

Abraham

The Abrahamic Covenant & “The House of Israel”

➤ Questions to be Answered:

- What is the big deal about Abraham? Why do we see his name and reference him so much...even the Savior.
- What LAND is part of the Covenant and why is that so critical?
- What was the Token of the Covenant and WHY? (Gen 17:10-12)
- What & exactly who is the House of Israel?
- How does Abraham, the Abrahamic Covenant, & the House of Israel relate to me today & to the 2nd Coming?

➤ Abraham & The Abrahamic Covenant Outline:

R -“What we insistently desire, over time, is what we will eventually become and what we will receive in eternity.”

(Neal A. Maxwell, “According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts,” Ensign, November 1996, 21)

- a. Priesthood Patriarchal until Abraham (D&C 107:40-56) and he becomes the “*Father of Many Nations*”, “*Father of the Faithful*”, etc.
- b. Abraham Desires & Youth (Almost Sacrificed/Saved by Jehovah- Abraham knew what it felt like to be put on an alter to BE the sacrifice – See **Abr. 1:5-20**; His father’s and their Idol worship of virgins)
- c. Abraham’s desires (Abraham 1:1-4)
- d. Sacrificing Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen 22:2)!
 - i. *Abraham & Isaac/Sacrifice(Testing):
Gen 22; Robert E. Wells quote; George Q. Cannon quote; Neal A. Maxwell quote; D&C 101:4-5; Elder Packer Quote, John Taylor Quote, Elder Maxwell Quote, C.S. Lewis quote)
- e. God’s Covenant with Abraham: (Gen 15=Cut a Covenant)
Gen 12:1-3 – Gen 13:15-16 – JST Gen 14:25-40 – Gen 15:1-8, 18 – Gen 17:2-8 – Gen 17:15-21 – Abr 1:8-19 – Abr 2:9-11; Gal 3:26-29, John 8) – **TOKEN of Covenant:** *Circumcision* (Gen. 17:10-12)

- **The House of Israel: (Jacob & the Tribes of Israel)**
 - a. Jacob/Israel (Gen 4 wives & 13 kids, crazy family)
 - b. Birthright...who gets it? (Why is this significant today?)
 - c. Birthright Blessings (**Judah & Ephraim** = Best Blessings)
 - d. “*The House of Israel*” (Key to scriptural understanding)

- **What LAND is part of the Covenant?**
 - a. Canaan: Gen 15:18 – Gen 28:13-14
 - b. Western Hemisphere: Gen 49:22-24 – Duet 33:13-17; Ether 13:1-12; 1 Nephi 22: (vs.7-12); 2 Nephi 1:3-11 (Ether 2:7-12); 2 Nephi 3 (vs.1-5, 12, 21-23); 2 Nephi 10 (vs 8-20); Alma 46:23-24; 3 Nephi 5:21-26; ch. 10:17; 3 Nephi 15:12-13; 3 Nephi 16:10, 16-20; ch 20:10-14,22,25, 29-31 (then Isaiah’s words)

- **The Abrahamic Covenant Today:**
 - a. Jesus & Abraham (John 8...Light...Father...Truth...Abraham!)
 - b. The Eternal Abrahamic Covenant (A.C. for dummies, LAND)
 - c. God is STILL fulfilling this Covenant (3 Nephi 16; 20-22; 29, Pres Nelson)

Quoted References:

Book of Genesis ch. 12-17, 22, 49

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/ot/gen/12?lang=eng>

John 8

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/nt/john/8?lang=eng>

3 Nephi 16; 20

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/16?lang=eng>

Pearl of Great Price; Book of Abraham

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp/abr/1?lang=eng>

Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible; Genesis 14:25-40; 15:9-12; 17:3-12
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/jst/jst-gen/14?lang=eng>

Abrahamic Covenant Chart as shows in the Pearl of Great Price Student Manual
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/the-pearl-of-great-price-student-manual-2018/the-abrahamic-covenant?lang=eng>

Doctrine & Covenants 107
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/107?lang=eng>

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity
<https://www.amazon.com/Mere-Christianity-C-S-Lewis/dp/0060652926>

LeGrand Richards, Israel! Do You Know?
<https://www.amazon.com/Israel-You-Know-LeGrand-Richards/dp/0875793142>

President Russell M. Nelson and Sister Wendy W. Nelson, “Hope of Israel”, *Worldwide Youth Devotional* • June 3, 2018 • SLC, Utah
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/new-era/2018/08-se/hope-of-israel?lang=eng>

John Taylor, Journal of Discourses
<https://www.amazon.com/Gospel-Truth-Discourses-Writings-President/dp/0877475202>

George Q. Cannon, in *Gospel Truth*, comp. Jerreld L. Newquist
<https://www.amazon.com/Gospel-Truth-Discourses-Writings-President/dp/0877475202>

A Message to Judah from Joseph by President Ezra Taft Benson
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1976/12/a-message-to-judah-from-joseph?lang=eng>

Abraham Accords Aug 2020
<https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords/>

QUOTES:

“Why did the Lord ask such things of Abraham? Because, knowing what his future would be and that he would be the father of an innumerable posterity, he was determined to test him. God did not do this for His own sake for He knew by His foreknowledge what Abraham would do; but the purpose was to impress upon Abraham a lesson and to enable him to attain unto knowledge that he could not obtain in any other way. That is why God tries all of us. It is not for His own knowledge for He knows all things beforehand. He knows all your lives and everything you will do. But He tries us for our own good that we may know ourselves”

(**George Q. Cannon**, in *Gospel Truth*, comp. Jerreld L. Newquist, 2 vols. [1974], 1:113).

“Therefore, how can you and I really expect to glide naively through life, as if to say, “Lord, give me experience, but not grief, not sorrow, not pain, not opposition, not betrayal, and certainly not to be forsaken. Keep from me, Lord, all those experiences which made Thee what Thou art! Then let me come and dwell with Thee and fully share Thy joy!”

(**Neal A. Maxwell**, *Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles April 1991 General Conference*; “Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds”)

“One of the principal purposes of this life is to find out if the Lord *can* trust us. One of our familiar scriptures says, “And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” ([Abr. 3:25](#)). We are destined to be tried, tested, and proven during our sojourn on earth to see if we are trustworthy.

The Prophet Joseph Smith indicated that to attain the highest blessing of this life, we will first be tested and proved thoroughly until the Lord is certain that he can trust us in all things, regardless of the personal hazard or sacrifice involved.”

(**Elder Robert E. Wells** *Of the First Quorum of the Seventy, Oct 1978 General Conference*; “The Cs of Spirituality”)

“We may foolishly bring unhappiness and trouble, even suffering upon ourselves. These are not always to be regarded as penalties imposed by a displeased Creator. They are part of the lessons of life, part of the test. Some are tested by poor health, some by a body that is deformed or homely. Others are tested by handsome and healthy bodies; some by the passion of youth; others by the erosions of age. Some suffer disappointment in marriage, family problems; others live in poverty and obscurity. Some (perhaps this is the hardest test) find ease and luxury. All are part of the test, and there is more equality in this testing than sometimes we suspect.”

(**Boyd K. Packer**, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1980, p. 29)

“I heard Joseph Smith preach to the Twelve in Nauvoo saying that the Lord would get hold of their heart strings and wrench them, and that they would have to be tried as Abraham was tried . . . And Joseph said that if God had known any other way whereby he could have touched Abraham’s feelings more acