 6:8-11 and Jn 12:40-1; and Zech 12:10 and Jn 19:37. See also Jn 1:1-3,14. Using the Book of Mormon the connection is easy to make for when Christ appeared to the Nephites he declared, ‘Behold, I say unto you that the law is fulfilled that was given unto Moses. Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel’ (3 Ne 15:4-5). He also said, ‘Behold I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning’ (3 Ne 9:15).

James E. Talmage writes:

“We claim scriptural authority for the assertion that Jesus Christ was and is God the Creator, the God who revealed Himself to Adam, Enoch, and all the antediluvial patriarchs and prophets down to Noah; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... We affirm that Jesus Christ was and is Jehovah, the Eternal One....

“Jesus is the individual name of the Savior, and as thus spelled is of Greek derivation; its Hebrew equivalent was Yehoshua or Yeshua, or, as we render it in English, Joshua. In the original the name was well understood as meaning ‘Help of Jehovah,’ or ‘Savior.’...

“Jehovah is the Anglicized rendering of the Hebrew, Yahveh or Jahveh, signifying the Self-existent One, or The Eternal. This name is generally rendered in our English version of the Old Testament as LORD, printed in capitals. The Hebrew, Ehyeh, signifying I Am, is related in meaning and through derivation with the term Yahveh or Jehovah, and herein lies the significance of this name by which the Lord revealed Himself to Moses when the latter received the commission to go into Egypt and deliver the children of Israel from bondage...

“The Jews regarded Jehovah as an ineffable name, not to be spoken; they substituted for it the sacred, though to them the not-forbidden name, Adonai, signifying the Lord. The original of the terms Lord and God as they appear in the Old Testament, was either Yahveh or Adonai; and the divine Being designated by these sacred names was, as shown by the scriptures cited, Jesus the Christ. John, evangelist and apostle, positively identifies Jesus Christ with Adonai, or the Lord who spoke through the voice of Isaiah, and with Jehovah who spoke through Zechariah. . . .

“‘Jehovah’ a Name Not Uttered by the Jews. -- Long prior to the time of Christ, certain schools among the Jews, ever intent on the observance of the letter of the law, though not without disregard of its spirit, had taught that the mere utterance of the name of God was blasphemous, and that the sin of so doing constituted a capital offense. This extreme conception arose from the accepted though uninspired interpretation of Lev. 24:16, ‘And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.’ (*Jesus the Christ*, pp. 32-41)

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

#### 2 Nephi 22:3 **The Wells of Salvation:**

There are hundreds of descriptive titles for Deity that appear in the Book of Mormon. I have listed these titles both alphabetically and chronologically in an Appendix to my commentary for the book of First Nephi. The following are titles for Deity in 2 Nephi that appear for the first time in the text of the Book of Mormon:

Him That Is Just (2 Ne. 1:10)  
Holy One of Israel, the True Messiah, Their Redeemer and Their God, The (2 Ne. 1:10)  
Just God, A (2 Ne. 1:22)  
God, Thy (2 Ne. 2:3)  
First That Should Rise, The (2 Ne. 2:8)  
Holy Messiah, The (2 Ne. 2:8)  
Holy Messiah, Who Layeth Down His Life . . . , The (2 Ne. 2:8)  
Firstfruits unto God, The (2 Ne. 2:9)  
Holy One, The (2 Ne. 2:10)  
Him Who Knoweth All Things (2 Ne. 2:24)  
Great Mediator of All Men, The (2 Ne. 2:27)  
Great Mediator, The (2 Ne. 2:28)  
God, and the Rock of My Salvation, My (2 Ne. 4:30)

Rock of My Salvation, The (2 Ne. 4:30)  
Everlasting God, Mine (2 Ne. 4:35)  
God, the Rock of My Righteousness, My (2 Ne. 4:35)  
Rock and Mine Everlasting God [Amen], My (2 Ne. 4:35)  
Rock of My Righteousness, The (2 Ne. 4:35)  
Amen (2 Ne. 4:35)  
Lord My God, The (2 Ne. 5:1)  
Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, The (2 Ne. 6:9)  
God, the Holy One of Israel (2 Ne. 6:15)  
Mighty God, The (2 Ne. 6:17)  
Me (2 Ne. 8:4)  
He That Comforteth You (2 Ne. 8:12)  
Lord Thy Maker, . . . Stretched Forth the Heavens, . . . Earth, The (2 Ne. 8:13)  
Maker, That Hath Stretched Forth the Heavens, . . . Earth, Thy (2 Ne. 8:13)  
Maker, Thy (2 Ne. 8:13)  
Lord Thy God, Whose Waves Roared, The (2 Ne. 8:15)  
Lord Thy God, Whose Waves Roared; the Lord of Hosts, The (2 Ne. 8:15)  
Lord and Thy God, The (2 Ne. 8:22)  
Lord, the Lord and thy God, Thy (2 Ne. 8:22)  
Great Creator, The (2 Ne. 9:5)  
Eternal God, The (2 Ne. 9:8)  
God Who Prepareth a Way for Our Escape from . . . Death and Hell, Our (2 Ne. 9:10)  
God, the Holy One of Israel, Our (2 Ne. 9:11)  
God Who Gave Them Breath, That (2 Ne. 9:26)  
Holy God, That (2 Ne. 9:39)  
Maker, Your (2 Ne. 9:40)  
Keeper of the Gate, The (2 Ne. 9:41)  
Lord, the Holy One, The (2 Ne. 9:41)  
God of My Salvation, The (2 Ne. 9:44)  
God Who Is the Rock of Your Salvation, That (2 Ne. 9:45)  
Christ (2 Ne. 10:7)  
I Am Christ (2 Ne. 10:7)  
I, the Lord, the King of Heaven (2 Ne. 10:14)  
King of Heaven, The (2 Ne. 10:14)  
King, Their (2 Ne. 10:14)  
Light unto Them Forever, That Hear My Words, A (2 Ne. 10:14)  
Merciful God, Our (2 Ne. 10:20)  
Lord God of Hosts, The (2 Ne. 13:15)  
Branch of the Lord, The (2 Ne. 14:2)  
Beloved, My (2 Ne. 15:1)  
Well Beloved, My (2 Ne. 15:1)  
God That Is Holy (2 Ne. 15:16)

Holy, Holy, Holy (2 Ne. 16:3)  
 King, The (2 Ne. 16:5)  
 King, the Lord of Hosts, The (2 Ne. 16:5)  
 Holy Seed, The (2 Ne. 16:13)  
 Immanuel (2 Ne. 17:14)  
 Dread, Your (2 Ne. 18:13)  
 Fear, Your (2 Ne. 18:13)  
 Gin and a Snare to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, A (2 Ne. 18:14)  
 Rock of Offense to Both the Houses of Israel, A (2 Ne. 18:14)  
 Sanctuary, A (2 Ne. 18:14)  
 Stone of Stumbling, A (2 Ne. 18:14)  
 Lord, That Hideth His Face from the House of Jacob, The (2 Ne. 18:17)  
 Great Light, A (2 Ne. 19:2)  
 Light, The (2 Ne. 19:2)  
 Thee (2 Ne. 19:3)  
 Thou (2 Ne. 19:3)  
 Child, A (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 Counselor (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 Everlasting Father, The (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 Prince of Peace, The (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 Son, A (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 Wonderful (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, (The) (2 Ne. 19:6)  
 David (2 Ne. 19:7)  
 Fire, A (2 Ne. 20:17)  
 Flame, A (2 Ne. 20:17)  
 Light of Israel, The (2 Ne. 20:17)  
 Lord, the Holy One of Israel, The (2 Ne. 20:20)  
 Lord, the Lord of Hosts, The (2 Ne. 20:33)  
 Mighty One, A (2 Ne. 20:34)  
 Stem of Jesse, The (2 Ne. 21:1)  
 Root of Jesse, A (2 Ne. 21:10)  
 Lord Jehovah, The (2 Ne. 22:2)  
 Song, My (2 Ne. 22:2)  
 Strength and My Song, My (2 Ne. 22:2)  
 Strength, My (2 Ne. 22:2)  
**Wells of Salvation, The** (2 Ne. 22:3)  
 Highness, My (2 Ne. 23:3)  
 Almighty, The (2 Ne. 23:6)  
 Most High, The (2 Ne. 24:14)  
 Father of Heaven and Earth, The (2 Ne. 25:12)  
 Only Begotten of the Father, The (2 Ne. 25:12)

Christ, the Son of God (2 Ne. 25:16)  
 He Who Should Be Rejected of the Jews (2 Ne. 25:18)  
 Messiah to Come, A (2 Ne. 25:18)  
 Messiah, That (2 Ne. 25:18)  
 One Messiah Spoken of by the Prophets (2 Ne. 25:18)  
 True Messiah, Who Was Rejected by Them, The (2 Ne. 25:18)  
 Jesus (2 Ne. 25:19)  
 Jesus Christ (2 Ne. 25:19)  
 Jesus Christ, the Son of God (2 Ne. 25:19)  
 Jesus Christ, of Which I Have Spoken, This (2 Ne. 25:20)  
 Son of Righteousness, The (2 Ne. 26:9)  
 Christ, The (2 Ne. 26:12)  
 Christ, the Eternal God, The (2 Ne. 26:12)  
 Very Christ, The (2 Ne. 26:12)  
 God of Miracles, A (2 Ne. 27:23)  
 I Am God (2 Ne. 27:23)  
 Just, The (2 Ne. 27:32)  
 Him That Reproveth in the Gate (2 Ne. 27:32) cf. Isa.53:12  
 Lord, Who Redeemed Abraham, The (2 Ne. 27:33)  
 Holy One of Jacob, The (2 Ne. 27:34)  
 Lord and the Redeemer, The (2 Ne. 28:5)  
 Son, Who Is the Holy One of Israel, His (2 Ne. 30:2)  
 Beloved Son, My (2 Ne. 31:1)  
 Son, The (2 Ne. 31:12)  
 Lord and Your Savior, Your (2 Ne. 31:13)  
 Father, The (2 Ne. 31:15)  
 Son of the Living God, The (2 Ne. 31:16)  
 Lord and Your Redeemer, Your (2 Ne. 31:17)  
 Him Who Is Mighty to Save (2 Ne. 31:19)  
 One God, Without End [Amen] (2 Ne. 31:21)  
 Way, The (2 Ne. 31:21)

[Alan Miner, Personal Notes]

## 2 Nephi 22:3 **Therefore With Joy Ye Shall Draw Water Out of the Wells of Salvation:**

In Chapter 7 of the book of John, Jesus proclaims his divine Sonship. He had gone up to Jerusalem from Galilee for the Feast of the Tabernacles. While there he taught at the Temple where it says “the Jews sought him.” (v. 11). “And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” “Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine,

but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” (vv15-16).

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**

38 **He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 And every man went unto his own house.





Living water

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

**2 Nephi 22:6 Zion, for Great Is the Holy One of Israel in the Midst of Thee:**

The greatest single blessing of the millennial day will be the presence of the Savior, in the midst of his people:

‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain’ (Revelation 21:3-4).



## Chapter 23

### 2 Nephi 23:1 **The Burden of Babylon:**

Isaiah writes several chapters which can be referred to as the burden chapters. They describe the judgments of the Lord on different peoples and constitute Isaiah 13-23. All of these chapters can be viewed as a type for the destructions promised for the wicked of the latter-days. In other words, the prophecies refer to the destruction of those kingdoms in ancient times and symbolize the destruction of the wicked in the last days.

The best example of all is the burden of Babylon. Babylon, or Babel is the chief city of Babylonia. It was founded after the flood by the wicked Nimrod and is the city in which the tower of Babel was built. It represented the center of Mesopotamian influence for centuries. Scripturally speaking, it represents the wickedness of the world, the kingdom of Satan, and the great and abominable whore. In this chapter, we learn a lot about how the Lord will destroy the wicked when he comes again. The unenlightened, however, see in this prophecy only Isaiah's description of the fall of ancient Babylon.

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

### 2 Nephi 23:3 **I Have Commanded My Sanctified Ones:**

Jehovah's sanctified ones (Josh. 3:5) are those who are temple worthy, who actually attend the temple, and who are made holy by Christ's power. In ancient Israel the soldiers prepared for the holy war by participating in holy rituals connected with the temple (Deut. 23:10-15). In this dispensation, Jesus Christ's soldiers (members of the Church) prepare for the battle against Babylon by participating in temple rituals.

[Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, Understanding Isaiah, p. 131]

### 2 Nephi 23:3 **For Mine Anger Is Not upon Them That Rejoice in My Highness:**

According to Richardson, Richardson and Bentley, critics claim that Joseph Smith plagiarized some passages from the Bible, inserting them into the Book of Mormon. Yet a careful comparison of those Book of Mormon passages that are shared with the Bible shows that the Book of Mormon actually restores original text from the Bible and makes many clarifications of Biblical wordings.

An example is found by a careful study of 2 Nephi 23:3 which reveals a much clearer translation of what was said in Isaiah 13:3. The Isaiah passage reads, "I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones, for mine anger, *even* them that rejoice in my highness." The

Book of Mormon passage reads the same as Isaiah only to the word "anger." It clarifies the nonsense of the King James translation from the Masoretic text: "for mine anger *is not upon* them that rejoice in my highness. (For more information, see John A. Tvedtnes, *A Sure Foundation*, pp. 24-5; also in "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon" in *Isaiah and the Prophets*)<sup>xiv</sup>  
[Allen H. Richardson, David E. Richardson and Anthony E. Bentley, 1000 Evidences for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Part Two-A Voice from the Dust: 500 Evidences in Support of the Book of Mormon, pp. 20-21]

#### 2 Nephi 23:4 **The Lord of Hosts Mustereth the Hosts of the Battle:**

One interpretation of the Lord's army is that they are heavenly hosts. They have come literally 'from the end of heaven', and they represent 'the weapons of his indignation' (v. 5). This interpretation is not inconsistent with other scriptures of the armies of the Lord. The heavenly host was sent to protect the prophet Elisha from the king of Syria. As Elisha reassured his servant,

'he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha' (2 Kings 6:16-17).

In the destruction of the last days, angels will be commissioned to bring destruction upon the wicked. The Lord explained that the angels are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to go forth in the earth, 'the angels are crying unto the Lord day and night, who are ready and waiting to be sent forth to reap down the fields' (D & C 86:5). The book of Revelation makes it clear that the Lord's army, the angels, will be given specific power to destroy men in certain predetermined ways.

[1981 Old Testament LDS Institute Manual, p. 153]

#### 2 Nephi 23:10 **The Stars of Heaven and the Constellations Thereof Shall Not Give Their Light:**

"He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names." (Psalm 147:4)

"Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing." (Isaiah 40:26)



Star constellation animals

[frosch-polster.blogspot.com](http://frosch-polster.blogspot.com)

#### 2 Nephi 23:10 **The Sun Shall Be Darkened in His Going Forth:**

This passage is a variation of the commonly given sign of the Second Coming—the stars fall from the heavens, the moon turns to blood, and the sun refuses to give light. Many have mistakenly spoken of meteor showers and an occasional orange-red moon as fulfillment of this prophecy. This sign in the heavens will be much more dramatic than that. Imagine how powerful the signs of Christ’s death were, when the sun was darkened for three hours in Jerusalem and for three days in the Americas. Such a dramatic sign should be expected again, ‘there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together’ (D & C 88:93). This concept is contained in the scriptures in more than 10 places. All of the most important passages describing the signs of the coming of the Son of God contain this concept (see D & C 29:14; 45:42; 88:87; 133:49; Matthew 24:29, JS-M 1:33; Revelation 6:12).

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



Eclipse of the sun

[telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk)

2 Nephi 23:10 **The Moon Shall Not Cause Her Light to Shine:**



Lunar eclipse

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

## 2 Nephi 23:12 **Ophir:**

The country from which fine gold was imported to Judah (2 Chronicles 8:18; Job 22:24; 28:16; Psalms 45:9; Isaiah 13:12), sometimes in large quantities (1 Chronicles 29:4), and with valuable wood (1 Kings 10:11), silver, ivories, apes and peacocks (1 Kings 10:22), and precious stones (2 Chronicles 9:10). It was reached by Solomon's fleet from Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Aqabah (1 Kings 22:48). These voyages took "three years," that is perhaps one entire year and parts of two others. . . . In Isaiah 13:12 Ophir is paralleled with *oqir*, "I will make precious." Various theories have been put forward for the site of Ophir: Southern Arabia (Yemen), Southeastern Arabia (Oman), the east African coast (Somaliland), India (north of Bombay), and others. Josephus (*Ant.* 8. 164), LXX and Vulgate (Job 28:16) interpreted Ophir as India. In favor of this interpretation are the facts that all the commodities named are familiar in ancient India, and it is known that from the 2nd millennium B.C. there was a lively sea-trade between the Persian Gulf and India. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 1119]

## 2 Nephi 23:12 **Ophir:**

Walter Kaiser notes that the legendary wealth of King Solomon came, in part, from the fact that his ships were supposed to sail to "Ophir," from which they "brought back 420 talents of gold" (1 Kings 9:28)--equivalent to a whopping sixteen tons, or 14.5 metric tons, of gold. Solomon's ships supposedly sailed from the Red Sea port of Elath (Ezion Geber), but where was Ophir? Although no one knows for sure, the fact that it was indeed a real place is supported from archaeological finds. In 1956, at the coastal site of Tell Qasile (just north of Tel Aviv in Israel), a small ostrakon was found with a shipment notice written on it saying, "gold of Ophir for Beth-Horon, thirty shekels." Thus not only was the site shown to be a real location known from the world of commerce of the day, rather than the imaginary site it was alleged to have been, but it also was a source of gold as well. [Water C. Kaiser Jr., The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable & Relevant?, pp. 105-106]

## 2 Nephi 23:12 **Ophir:**

According to George Hourani, from the first Book of Kings we find: "And King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Elath on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom; and Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipment that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to King Solomon." (1 Kings 9:26-28)

Ezion-geber can now be identified with confidence as the site at Tall al-Khulayfah, west of al-Aqabah, which was excavated by an American expedition in 1938-1940. It is quite likely that Solomon himself (c. 974-932) built the town and the large copper refinery which has been unearthed there, after the subjection of the Edomites by his father David.

The "Ophir" to which Solomon's ships sailed may well have been in India, for the voyage was made only once every three years. The merchandise brought from Ophir--gold, silver, jewels, almuq wood, ivory, apes and peacocks--smacks of India, etymologically and economically.

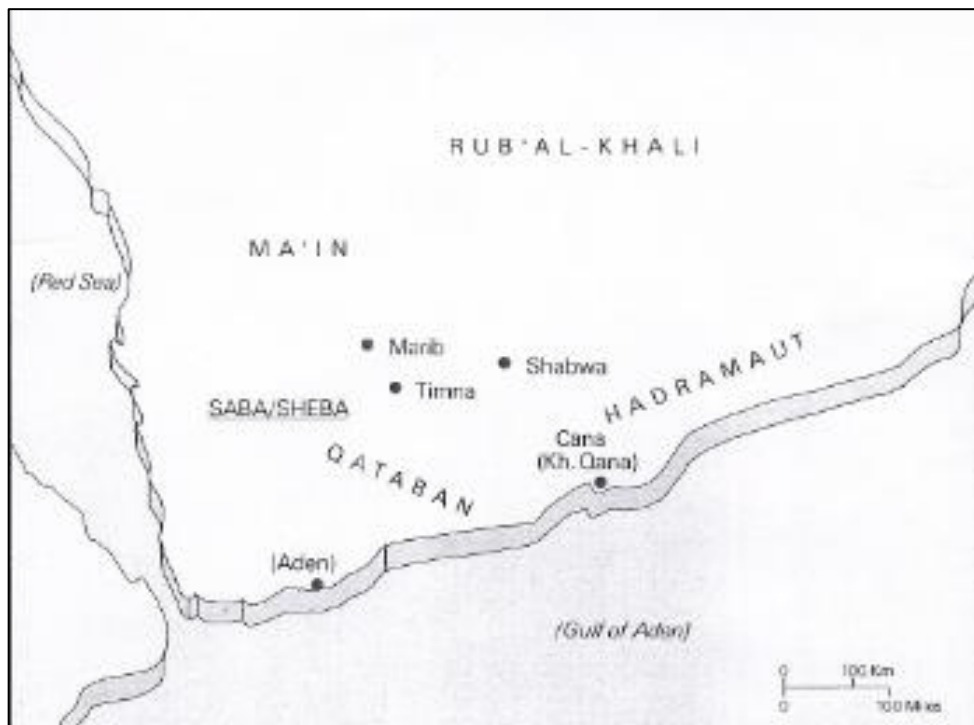
Yet in a footnote, Hourani writes that Ophir is probably not India but southern Arabia. The main evidence is philological: the Hebrew words for ape, ivory, and peacock are loans from Sanskrit and Tamil. (George F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring*, pp. 9, 130)

With this in mind, it is interesting that the Jewish scholar, Raphael Patai writes:

In the biblical account, the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem is bracketed between two references to Solomon's Ophir expedition (1 Kings 9:26-10:13; 2 Chron. 8:17-9:12). This makes it appear, without it ever being stated explicitly, that the country of Sheba was believed to be either identical with or a close neighbor of Ophir. (*The Children of Noah: Jewish Seafaring in Ancient Times*, 1998, p. 13.)

Concerning the Queen of Sheba and the location of Sheba we find the following:

An unnamed Sabaeen (\*Sheba) monarch who journeyed to Jerusalem to test Solomon's wisdom (1 Ki. 10:1-10, 13; 2 Ch. 9:1-9, 12). A major purpose of her costly (1 Ki. 10:10) yet successful (1 Ki. 10:13) visit may have been to negotiate a trade agreement with Solomon, whose control of the trade routes jeopardized the income which the Sabaeans were accustomed to receive from the caravans which crossed their territory . . . The spices, gold and precious stones with which she sought Solomon's favour (1 Ki. 10:3, 10) would have been typical of the luxurious cargoes of these caravans, which linked the resources of E Africa, India and S Arabia to the markets of Damascus and Gaza by way of oases like Mecca, Medina and Tema. (*The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, vol. 3, p. 1431)



2 Nephi 23:12 **Ophir (Illustration):** The Land of Sheba [The University and Colleges Christian Fellowship, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, vol. 3, p. 1431]



Note\* If the country of Sheba was known from the times of Solomon, and if Sheba was located in the general region of Sana'a (Nahom), and if Ophir was associated with a sea port beyond this location, then it is possible that Ophir was not only linked to Nephi's Bountiful, but Lehi and Nephi might have been purposefully aiming in that direction in order to take advantage of seafaring knowledge that might help them in their journey to the promised land. One of the leading candidates for Bountiful is the region of Salalah, Oman. This fertile "wedge" was the head of the incense trade. The "golden" incense of Salalah was worth it's weight in gold. It very easily could have been exchanged for expensive items brought in on ships from India such as gold, apes, peacocks, etc. If Salalah was the land Bountiful and the place where Nephi launched his ship, then his voyage was truly more valuable than any merchant ship laden with gold and other trade items from that area. They were the covenant children of "one man"--Christ. Thus, Isaiah's prophecy--"I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir" could have been interpreted with significance to the lives of Lehi and Nephi. The context was the destruction, scattering and gathering of Israel. The Book of Mormon reader should note Nephi's comments regarding these Isaiah chapters (see 2 Nephi 25) in far away places. From them he makes "his prophecy":

Wherefore, for this cause hath the Lord God promised unto me that these things which I write shall be kept and preserved and handed down unto my seed, from generation to generation, that the promise may be fulfilled unto Joseph, that his seed should never perish as long as the earth should stand. (2 Nephi 25:21)

Nephi could only keep his part of that promise by leaving the "golden wedge" of Ophir to follow "one man"--Christ.

[Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes. Expanded from an idea originally passed to me by George Potter]  
 [See the Potter commentary on 1 Nephi 17:1] [See the commentary on Tarshish--2 Nephi 12:16]



Salalah & Khor Rori (Bountiful)

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



Location of Ophir

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

**2 Nephi 23:13 I Will Shake the Heavens, and the Earth Shall Remove Out of Her Place:**

If the earth were literally moved from its current location and orbit, that would certainly cause the prophesied events of the heavens shaking, the earth reeling to and fro as a drunken man, the stars falling from the heavens, and the sun being darkened. This is all part of the creation of a new heaven and a new earth prophesied by John, 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away' (Rev 21:1).

When the earth was framed and brought into existence and man was placed upon it, it was near the throne of our Father in heaven. When man fell, the earth fell into space, and took up its abode in this planetary system. This is the glory the earth came from, and when it is glorified it will return again unto the presence of the Father." (Journal of Discourses, vol. 17, p. 143



Wild sheep Israel

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



Roe deer

[politically-confused.blogspot.com](http://politically-confused.blogspot.com)

2 Nephi 23:14 **As the chased roe and as a sheep that no man taketh up (Illustration – not shown):** A "chased roe" is a hunted deer, and "sheep that no man taketh up" are vulnerable because their shepherds are absent. The imagery implies that the wicked will be like hunted deer. They will flee for their lives during

a time of wars.

According to Mosaic law, the roe deer was a clean animal that could be eaten. It may have been a delicacy as King Solomon made it part of the royal table (1 Kings 4:22-23). Many species of deer and antelope still inhabit Israel and may be seen in the upper Galilee region or Judean hills. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 48]

#### 2 Nephi 23:16 **Their Houses Shall Be Spoiled and Their Wives Ravished:**

Notice how similar this prophecy is to one about which the time and place are better known. The prophet Zechariah prophesies that when Jerusalem is under siege just prior to the Second Coming that the following will happen:

‘I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city’ (Zechariah 14:2).

#### 2 Nephi 23:17 **I Will Stir up the Medes Against Them:**

In order to understand this reference to “the Medes”, we need to review some of the history. In Isaiah’s day, the Babylonians were ruled by the powerful Assyrian empire. This continued until about 607 BC when Nebuchadnezzar and his father regained control of Babylon. The kingdom of Babylon continued the splendor and greatness of the preceding empire for several decades. Josephus records:

“[Nebuchadnezzar] built walls about the inner city...and adorned its gates gloriously, he built another palace...to describe the vast height and immense riches of which, it would perhaps be too much for me to attempt. (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book X, Chap. XI, v. 1)

Reynolds and Sjodahl write:

“Babylon was one of the great cities of the ancient world, perhaps the greatest. Its walls were, for height and width, one of the wonders of the world. The temple of Bel, the terraced ("hanging") gardens, the immense copper gates, and the artificial lake were, up to that time, the greatest achievements of human skill and ingenuity. The fields and farms and flocks yielded almost incredible returns, and the wealth, luxury and power of the ruling classes were correspondingly great. If any city, or country, could be regarded as invincible, Babylonia and Babylon might be so considered. But centuries before their fall Isaiah predicted, with supernatural knowledge of the details, the destruction of the city and the overthrow of the government.” (Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 364)

The glory of Babylon would not last. Its decline began with the pride of Belshazzar. He was a king of Babylon in about 539 BC when the Jews were still captive in Babylon. One evening, Belshazzar had taken the holy vessels, which had previously been pillaged from the temple of Solomon, and used them for one of his feasts. The anger of the Lord was manifest when he saw a hand writing a message of doom on the wall of his palace. Daniel interpreted the message. Part of the message was interpreted as follows, 'Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians...In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old' (Dan 5:28-31).

"Babylon...became so wicked that her power over surrounding nations lasted only until 539 B.C. That was the year the Medes and Persians came sweeping down from the mountains and high plateaus to the east and conquered Babylon in a single night. They were led by Cyrus, whom Isaiah identified by name around 175 years before Cyrus was born (see isa. 44:28; 45:1). After Babylon was overthrown, Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C."

[W. Cleon Skousen, Isaiah Speaks To Modern Times, p. 260 ]

## 2 Nephi 23:17 **Medes:**

Media was the name for northwest Iran, southwest of the Caspian Sea and north of the Zagros Mountains, covering the modern province of Azerbaijan and part of Persian Kurdistan. The inhabitants were called Medes or Medians and were Japhethites (Genesis 10:2).

Assyrian kings sought to keep the eastern passes of Media open to the traders. Tiglath-pileser III (743 B.C.) and Sargon II (716 B.C.) claim to have conquered the land of the Medes. Sargon II transported Israelites to Media (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11). [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary , Vol. 2, p. 970]



Median Empire

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



Media

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



2 Nephi 23:17 **Medes (Illustration)**: Media [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 2, p. 970]

2 Nephi 23:19 **Chaldees**:

Chaldea was the name of the land in southern Babylonia. The term was later used to denote Babylonia as a whole, especially during the last dynasty of Babylonia (626-539 B.C.). When Mardukapla-iddina II (Merodach-Baladan), the chief of the Chaldean district of Bit-Yakin, seized the throne of Babylon in 721-710 and 703-702 B.C. he sought help from the west against Assyria (Isaiah 39). The prophet Isaiah warned of the danger to Judah of supporting the Chaldean rebels (Isaiah 23:13) and foresaw their defeat (Isaiah 43:14), perhaps after the initial invasion by Sargon in 710 B.C. Since Babylon was at this time under a Chaldean king, "Chaldean" is used as a synonym for Babylonian (Isaiah 13:19; 47:1,5; 48:14,20), a use later extended by Ezekiel to cover all the Babylonian dominions (Ezekiel 23:23). [Tyndale House, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, pp. 257-258] [See the commentary on 1 Nephi 20:14]



2 Nephi 23:19 **Chaldees (Illustration):** Chaldea: a name for part of Babylonia taken over for the whole land in 8th and 7th centuries B.C. [Tyndale House, [The Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#), Vol. 1, p. 257]

2 Nephi 23:19 **Babylon . . . Shall Be As When God Overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah:**

In 2 Nephi 23:19-22 we find a prophecy of the destruction of Babylon. According to Reynolds and Sjodahl, Babylon was one of the great cities of the ancient world, perhaps the greatest. Its walls were, for height and width, one of the wonders of the world. The temple of Bel, the terraced ("hanging") gardens, the immense copper gates, and the artificial lake were, up to that time, the greatest achievements of human skill and ingenuity. The fields and farms and flocks yielded almost incredible returns, and the wealth, luxury and power of the ruling classes were correspondingly great. If any city, or country, could be regarded as invincible, Babylonia and Babylon might be so considered. But centuries before their fall Isaiah predicted, with supernatural knowledge of the details, the destruction of the city and the overthrow of the government.

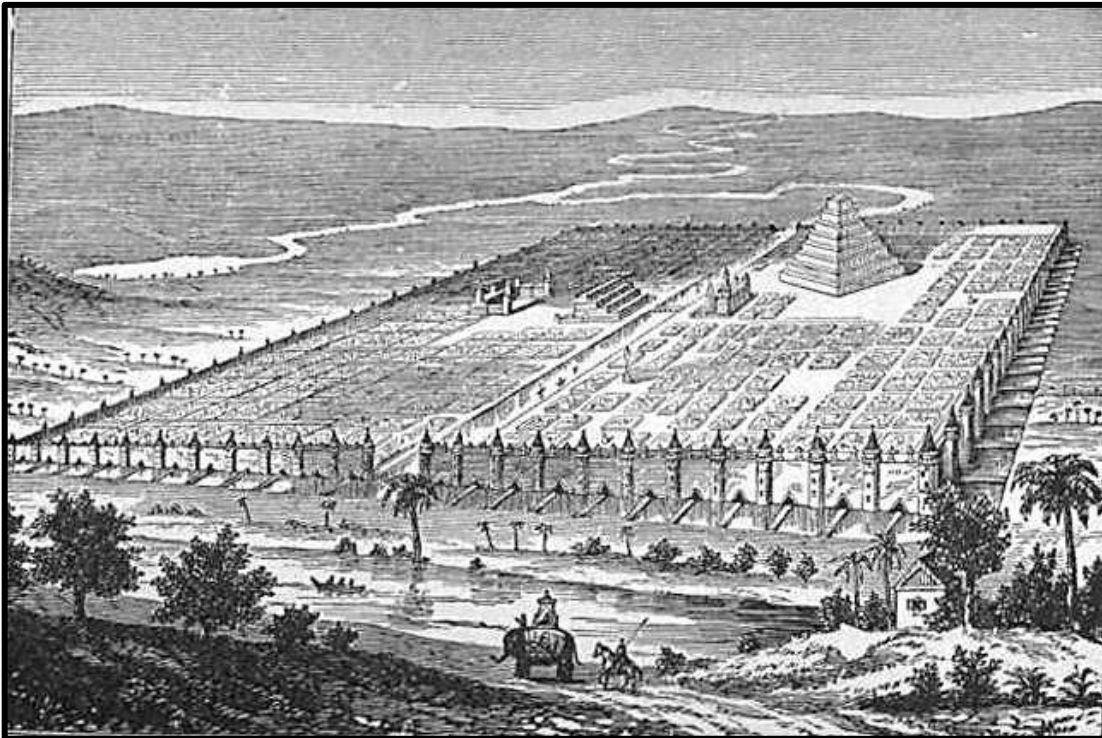
It was done by means of strategy. After a long siege, apparently without effect, Cyrus, who led the besieging Medes and Persians, decided to turn the Euphrates out of its course and enter on the dry river bed. That was a gigantic undertaking. The river was 1500 feet wide and 12 feet deep. However, the undertaking was successful. The invaders entered from two sides, the former inflow and outflow of the river, and so quietly did they take possession that most of the



people did not know what was happening till it was too late to make resistance. Aristotle had been informed that some of the inhabitants did not know until three days afterwards that the city had fallen. When the king of Babylon learned that Cyrus was at the gate of the palace, he commanded that he be admitted. He was. The king and all the revelers surrounding him perished. Many Babylonian princes, at that time, ended their useless earthly lives in a drunken debauch. The kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.

[George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 364]

2 Nephi 23:19 **Babylon:**



Ancient Babylon walls

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

2 Nephi 23:19 **When God Overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah:**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 13:9]



Sodom & Gomorrah

[oneway2day.wordpress.com](http://oneway2day.wordpress.com)

#### 2 Nephi 23:19 **Gomorrah:**

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

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

As Lot saw it, the Circle of the Jordan was supremely attractive from every material viewpoint (Genesis 13:10), but it was to become desolate. The efficient cause of this destruction of the cities was probably an earthquake, with an accompanying release and explosion of gaseous deposits. Biblically and fundamentally it was God's judgment, remembered again and again throughout the Bible (Deuteronomy 29:23; Isaiah 1:9; Jeremiah 49:18; etc.) [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, p. 1237] [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 13:9]

#### 2 Nephi 23:20 **It Shall Never Be Inhabited:**

This promise that Babylon "shall never be inhabited" has been fulfilled. After Babylon was taken by the Parthians in about 144 BC, the city had become completely powerless. "By the time of Christ, only a few astronomers and mathematicians continued to live in the ancient, sparsely

populated city. After they left, Babylon remained a deserted tell (mound), which sand and brush gradually covered until it became a hill used only by wild animals, and as grazing land for nomadic flocks” (Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet, by Victor L. Ludlow, p. 185). Even today, the ancient city of Babylon is barren, completely uninhabited, and only of interest for its archeological value. The site of the city is in modern day Iraq, not far from Baghdad.

The prophet, Jeremiah, also prophesied that Babylon would eventually be completely desolate, never to be inhabited again. This is what the Lord had done to Sodom and Gomorrah:

‘Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.’ (Jeremiah 50:13,39-40)

LeGrand Richards comments:

**“[Babylon] was the greatest city in all the world....Yet Isaiah announced that that city would be destroyed; he said that it would never be rebuilt, that it would never be inhabited from generation to generation,** that it would become the abode of reptiles and wild animals and that the Arabs would no more pitch their tents there. That was a declaration that the greatest city in the world would not only be destroyed, but it would also never be rebuilt.” (Conference Report, Apr. 1954, p. 54 ]

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

Note\* If we believe in the Bible, then we believe that Isaiah and Jeremiah could “see” into the future. In evaluating the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, can we grant the Book of Mormon prophets and “seers” the same powers relative to what they recorded? [Alan Miner Personal Notes]

## 2 Nephi 23:20 **Arabian:**

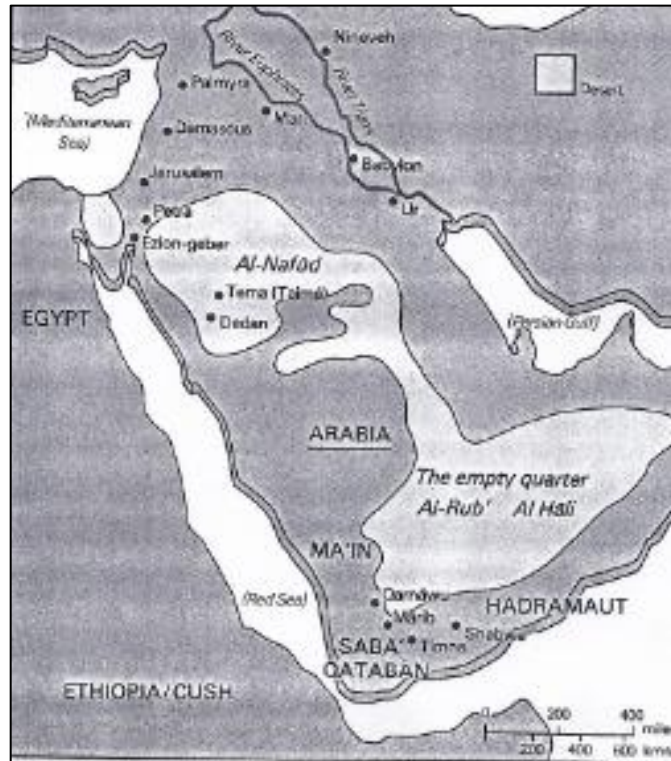
Arabia is not often referred to by this name in the Bible, since its inhabitants were generally known by the political or tribal names of the smaller groups to which they belonged.

In the time of Hezekiah these people were very familiar (Isaiah 13:20; 21:13), and some even served as mercenaries in the defense of Jerusalem against Sennacherib. In the time of Josiah (Jeremiah 3:2) and in the closing days of the kingdom of Judah, the Arabians were coming to

prominence as traders (Jeremiah 25:23-24; Ezekiel 27).

Arabia did not, as it does today, denote the whole of the great peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, but only the area to the immediate east and south of Palestine.

[Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, pp. 83-86]



2 Nephi 23:20 **Arabian (Illustration):** Ancient Arabia. [Tyndale House, The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 85]

## Chapter 24

### 2 Nephi 24:1 **The Lord Will Have Mercy on Jacob and Set Them in Their Own Land:**

According to David Ridges, one historical fulfillment was when Cyrus the Great of Persia allowed captives in Babylon to return in 538 BC.;



King Cyrus Persia [museumartifact.com](http://museumartifact.com)

Cyrus the Great (c. 600 or 576 – 530 BC) figures in the Hebrew Bible as the patron and deliverer of the Jews. He is mentioned 23 times by name and alluded to several times more.[1] From these statements it appears that Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, was the monarch under whom the Babylonian captivity ended, for according to the Bible, in the first year of his reign he was prompted by God to make a decree that the Temple in Jerusalem should be rebuilt and that such Jews as cared to might return to their land for this purpose. Moreover, he showed his interest in the project by sending back with them the sacred vessels which had been taken from the First Temple and a considerable sum of money with which to buy building materials.

Cyrus the Great is unconditionally praised in the Jewish sources. It is likely that, after the Persian conquest of Babylon, Cyrus had commenced his relationship with the Jewish leaders in exile,[2] and that he later was considered as a messiah sent by God.[3]

The Hebrew Bible states that Cyrus issued the decree of liberation to the Jews.[4] Cyrus's edict for the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem marked a great epoch in the history of the Jewish people. According to Ezra 4:1-6 "the enemies of Judah and Benjamin" asked to help build

the temple, and when this was denied hired counselors to frustrate the people of Judah from completing the rebuilding throughout the reign of Cyrus, Xerxes ('Ahasuerus'), and Artaxerxes, until the reign of Darius. The work recommenced under the exhortations of the prophets, and when the authorities asked the Jews what right they had to build a temple, they referred to the decree of Cyrus. Darius, who was then reigning, caused a search for this alleged decree to be made, and it was found in the archives at Ecbatana,[5] whereupon Darius reaffirmed the decree and the work proceeded to its triumphant close.



The Cyrus cylinder, which confirms that Cyrus allowed captives in Babylon to return to their native lands, earning him an honored place in Judaism.

A chronicle drawn up just after the conquest of Babylonia by Cyrus, gives the history of the reign of Nabonidus ('Nabuna'id'), the last king of Babylon, and of the fall of the Babylonian empire. In 538 BC, there was a revolt in Southern Babylonia, while the army of Cyrus entered the country from the north. In June the Babylonian army was completely defeated at Opis, and immediately afterwards Sippara opened its gates to the conqueror. Gobryas (Ugbaru), the governor of Media, was then sent to Babylon, which surrendered "without fighting," and the daily services in the temples continued without a break. In October, Cyrus himself arrived, and proclaimed a general amnesty, which was communicated by Gobryas to "all the province of Babylon," of which he had been made governor. Meanwhile, Nabonidus, who had concealed himself, was captured, but treated honourably; and when his wife died, Cambyses II, the son of Cyrus, conducted the funeral. Cyrus now assumed the title of "king of Babylon," claimed to be the descendant of the ancient

kings, and made rich offerings to the temples. At the same time he allowed the foreign populations who had been deported to Babylonia to return to their old homes, carrying with them the images of their gods. Among these populations were the Jews, who, as they had no images, took with them the sacred vessels of the temple. [Wikipedia.org]



Ezra rebuilding the Temple

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

Another group of Jews returned to Jerusalem in 520 B.C.

This prophecy of Isaiah is also being fulfilled in our day.

[David Ridges, Your Study of Isaiah Made Easier: In the Bible and the Book of Mormon, p. 47]

Note of Interest\* The Temple Institute, known in Hebrew as Machon HaMikdash (Hebrew: מִכּוֹן הַמִּקְדָּשׁ), is an organization in Israel focusing on the controversial endeavor of establishing the Third Temple. Its long-term aims are to build the third Jewish temple on the Temple Mount, on the site currently occupied by the Dome of the Rock, and to reinstate sacrificial worship. It aspires to reach this goal through the study of Temple construction and ritual and through the development of actual Temple ritual objects, garments, and building plans suitable for immediate use in the event conditions permit its reconstruction.

As part of its ongoing effort to prepare for a future rebuilt Temple, the Temple Institute has been preparing ritual objects suitable for Temple use. Many of the over ninety ritual items to be used in the Temple have been made by the Temple Institute.

As of June 2008, a major current project of the institute is the creation of the sacred uniform of the Kohen Gadol, the High Priest, and the ordinary priests. This project, the culmination of years of study and research, has been underway for several years. The High Priest's Hoshen (breastplate) and Ephod have already been completed. The Tzitz, the golden crown of the High Priest, was completed in 2007. The Temple Institute is designing the garments for the lay priests intended for purchase by Kohanim.

The institute's educational efforts include raising public awareness about the Holy Temple, and the central role that it is believed to occupy in the spiritual life of mankind. These efforts include a full-time research staff (kollel), seminars, publications, and conferences, as well as the production of educational materials. Online educational tools include the Institute's website, educational videos and video conferencing.



Jewish Temple Institute

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

#### 2 Nephi 24:4 **And It Shall Come to Pass in That Day:**

According to Jeff Lindsay, the idea of a simple-minded copying by Joseph Smith of Bible passages into the Book of Mormon has to be rejected, though it is clear that the King James Bible was used in many cases to facilitate translation. In actuality, scholars have found that Book of



Mormon passages apparently from the King James Version of the Bible contain variants corroborated in other biblical manuscript texts. Franklin Harris writes:

In Isaiah 14:4 (2 Nephi 24:4) the Book of Mormon adds "And it shall come to pass in that day," which is without support in the Hebrew. But of striking interest is a similar reading in Codex Alexandrinus (now in the British Museum), "And thou shall say in that day." The latter is not found in (Codex Vaticanus. . . ." (Franklin S. Harris, Jr., The Book of Mormon: Messages and Evidences, pp. 50-52)

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

**2 Nephi 24:5 The Lord Hath Broken the Staff of the Wicked, and the Sceptre of the rulers:**

The use of a rod or staff as representing authority can be traced back to early times.



Royal Staff

he-man.org

A sceptre (or scepter in U.S. English) is a symbolic ornamental staff or wand held in the hand by a ruling monarch as an item of royal or imperial insignia. Sometimes, it could be used for showing a sense of divinity.



King Royal Sceptre

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



Statue of Jupiter in the Hermitage, holding the sceptre and orb.

[\[Wikipedia.org\]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jupiter_(mythology)#Statue_of_Jupiter_in_the_Hermitage)

2 Nephi 24:8 **The Fir Trees [Cyprus forest]:**



Cypress Tree Forest

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

2 Nephi 24:8 **Cedars of Lebanon:**

[See the commentary on 2 Nephi 12:13]



Cedar Forest

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

2 Nephi 24:8 **Feller:**

A “feller” was one who cut down trees.



“feller”

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

2 Nephi 24:11 Viols [Royal Harps]:



King David with harp

[blog.feinviolins.com](http://blog.feinviolins.com)

## 2 Nephi 24:11 **The Worms Cover Thee:**

A maggot is the larva of a fly. Depending on the species and the conditions, maggots may be observed on a body within 24 hours. The eggs are laid directly on the food source and when the eggs hatch, the maggots move towards their preferred conditions and begin to feed. When maggots turn into adult flies and start the life cycle over, numbers will grow exponentially if unchecked.

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



Maggots ("worms") on a dead body

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

**2 Nephi 24:12 How Art Thou Fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!:**

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explains the title 'son of the morning':

This name-title of Satan indicates he was one of the early born spirit children of the Father. Always used in association with the name Lucifer, son of the morning also apparently signifies son of light or son of prominence, meaning that Satan held a position of power and authority in [the] pre-existence. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 744)

Lucifer fell from heaven for rebelling against God the Father and His plan of salvation. 'He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him' (Rev 12:9). 'And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven' (Rev 12:4).

**2 Nephi 24:12; Isaiah 14:12 How Art Thou Fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning?**

(See KnoWhy #43 Why Did Lehi "Suppose" the Existence of Satan?

[www.bookofmormoncentral.org](http://www.bookofmormoncentral.org))





Lucifer fallen from heaven

[nsearch4truth.wordpress.com](http://nsearch4truth.wordpress.com)

2 Nephi 24:14 **I Will Be Like the Most High:**

This scene is described in Moses 4:1-3:

1 And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.

2 But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.



Christ and Lucifer “Here am I send Me”

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

3 Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;

4 And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.

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

2 Nephi 24:15 Hell . . . the Pit:



Hell – the bottomless pit

[Villains.wikia.com](http://Villains.wikia.com)

2 Nephi 24:19 **Remnant [Raiment?]:**

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

KJV: "and as the raiment" (Isaiah 14:19)

BM: "and the remnant" (2 Nephi 24:19)

He writes that the Masoretic Hebrew Text fully backs the KJV version and hence the change from "raiment" to "remnant" is probably a scribal mishearing (or a misreading of the handwritten manuscript by the printer). However, it is interesting to note that the Septuagint (3rd century B.C.) has a third reading: *meta pollon tetnekoion*, "with the multitude of the slain." Thus, while the explanation of scribal or printer error seems to be the simplest and most logical in this case, the antiquity of the Book of Mormon version can not be ruled out. [John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," FARMS, p. 59]



2 Nephi 24:22-23 **I will rise up . . . and cut off from Babylon the name (Illustration):** Map: The Babylonian Empire, 605 to 538 B.C. [Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 35]

**2 Nephi 24:23 I Will Also Make [Babylon] a Possession for the Bittern and Pools of Water:**

According to the Reynolds and Sjodahl, at the beginning of our era, Babylon was still partly inhabited and the surrounding country was cultivated. In the second century, the walls were still standing. During the fourth century they served as an enclosure for wild animals, and Persian monarchs went there to amuse themselves hunting. By and by the location was lost sight of and forgotten. More modern writers--Dr. Alexander Keith, among others--note the utter desolation of the once famous city. From the place where once the temple of Bel and the royal palaces rose in majestic heights, to the streets, everything has been reduced to gravel hills. Some are large; others are smaller. One who sees the innumerable parallel hills and the depressions between them does not know whether they are remnants of streets or canals. Babylon is fallen. Its foundations could not have been brought lower. Its "pomp has been brought down to the grave." It has literally become "pools of water" (2 Nephi 24:23). For laborers have made innumerable excavations to get gravel, or clay, for industrial purposes, and when the Euphrates overflows its banks, its water fills these hollows forming pools, or swamps. Such was the glory of Babylon less than a century ago. [George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, p. 367]



Bittern

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

**2 Nephi 24:23 I will Sweep [Babylon] with the Besom of Destruction:**

Reynolds and Sjordahl write concerning the desolation of the place that once was Babylon, that Dr. Keith says there was no trace of vegetation. The ground looked as if it had been washed again and again by the rising and falling river, until every vestige of good soil had been swept away (see 2 Nephi 24:23). Yet, the higher located sections had not been reached by the overflow and were therefore dry and parched as a desert, while the lower land was a swamp.

[George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjordahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 367]



2 Nephi 24:22-23 **The broom (Illustration):** Broom with other household items, Qatzrin. Photograph by Tana and Mac Graham. [Donald W. Parry, Visualizing Isaiah, p. 35]

2 Nephi 24:29 **The Rod of Him That Smote Thee is Broken:**



Shalmaneser V – King of Assyria

emp.byui.edu



Sargon II King of Assyria: [en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org)



Sennacherib King of Assyria [allmesopotamia.wordpress.com](https://allmesopotamia.wordpress.com)



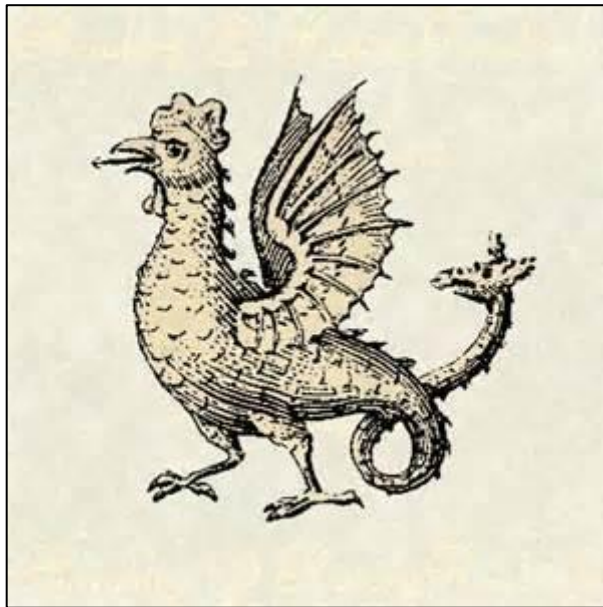
2 Nephi 24:29 **Out of the Serpent's Root:**



Snake laying eggs "out of a serpent's root"

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

2 Nephi 24:29 **A Cockatrice:**



Cockatrice

[technical-dictionary.org](http://technical-dictionary.org)

2 Nephi 24:29 **A Fiery Flying Serpent:**



Flying Dragon Lizard

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

2 Nephi 24:31 **Thou, Whole Palestina, Art Dissolved:**

According to Reynolds and Sjodahl, the word "Palestina" in 2 Nephi 24:31 means Philistia, the country of the Philistines (Heb. Peleshet), the southern part of the coast plain of Canaan. This country was once one of the most flourishing, and consequently, one of the most important and wealthy in Syria. Its cities, particularly Gaza, Askelon, and Ashdod, were famous in the Old World, when the prophets predicted their destruction. Even long after their doom was proclaimed, they continued to prosper. Alexander the Great, the conqueror of the Persian army, was halted outside Gaza and delayed for two months. Askelon was famous for its flourishing vineyards, which made it an important commercial center. Ashdod was a strongly fortified city, strong enough to hold the Egyptian conquerors at bay for twenty years. It was demolished by the Turks in A.D. 1270, and Ibrahim Pasha carried away a considerable part of the ruins to use for building material elsewhere. The surrounding country was fertile enough for many years. Wheat, peas, beans, fig trees, almonds and pomegranates were produced in abundance, but gradually the curse seemed to settle upon the soil. It became barren, and the few inhabitants who survived eked out a precarious existence by taking care of a few sheep and goats. Gaza was destroyed by Alexander the Great, 333 B.C. Strabo, at the beginning of our era, refers to it as a "desert." That is the very expression the angel of the Lord used when he sent Philip to go and meet the Ethiopian. He said "rise and go . . . unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." (Acts 8:26) True, Constantine rebuilt Gaza, and established an ecclesiastic see there, but not on the old site but some distance from it.

[George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1, p. 369]

## Chapter 25

### 2 Nephi chapter 25→ chapter 30 **[Nephi's Interpretation of Isaiah (2 Nephi 12---24)]:**

According to John Welch, Nephi's extensive quotation of the prophecies of Isaiah (Isaiah 2-14) is found in 2 Nephi 12-24. These thirteen chapters of Isaiah are quoted to supply Isaiah as a third witness to the things that Nephi and Jacob have said (see 2 Nephi 11:3). These Isaiah chapters are then interpreted by Nephi in 2 Nephi chapter 25---chapter 30. Here in these interpretive chapters, Nephi draws individual words and phrases from Isaiah (2 Nephi 12-24) to corroborate and substantiate his now familiar four-phased prophetic view:

1. Christ's coming;
2. his rejection and the scattering of the Jews;
3. the day of the Gentiles; and
4. the restoration of Israel and the ultimate victory of good over evil.

[John W. Welch, "Getting through Isaiah with the Help of the Nephite Prophetic View," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, pp. 28-30]

### 2 Nephi chapter 25---chapter 30 **(Isaiah's and Nephi's Theme of Pride):**

According to David Seely, one key to understanding Isaiah is to become familiar with the common themes he addresses. The poetry of Isaiah is like a musical fugue that intertwines several different themes. A reader unfamiliar with this style may feel lost with so many themes being treated at once, but one of the easiest and most effective ways to study Isaiah is to read for a specific theme and then follow that theme throughout the Isaiah passages and the accompanying commentary by the Book of Mormon prophets. . . .

The sin of pride is identified by both Isaiah and Nephi as the common denominator in the fall, destruction, and scattering of all the nations and peoples discussed in Isaiah's prophecies.

Table 1 (see illustration) names each of these groups and Table 2 gives at least one passage representative of each group's acceptance or rejection of the Messiah and his gospel, and contains Isaiah's condemnation of each group's pride.

Table 2 also shows that the theme of pride is an important and recurring theme throughout the Isaiah passages that Nephi quotes. The theme of pride is also central to Nephi's own prophecy in 2 Nephi 25-30, which prophesies the futures of the Jews, the Lehtes, and the Gentiles. Nephi describes how the Messiah will present himself to each of these peoples and how in each case the main reason for their rejection of the Messiah and his gospel is pride. Ultimately,

however, through the revelation of the Book of Mormon to the gentiles, each group will repent of its pride, be brought back to a knowledge of the Messiah, and enter into a covenant with the Lord. Table 3 (see illustration) outlines Nephi's progression through the group's reactions to the Messiah and the gospel, giving representative passages of their attitudes and action. [David Rolph Seely, "Nephi's Use of Isaiah 2-14 in 2 Nephi 12-30," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, pp. 152-160]

<b>Table 1</b>	
<b>Isaiah's Prophecies in 2 Nephi 12-24, Parallel to Isaiah 2-14</b>	
<u>2 Nephi/Isaiah<sup>7</sup></u>	<u>People Addressed or Discussed</u>
12/2	Judah and Jerusalem, destruction
13/3	Judah, Jerusalem, daughters of Zion
14/4	Zion's daughters
15/5	Judah as a vineyard, destruction
16/6	Isaiah's call, iniquity of Judah
17/7	Syria and Ephraim, destruction
18/8	Syria and Ephraim, destruction
19/9	Syria and Ephraim, destruction
20/10	Assyria, destruction
21/11	Israel, gathering
22/12	Israel, gathering
23/13	Babylon, type of the world, destruction
24/14	Babylon, type of the world, destruction
<b>Nephi's Prophecies in 2 Nephi</b>	
<u>2 Nephi</u>	<u>People Addressed or Discussed</u>
25	Jews, history
26	Nephites/Lehites, history
26-29	Gentiles, history
30:1-2	Gentiles to enter the covenant
30:3-6	Lamanites to enter the covenant
30:7	Jews to believe in Christ
30:8-18	all nations to hear the Gospel

2 Nephi 25-30 (**Isaiah's and Nephi's Theme of Pride**) [Illustration]: Table 1. Isaiah's Prophecies in 2 Nephi 12-24, Parallel to Isaiah 2-14 / Nephi's Prophecies in 2 Nephi. [David Rolph Seely, "Nephi's Use of Isaiah 2-14 in 2 Nephi 12-30," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, p. 154]

Table 2	
<b>The Theme of Pride in 2 Nephi 12-24 (Parallel to Isaiah 2-14)</b>	
<b>Speaking of the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem:</b>	<p>And it shall come to pass that the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. The day of the Lord shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty. (2 Nephi 12:11-12, parallel to Isaiah 2:11-12)</p> <p>Moreover, the Lord saith: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes . . . the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head. (2 Nephi 13:16-17, parallel to Isaiah 3:16-17)</p> <p>And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled. (2 Nephi 15:15, parallel to Isaiah 5:15)</p> <p>[Isaiah's message will] make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes . . . until the cities be wasted without inhabitant. (2 Nephi 16:10-11, parallel to Isaiah 6:10-11)</p>
<b>Speaking of the destruction of Syria and Ephraim:</b>	<p>And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart: The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. (2 Nephi 19:9-10)</p>
<b>Speaking of the destruction of Assyria:</b>	<p>[Assyria] saith: By the strength of my hand and by my wisdom I have done these things; . . . And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people. . . . Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? (2 Nephi 20:13-15, parallel to Isaiah 10:13-15)</p> <p>Behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts shall lop the bough with terror; and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down; and the haughty shall be humbled. (2 Nephi 20:33, parallel to Isaiah 10:33)</p>
<b>Speaking of the destruction of Babylon:</b>	<p>And I will punish the world for evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay down the haughtiness of the terrible. (2 Nephi 23:11, parallel to Isaiah 13:11)</p> <p>[The King of Babylon, typified as Lucifer, has said in his heart:] I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. (2 Nephi 24:14-15, parallel to Isaiah 14:14-15)</p>

2 Nephi 25-30 (**Isaiah's and Nephi's Theme of Pride**) [Illustration]: Table 2. The Theme of Pride in 2 Nephi 12-14 (Parallel to Isaiah 2-14). [David Rolph Seely, "Nephi's Use of Isaiah 2-14 in 2 Nephi 12-30," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, pp. 157-158]

Table 3

**Nephi's Prophecy: Pride in 2 Nephi 25–30**

**A** The Jews' rejection of the Messiah, who will come first to them (see 2 Nephi 25:9–30):

"Behold, they will reject him, because of their iniquities, and the hardness of their hearts, and the stiffness of their necks" (2 Nephi 25:12).

**A'** The Jews' acceptance of the gospel (see 2 Nephi 30:1–7):

"And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather . . . [and] become a *delightful* people" (verse 7).

**B** The Nephites' initial acceptance of the Messiah, who appeared to them after his death, and their subsequent rejection of him (see 2 Nephi 26:1–11):

After "the Son of righteousness shall appear unto them . . . For the reward of their pride and their foolishness they shall reap destruction; for because they yield unto the devil and choose works of darkness rather than light" (verses 9–10).

**B'** The Lamanites' acceptance of the gospel (see 2 Nephi 30:3–6):

"They shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers" (verse 5).

**C** The gentiles' reaction to the Messiah and to the restoration of the gospel in the latter days (see 2 Nephi 26:12–29:14):

"It must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God" (2 Nephi 26:12), but "the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, . . . and preach up unto themselves their own

wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor" (2 Nephi 26:20).

"Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up" (2 Nephi 28:12).

"O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines . . . revile against that which is good" (2 Nephi 28:15–16).

**C'** The gentiles' acceptance of the gospel (see 2 Nephi 28–30:3):

"As many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people . . . for the Lord covenanteth with none save it be with them that repent and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel. . . . There shall be many [gentiles] who shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of [the Jews]" (2 Nephi 30:2–3).

2 Nephi 25–30 (**Isaiah's and Nephi's Theme of Pride**) [Illustration]: Table 3 Nephi's Prophecy: Pride in 2 Nephi 25–30. [David Rolph Seely, "Nephi's Use of Isaiah 2–14 in 2 Nephi 12–30," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, pp. 159–160]

2 Nephi 25:1 **For They Know Not Concerning the Manner of Prophesying among the Jews:**

According to Donald Parry, Nephi addresses his latter-day audience specifically in 2 Nephi 25 concerning Isaiah's writings, giving us five keys to help facilitate in their comprehension. As the chart below illustrates, these keys include being filled with the spirit of prophecy, living righteously in the last days, and understanding the geography and rhetorical tradition of the Jews. (Source: Donald W. Parry, "Nephi's Keys to Understanding Isaiah (2 Nephi 25:1-8)," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998, 47-65) [John W. Welch and J. Gregory Welch, Charting the Book of Mormon: Visual Aids for Personal Study and Teaching, F.A.R.M.S., commentary for Chart 84]

Five Keys to Understanding Isaiah Given in 2 Nephi 25		
1	Understand the "manner of prophesying among the Jews"	25:1
2	Do not do "works of darkness" or "doings of abominations"	25:2
3	Be filled with the spirit of prophecy	25:4
4	Be familiar with regions around Jerusalem	25:6
5	Live during the days that the prophecies of Isaiah are fulfilled	25:7

2 Nephi 25:1 **For they know not concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews (Illustration):**  
Chart: Five Keys to Understanding Isaiah Given in 2 Nephi 25. [John W. Welch and J. Gregory Welch, Charting the Book of Mormon: Visual Aids for Personal Study and Teaching, F.A.R.M.S., Chart 84]

Table 2 Outlines of Passages Quoting Isaiah			
<b>Nephi addresses his brethren</b>	<b>"The words of Jacob, which he spake unto the people of Nephi"</b>	<b>Nephi writes more of the words of Isaiah</b>	<b>Abinadi's discourse</b>
<b>Introduction</b> 1 Nephi 19:22-4 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 48:1-49:26</b> 1 Nephi 20:1-21:26	<b>Introduction</b> 2 Nephi 6:1-5 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 49:22-3</b> 2 Nephi 6:6-7	<b>Introduction</b> 2 Nephi 11:1-8 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 2:1-14:32</b> 2 Nephi 12:1-24:32	<b>Question on Isaiah 52:7-10</b> Mosiah 12:20-4 <b>Question and answer</b> Mosiah 12:25-32 <b>Quotation of Exodus 20:2-4</b> Mosiah 12:34-6 <b>Explanation of Exodus 20:2-17</b>
<b>Explanation</b> 1 Nephi 22:1-31	<b>Explanation</b> 2 Nephi 6:8-15	<b>Explanation</b> 2 Nephi 25:1-27:2 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 29:7-11</b> 2 Nephi 27:3-6 <b>Explanation</b> 2 Nephi 27:7-16 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 29:11-12</b> 2 Nephi 27:17-19 <b>Explanation</b> 2 Nephi 27:20-24 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 29:13-24</b> 2 Nephi 27:25-35	<b>Mosiah 13:25-33</b> <b>Quotation of Isaiah 53:1-12</b> Mosiah 14:1-12 <b>Explanation</b> Mosiah 15:1-28
	<b>Quotation of Isaiah 49:24-52:2</b>  2 Nephi 6:16-8:25 <b>Conclusion of discourse</b> 2 Nephi 9:1-54	<b>Conclusion of discourse</b> 2 Nephi 28:1-30:10 <b>Quotation of Isaiah 11:5-9</b> 2 Nephi 30:11-5 <b>The End</b> 2 Nephi 30:16-8	<b>Quotation of Isaiah 52:8-10</b> Mosiah 15:29-31 <b>Conclusion</b> Mosiah 16:1-15

2 Nephi 25:1 **Now I, Nephi, do speak somewhat concerning the words which I have written (Illustration):** "Outlines of Passages Quoting Isaiah," [John Gee, "Choose the Things That Please Me": On the Selection of the Isaiah Sections in the Book of Mormon," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, p. 76]

Note\* When Nephtic prophets quoted Isaiah, they followed a regular pattern. The pattern they used in citing and interpreting Isaiah in the Book of Mormon may be standardized as follows:

- A. Introduction
- B. Citation of a passage of scripture
- C. Quotation of parts of the text and interpretation of the passage by explaining and defining terms
- D. Conclusion by quoting the closing verses of the section.

2 Nephi 25:1, 2, 6 **They Know Not Concerning the Manner of . . . the Jews:**

In speaking about the prophecies of Isaiah, Nephi mentions that, "Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand; for they know not concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:1). According to John Sorenson, Nephi's comments imply that although Nephi's group set about to reproduce some aspects of civilization as they recalled it from the land of Jerusalem, there were certain aspects of Israelite life that Nephi was happy enough to let die out because he considered them evil. [John Sorenson, An Ancient



American Setting for the Book of Mormon, F.A.R.M.S., p. 141]

Note\* In addition, Nephi's comments might imply that with all the effort expended in the trek through the wilderness and the establishment of a settlement in the land of Nephi, his people might not have had the opportunity for intense scriptural education.

#### 2 Nephi 25:4 **The Spirit of Prophecy:**

According to Donald Parry, the expression "the spirit of prophecy" belongs almost exclusively to the Book of Mormon, being listed there more than twenty times, against one single attestation of the quote, or phrase, in the bible (found in Revelation 19:10). The definition of the phrase, as presented in scripture, has reference to the testimony of Jesus. So, that is to say, if you have a testimony of Jesus and are worthy, you have the spirit of prophecy. Joseph Smith understood this well, and frequently made reference to it in his sermons. For example, on one occasion, Joseph Smith explained:

Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it. No man is a minister of Jesus Christ without being a Prophet. No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy. Whenever salvation has been administered, it has been by testimony.<sup>xv</sup>

Nephi explained to his brethren that the prophecies of Isaiah "were manifest unto the prophet [Isaiah] by the voice of the Spirit; for by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh" (1 Nephi 22:2). Add to this statement, a statement made by John Taylor: "these scriptures evidently show that the testimony of Jesus was the very principle, essence, and power of the spirit of prophecy whereby the ancient prophets were inspired."<sup>xvi</sup> [Donald W. Parry, "Isaiah's Prophecies of Jesus Christ, Zion, and the Millennium," F.A.R.M.S., p. 15]

#### 2 Nephi 25:4 **The Words of Isaiah . . . Are Plain unto All Those That Are Filled with the Spirit of Prophecy:**

Nephi had no trouble understanding Isaiah. This is reminiscent of Joseph Smith's comment about the book of Revelation. He said, "the book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 290). It is easy for Nephi to say that Isaiah is not hard to understand and for Joseph Smith to say that the book of Revelation is one of the plainest books ever written, because they had both seen in vision the same things that Isaiah and John the Revelator saw.

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

**2 Nephi 25:8 [The Words of Isaiah] Shall Be of Great Worth unto Them in the Last Days;  
For in That Day Shall They Understand Them:**

In 2 Nephi 25:8 Nephi is declaring that the people of the last days will understand the words of Isaiah. This is encouraging to us who live in these latter-days and try to understand the message of the Isaiah writings. It is also humbling, because Isaiah speak often about wickedness and destruction. Nevertheless, Isaiah also writes hopefully about the peace that can come from obedience to the Lord's covenants he has made relative to the house of Israel.

**2 Nephi 25:10 Immediately After My Father Lehi Left Jerusalem:**

Nephi commented that the destruction of Jerusalem "should come upon [the Jews], *immediately* after my father left Jerusalem" (2 Nephi 25:10). According to Randall Spackman, this verse seems to imply that Jerusalem was destroyed the very next year after Lehi left. [Randall Spackman, "An Introduction to Book of Mormon Chronology," F.A.R.M.S., p. 12]

Note\* If Nephi wrote this verse at the most between 40 and 55 years after Lehi left Jerusalem (Jacob 1:1), what does *immediately* really mean in terms of days, months, or years? [Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes]

**2 Nephi 25:11 Notwithstanding They Have Been Carried Away They Shall Return Again:**

When the Babylonians captured Jerusalem (c. 589 BC), they took the Jews who survived back to Babylon. The Jews remained there for 70 years. When they finally returned, they reestablished their nation and rebuilt the temple. As Jeremiah prophesied, this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11).

**2 Nephi 25:12 The Father of Heaven and of Earth, Shall Manifest Himself unto Them in the  
Flesh:**

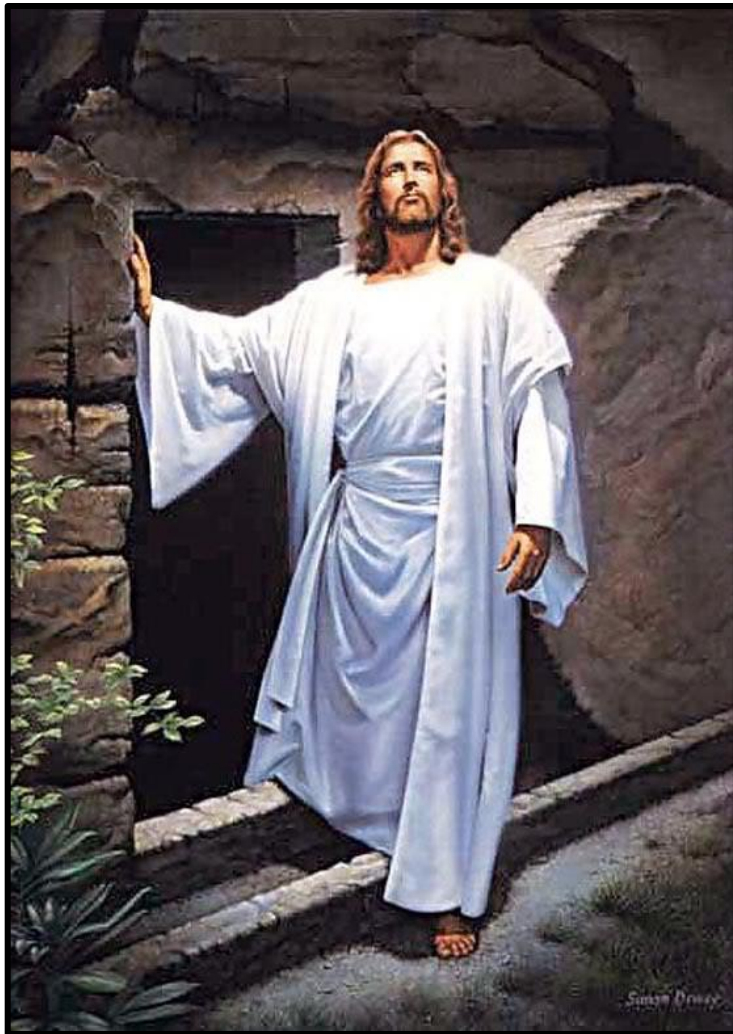
Here, Nephi is prophesying that the Father of heaven and of earth will become mortal and minister to the Jews.

Thus we need to look at how Jesus Christ can be referred to as "the Father." Jesus Christ can be referred to as the father in three different contexts.

First, as the creator of the heavens and the earth (under the direction of Elohim), He becomes the “Father of heaven and of earth.”

Second, as the redeemer, he becomes our spiritual father by redeeming us from spiritual death. When we accept Him as our Savior, we become sons and daughters unto Christ. If we are his sons and daughters, then he must be our father. “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you” (Mosiah 5:7).

Third, Jesus Christ is “the Father” because of his special designation as the Only-Begotten of the Father (Elohim) in the flesh. Abinadi explained how Christ is both the Father and the Son, The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son (Mosiah 15:3).



Jesus Christ risen from the dead

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

2 Nephi 25:13 **After he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead**  
**(Illustration – not shown):** He Is Risen. "Behold they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead, with healing in his wings." Artist: Del Parson. [Thomas R. Valletta ed., The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families, 1999, p. 130]

2 Nephi 25:16 **They Shall Believe in Christ, and Worship the Father in His Name, with *Pure Hearts and Clean Hands*:**

In regards to ancient temple prayer rituals, John Tvedtnes writes that there is symbolism in raising the hands in prayer. The gesture exposes to God both the breast and the palms of the petitioner to show that they are pure (clean). This is reflected in one of the temple hymns found in the Bible, Psalm 24, which Donald W. Parry has suggested may relate to a prayer circle:<sup>xvii</sup>

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. (Psalm 24:3-4)

The message of the Psalm is clear: In order to enter into the temple (the "hill of the Lord," called "the mountain of the Lord's house" in Isaiah 2:2), one must have clean hands and a pure heart.<sup>xviii</sup> In other words, both acts (represented by the hands) and thoughts (represented by the heart) must reflect righteousness, along with the lips that utter the prayer.<sup>xix</sup> This is probably what the author of Job had in mind when he wrote, "prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him" (Job 11:13). Note also Lamentations 3:41, "Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."

[John A. Tvedtnes, "Temple Prayer in Ancient Times," in The Temple in Time and Eternity, F.A.R.M.S., p. 84]

2 Nephi 25:17 **A Marvelous Work and a Wonder:**

The "marvelous work and a wonder" doctrine comes from Isaiah, Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid . . . .And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 29:14,18-19).

**2 Nephi 25:17 A Marvelous Work and a Wonder:**

(See KnowWhy #375 Why Did Nephi Connect Isaiah's Prophecies with Joseph Who Was Sold into Egypt?

[www.bookofmormoncentral.org](http://www.bookofmormoncentral.org))

**2 Nephi 25:18 He Shall Bring Forth His Words unto Them, Which Words Shall Judge Them At the Last Day:**

John the Revelator recorded, 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 (Revelation 20:12).

**2 Nephi 25:19 The Messiah Cometh in Six Hundred Years from the Time My Father Left Jerusalem:**

[See the commentary on 1 Nephi 10:4]

**2 Nephi 25:19 His Name Shall Be Jesus:**

According to Ariel Crowley, one of the primary, startling, and distinguishing characteristics of the Book of Mormon, often assailed by its critics, is its use of the proper name "Jesus" (2 Nephi 25:19; Mosiah 3:8; Alma 7:10) as applied to the expected Messiah, many years before his birth.

There can be no doubt that the name *Jesus* is the English rendition of the Hebrew name *Joshua*. This name was borne by the illustrious successor of Moses who brought the children of Israel into the promised land (Exodus 24:13). . . . The original name of the first Joshua was *Oshea* (Numbers 13:16), and with prophetic significance, this name was changed by Moses to *Jehoshua*. The change had the effect of converting the meaning of the name from *saving* to *Jehovah is Salvation*. In later times Jehoshua was called Joshua or Jeshua, whence came the Greek form *Iesous* (Jesus in English) which is always used in the Greek version of the Old Testament current in the time of Christ. . . . When the name Joshua is mentioned in the New Testament, it is found written in the form *Jesus* (Hebrews 4:8; Acts 7:45).

Justin Martyr, a Samaritan, following the example of Jesus, began at Moses, in an effort to enlighten Trypho the Jew (*Dialogue with Trypho*, Ch. 75, 89), and said:

. . . Thus it is written: 'And the Lord spake to Moses, Say to this people, Behold, I send my angel before thy face to keep thee in the way, to bring thee into the land which I have prepared for thee. Give heed to him, and obey him; do not disobey him; for he will not draw back from you; *for my name is in him.*' [compare Exodus 23:20-21] Now understand that he who led your fathers into the land is called by this name Jesus and at first was called *Auses* (Oshea). For if you shall understand this, you shall likewise perceive that the name of Him who said to Moses "for my name is in him" was Jesus.

[Ariel L. Crowley, About the Book of Mormon, pp. 91-92]

Note\* Thus we see that it is Jesus (Joshua) who leads the children of Israel (the children of Christ) into the Promised Land. This fact was lost on the Jews of Lehi's day as well as the Jews at the time of Christ: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament: which veil is done away in Christ." (2 Corinthians 3:14)

[Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes] [See the commentary on the name *Abraham* -- 1 Nephi 22:9; see also the commentary on the name *Israel* -- 1 Nephi 15:18]

## 2 Nephi 25:19 **His Name Shall Be Jesus Christ, the Son of God:**

According to Joy Osborn, in the Book of Mormon we read of angels revealing the name of Israel's Messiah as "Jesus Christ" to Nephi, to his brother Jacob, and later to King Benjamin (see Mosiah 3:5-13) hundreds of years before the birth of Christ. Nephi, a descendant of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh wrote of the future coming of the Messiah:

For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (2 Nephi 25:19)

Moreover, King Benjamin revealed that according to the angel, "he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary" (Mosiah 3:8). That the mother of Jesus would be called by the name of Mary would also be declared by Alma (see Alma 7:7-14), some eighty-three years before the actual event.

Could the early Book of Mormon prophets have known that the future Messiah would be named Jesus Christ, and that his mother would be named Mary? The statements made by Nephi earlier, and King Benjamin's proclamation that an angel from God had revealed to him the name of Jesus Christ, and that his mother's name would be Mary, more than a hundred years before the birth of Christ, has been cited by critics of Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon, as proof that the book is a forgery, and a fraud, plagiarized from the Bible, and that Joseph Smith was a false prophet.

Others have been a little more kind and scholarly in their judgements, but nonetheless

dubious. Dr. James H. Charlesworth, head of the Pseudepigrapha Institute at Duke University, who edited two impressive volumes of Pseudepigrapha, published by Doubleday in 1985, is recognized as one of the worlds great authorities on the Pseudepigrapha.



James H. Charlesworth

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

In an essay entitled, "Messianism in the Pseudepigrapha and the Book of Mormon," Dr. Charlesworth states: "At the outset we should recognize that, as with the Pseudepigrapha, the Book of Mormon contains lengthy sections that look very Jewish and others that look peculiarly Christian" (p. 124). Professor Charlesworth declares that in the Book of Mormon, we find what most critical scholars would call clearly Christian phrases; that is, the description is so precise that it is evident it was added after the event. . . . The specific details are the clarification that the Messiah will be called 'Jesus Christ,' that his mother will be called Mary, that salvation is through faith - indeed faith on his name - that many will say he has a devil, that he will be scourged and crucified, and finally that he will rise on the third day from the dead.

Dr. Charlesworth expresses the opinion that the sections which appear to be "Christian" additions to the Book of Mormon may have been added when Mormon abridged the records in the fourth century A.D, after the appearance of Jesus. Or, he says that Joseph Smith could have added these things to the records when he translated the Book of Mormon.

In view of this criticism one might ask, Is there any evidence in the ancient scriptures or writings to support the claim that the name of Jesus Christ, and also the name of his mother Mary was known and recorded by the ancient prophets?

Following the publication of the Book of Mormon, in 1830, many ancient manuscripts and writings have been discovered which prove the accounts given in the Book of Mormon to be a true record, and also prove that this remnant of Joseph did, indeed, have the records, plates, and

writings of the ancient prophets of Israel, including the writings of Joseph. The list of ancient manuscripts, many of them recognized as ancient scripture, or canon, which show that the name of Jesus, and of his mother, Mary, was known and recognized by the ancient prophets, is long and impressive.

The Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah is one of the pseudepigraphal works of great importance in support of the Book of Mormon account. Scholars date these writings from between the Second Century B.C. and the Fourth Century A.D. Some believe it to be of Jewish origin and to be derived from a genuine original. Others see it as a Christian work. Charlesworth says there is good evidence that the Martyrdom was composed in Hebrew, whereas the Ascension seems to be a mixture of Jewish and Christian material.

Why have Biblical scholars decided that this vision of Isaiah is a mixture of Jewish and Christian material? Because in it Isaiah, who lived before 700 B.C., about 100 years before Nephi began the Book of Mormon record, was shown in visions and while being guided through the seven heavens the birth of the Savior - whom he says will be named Jesus Christ, and whose mother will be a virgin named Mary! Remember what Nephi wrote in the Book of Mormon about 600 B.C. concerning Isaiah?

And now I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah, for my soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people, and I will send them forth unto all my children, for he verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him. And my brother, Jacob, also has seen him as I have seen him; wherefore, I will send their words forth unto my children to prove unto them that my words are true. Wherefore, by the words of three, God hath said, I will establish my word. Nevertheless, God sendeth more witnesses, and he proveth all his words. (2 Nephi 11:2-3).

In the Bible, we have Isaiah's prophecy of the birth of Israel's promised Messiah: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). Immanuel in Hebrew meaning "With us is God." Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah's statement as follows: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

In the Pseudepigrapha, in the Apocalypse of Baruch, Third Baruch, Greek version, an angel tells Baruch, companion and fellow prophet of Jeremiah, about 600 B.C.:

And God sent the angel Sarasael, and he said to him, Rise, Noah, plant the sprig, for the Lord says this: Its bitterness will be changed into sweetness, and its curse will become a blessing, and its fruit will become the blood of God, and just as the race of men have been condemned through it, so through Jesus Christ Emmanuel in it (they) will receive a calling and entrance into Paradise.



Whereas Isaiah prophesies that the Messiah will be called Emmanuel, meaning "with us is God," about one hundred years later an angel of the Lord tells Baruch that his name will be called Jesus Christ Emmanuel. Was the name Jesus Christ Emmanuel, as given by Baruch, changed to simply Emmanuel in Isaiah's prophecy? If so, who changed it and when was it changed? Was it changed by Manasseh, the wicked king of Judah, who had the prophet Isaiah killed, and the "name of God removed from the Torah"?

According to the words of Nephi in the Book of Mormon, they had with them the writings of the ancient prophets, and he states that, according to the words of these ancient prophets, the future Messiah would be called Jesus Christ. There is much evidence to prove both of these statements to be true. The most important recorded evidence comes from the great Christian historian Eusebius. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, c. 313-339, is recognized as one of the greatest of the early Church Fathers and Historians. Born at Caesarea, about 260 A.D., Eusebius wrote two great histories of the Church, covering it from the time of Christ to the days of Constantine.

In his History of the Church, Eusebius writes:

Both Jesus and Christ were names honoured even by God's beloved prophets of old, as I must now make clear. The extreme sanctity and glory of the name Christ was first proclaimed by Moses himself, . . . For in describing God's high priest, the most powerful of men, he called him Christ, and on this high-priestly office, which in his eyes surpassed all preeminence among men, he bestows as a mark of honour and glory the name of Christ. It is clear then that he understood the divine import of the name of Christ. Moses again was enabled by the Holy Spirit to foresee quite plainly the title Jesus: it, too, he felt to be worthy of special privilege . . . With equal clarity the prophets who came later named Christ in their prophecies, witnessing beforehand alike to the intrigue destined to be leveled against Him by the Jewish people, and to the calling of the Gentiles through Him. (Book 1, pp. 9- 10)

Now we can better understand Jesus' words to the Jews when he told them if they had believed the words of Moses they would have believed him - for Moses had testified of him. And we see now, from the writings of Eusebius, that Moses wrote a great deal more about Jesus than is found in our Bible. This also supports the Book of Mormon declaration that "many plain and precious parts" had been removed from the Scriptures. For Eusebius also states that the prophet Jeremiah and the psalmist David also knew and quoted the name of Christ.

It is most interesting, after reading these statements of Eusebius, to note the many statements made in the Pseudepigrapha and the apocryphal writings of the early prophets - which so many scholars have classed as "Christian interpolations," because they named Jesus, and in some cases, Mary, even as they are named in the Book of Mormon.

We have the statements of Isaiah, in the Vision of Isaiah, that he was shown the coming of

the Lord Christ, who is to be called Jesus, and whose mother would be named Mary. In the Testament of Isaac, who, in speaking to his son, Jacob, declared: "And after this there shall come forth twelve giants. Then will come Jesus the Messiah from your descendants out of a virgin named Mary" (Pseud. V. 1, p. 907).

In the Testament of Adam, Adam tells his son, Seth - "You have heard, my son, that God is going to come into the world after a long time, (he will be) conceived of a virgin and put on a body, be born like a human being, and grow up as a child." And Adam tells Seth that while he was in Paradise, the Lord told him that he would be born of the Virgin Mary. And Adam speaks of the "majesty of our Lord Jesus the Messiah."

Then, in the MSS, known as the Life of Adam and Eve, we find an example of Christian doctrine much like that which Dr. Charlesworth had questioned being in the Book of Mormon. It states:

Then the most beloved Christ, Son of God, shall come upon the earth to revive the body of Adam and with him the bodies of the dead. And when he, the Son of God, comes, he himself will be baptized in the river Jordan, and when he has come out of the water of the Jordan, then he will anoint from the oil of mercy all who believe in him. And the oil of mercy shall be life. Then the most beloved Son of God, Christ, shall descend to the earth, and lead your father Adam to Paradise to the tree of mercy. (Vol. 11, p. 274)

In First Enoch, it states that in the beginning, before the creation of the earth, the Son of Man existed and was with the Father. He was given a name, and became the Chosen One of the Father. In the recently discovered Gospel of Philip, is this statement: "The name Jesus does not exist in any other tongue (than Hebrew), but he is always called Jesus. But Christ is Messiah in Syriac, while in Greek it is Christ." Dr. Nibley declares: "The Gospel of Philip says the Lord had one name, Jesus, which was the same for all people and all languages, while his Greek name of Christ was not used by the Syrians, who said "Messiah" instead; the name of Nazarene was a secret one whose real meaning was known only to his immediate followers." (Nibley, Enoch, p. 34)

Again we see where the things which seemed so far out and ridiculous in Joseph Smith's day, are the very things which now prove him a true prophet of God. And in the writings of Eusebius we can find many of the "plain and precious parts" which have been removed from the Holy Scriptures. We find verification for Nephi's statement.

[Joy M. Osborn, The Book of Mormon -- The Stick of Joseph, pp. 255-264] [See the commentary on Mosiah 3:8] See Vol. 6, Appendix C]

**2 Nephi 25:19 The Messiah Cometh . . . His Name Shall Be Jesus Christ, the Son of God:**

According to Hugh Nibley, there were many false Messiahs, and the Jews got all excited

about them because they had missed the real one. Here in chapter 25, Nephi talks about the Messiah. Specifically in 2 Nephi 25:19 he says: "His name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God." That, of course, is a translation meaning "Jesus" (the Savior) and "Christ" (the Messiah, the Anointed One). It's a very interesting thing--only the early parts of the Book of Mormon refer to the *Messiah*. It's here that Nephi starts referring the *Christ*. He calls him *Christ* from here on, but earlier he's always called the *Messiah*, which means the same thing, of course--the Anointed One. [Hugh W. Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, p. 328]

Note\* Anointing is not only the manner in which a king is elevated to his position, it is also the manner in which a person is healed--see the commentary following this by Hugh Nibley on 2 Nephi 25:20. [Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes]



David is anointed King by Samuel

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



Jesus anointing the sick and blind

[fashions-cloud.com](http://fashions-cloud.com)

**2 Nephi 25:19 His Name Shall Be Jesus Christ, the Son of God:**

One of the marvelous contributions of modern revelation (including the Book of Mormon) is an insight into the nature of Christ's eternal gospel, the revelation to the Church and to the world that Christian prophets have taught Christian doctrine and administered Christian ordinances since the days of Adam. The name of the Messiah--revealed to us as Jesus Christ, meaning literally 'Jehovah is salvation, the anointed one'--was known from the very beginning of earth's history. God spoke to Adam as follows: 'I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh. And [God] also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, . . . ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Moses 6:51-52.) Enoch, whose name and city are associated with transcendent righteousness, pleaded in behalf of the people of the earth: 'I ask thee, O Lord, in the name of thine Only Begotten, even Jesus Christ, that thou wilt have mercy upon Noah and his seed, that the earth might never more be covered by the floods' (Moses 7:50). Noah called upon a wicked generation: 'Believe and repent of your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our Fathers, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost' (Moses 8:24). Likewise, the brother of Jared, the spiritual leader among that colony which left the eastern hemisphere at the time of the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel was told:

'Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ.' (Ether 3:14.)

[Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert Millet, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, vol. 1, p. 292]

**2 Nephi 25:20 The Lord God . . . Gave unto Moses Power That He Should Heal the Nations after They Had Been Bitten by the Poisonous Serpents:**

In chapter 25 of 2 Nephi, after Nephi has introduced the title "Christ" (the *Anointed*) for the Messiah, he then launches into the story of Moses leading the nation of Israel out of bondage in the land of Egypt. "The Lord God . . . gave unto Moses power that he should heal the nations after they have been bitten by the poisonous serpents, if they would cast their eyes unto the serpent which he did raise up before them . . ." (2 Nephi 25:20).



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

Hugh Nibley asks, "Can someone please explain to us how he could heal them by the serpent if they had been made mortally ill by the bite of a serpent?" Remember, we are told [in Numbers 21:6-9] that the serpents came in great numbers and bit the people. Moses raised a brazen serpent on a staff, and whoever looked at the serpent would be healed. So by the curse the curse is removed? What is the point of that? And what do they mean by "washed white in the blood of the Lamb"? Why would the blood of the Lamb wash you white? [That is, both the example of a serpent healing and blood washing white seem paradoxical, so what is the explanation?] The key is ambivalent meaning. It's explained [scripturally] in the Book of Mormon and nowhere else what these things mean.

The serpent, of course, is the most ambivalent of emblems. You know what the *caduceus* is, the emblem of doctors.



Caduceus

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

You know the *caduceus* is the two serpents intertwined, which is the sign of the healer. Aesculapius founded it, but it was originally the staff of Hermes. There were two serpents copulating on a staff. He picked it up and made it his symbol. The one stands for life and the other for death. There are always the two serpents. To this day in the Greek Orthodox Church, the

Russian Orthodox Church, and the Serbian Church, the staff of the archbishop, head of the church, always consists of a cross with two serpents entwined on it. There are two serpents facing each other on the cross. It's a strange thing; they go back like this and face each other. All the episcopal staves and patriarchal staves of the Orient and the old eastern churches have the two serpents. One is life and the other is death, and you must have both--this opposition in all things. It's very clear among the Hopis in the snake dance. . . . and this is an Egyptian formula too. You must pass through the serpent. In this earth we must pass through the serpent; we go to the lowest stage. . .

But the two serpents are the serpents that oppose each other and they represent both parts of life. We have to have life, and we have to have death. On this earth the two go together. The bite of the serpent ends it, but by the serpent are we saved. Obviously, the reason the Egyptians take the serpent as a symbol of resurrection is that it sheds its skin and becomes really new and shiny every year. It leaves its old skin behind. Everything is left behind and out it comes like a new creature, reborn. It's one of the most striking symbols of rebirth. . . .

Anyway, the ambivalence of the serpent is very ancient, and it's a symbol that was understood by the ancients. But a thing like that seems so contradictory to us; it's not so, though.

[Hugh W. Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 1, pp. 328-329]

[Note\* For a discussion on the symbolism of blood turning a garment white, see the commentary on 2 Nephi 5:21.]

[Note\* Moses was a symbol of Joseph Smith & Christ: see the commentary on 2 Nephi 3:9.]  
[See the commentary on Helaman 8:14-15]

## 2 Nephi 25:23 **It Is by Grace That We Are Saved, After All We Can Do**

(See KnoWhy #371 Why Does Nephi State that We Are Saved by Grace "After All We Can Do"? [www.bookofmormoncentral.org](http://www.bookofmormoncentral.org))

## 2 Nephi 25:24-27 **And Notwithstanding We Believe in Christ (Chiastic Structure):**

According to Donald Parry, parallelism is universally recognized as the characteristic feature of biblical Hebrew poetry. (p. i)

Apparently, **the prophets and writers of the scriptures employed the inverted parallel structure of parallel lines for the purpose of reinforcing their teachings and doctrines.** (p. x)

An "inverted parallelism takes the form A-B-C/C-B-A. (p. xxxii)

[In my view the chiastic structure can be the most forceful of parallels because all the lines of thought are focused on the center line, making that statement very significant.

A fine example of this Inverted Parallelism (Chiastic Structure) is found in 2 Nephi 25:24-27:

- 24    **A**   **(a)** And, notwithstanding we believe in Christ,  
          **(b)** we keep the law of Moses,  
          **B**   **(a)** and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ,  
          **(b)** until the law shall be fulfilled.
- 25            **C**   For, for this end was the law given;  
                  **D**   **(a)** wherefore the law hath become dead unto us,  
                  **(b)** and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith;  
                          yet we keep the law because of the commandments.
- 26                    **E**   And we talk of Christ,  
                          we rejoice in Christ,  
                          we preach of Christ,  
                          we prophesy of Christ,  
                          **E**   and we write according to our prophecies,  
                                  that our children may know to what source  
                                  they may look for a remission of their sins.
- 27                            Wherefore, we speak concerning the law  
                                  that our children may know  
                                  **D**   the deadness of the law;  
                                  **(a)** and they, by knowing the deadness of the law,  
                                  **(b)** may look forward unto that life which is in Christ,  
                          **C**   and know for what end the law was given.
- B**   And after the law is fulfilled in Christ,  
**A**   that they need not harden their hearts against him when the law ought to be done  
          away.

[Donald W. Parry, The Book of Mormon text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns, F.A.R.M.S., p. 99 ]

### 2 Nephi 25:29 **Worship Him . . . With Your Whole Soul**

(See KnoWhy #467 Why Does the Book of Mormon Say We Must Worship God with Our Whole Soul?

[www.bookofmormoncentral.org](http://www.bookofmormoncentral.org))



## Notes

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- i. Telephone interview with Louis E. Crandall, September 12, 2001.
- ii. Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), p. 138.
- iii. Kent P. Jackson, *From Apostasy to Restoration* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996), pp. 135-139.
- iv. "Who Mattered Most in This Millennium," *USA Today*, 23 December 1999, sec. A, p. 17.
- v. Life Books <http://www.life-mag.com/Life/millennium/events/01.html>. "By the mid-sixteenth century, a reader would have been able to choose from well over eight million printed books."
- vi. Sidney B. Sperry, *The Voice of Israel's Prophets*, pp. 34-38; see also Sidney B. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, p. 226.
- vii. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 3:250-254; Joseph Fielding Smith *The Way to Perfection*, pp. 125-127.
- viii. This phrase could not mean that all of Joseph Smith's ancestors were descendants only of Ephraim, because Ephraim's immediate children could not marry each other but were probably married to other Israelites or at least to other Semites. Jesus is known as the rightful heir of Judah, yet even his ancestry contained non-Israelite blood (Ruth the Moabite). That Joseph Smith is a "pure Ephraimite" probably means that if he traced his genealogy back to the time of Jacob or Israel, his "pure" patriarchal line (that is, his father's-father's-father's-father, etc.) would trace directly to Ephraim.
- ix. See *Life of Heber C. Kimball* [1888], p. 185; *Journal of Discourses* 4:248; *Journal of President Ruder Clawson*, pp. 374-75; *Ivins Journal*, p. 21.
- x. See D&C 77:9, 14; HC 1:176, and HC 6:249-54 for ideas about the role of "Elias," messengers who were to come in this dispensation. See also Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1, and Mark 1:3 for scriptures about a messenger who was to come before the Messiah.
- xi. See D&C 65:2; 107:8; 115:18-19; 128:10-14, 20-21.
- xii. See D&C 45:9; *Doctrines of Salvation* 3:254-62; D&C 135:3.
- xiii. See also D&C 133:25-35; Amos 9:9; Isaiah 10:20-22; 35:8-10; HC 4:456; 5:336-37; TPJS pp. 17, 83, 308.
- xiv. For more information, see John A. Tvedtnes featured in *A Sure Foundation* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1988), pp. 24-5; and also in "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon" in *Isaiah and the Prophets*, Edited by Monte S. Nyman, (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1984).
- xv. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Bookcraft, 1978), 3:389.
- xvi. John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom: Selections from the Writings and Discourses of John Taylor*, ed. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987), 120.

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<sup>xvii.</sup> See Donald W. Parry, "Temple Worship and a Possible Reference to a Prayer Circle in Psalm 24," *BYU Studies* 32/4 (1992): 57-62.

<sup>xviii.</sup> Compare Doctrine and Covenants 88:74: "purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean." Doctrine and Covenants 88 contains many temple elements. Also note one of Jesus' beatitudes, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8), which reminds us that, in ancient Israel, God frequently appeared to the prophets in his temple. Returning to Psalm 24, we note that verse 6 speaks of those who seek the face of the Lord.

<sup>xix.</sup> The Book of Mormon teaches that God will judge us on the basis of our actions, our words, and our thoughts (see Mosiah 4:30; Alma 12:14; compare D&C 18:38; 88:109; 137:8-9; Isaiah 55-7; Matthew 12:36-37; 15:19; Mark 7:21; Acts 8:22). According to *2 Enoch* (J) 71:10, one can sin before God by word and thought, while in *3 Enoch* 45:1, we read that the deeds and thoughts of all mankind are written on the curtain that hangs before God. *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* indicate that we should love in deeds and thoughts, in the heart (see *Testament of Gad* 6:1; 3; 7:7; compare *Testament of Joseph* 4:6).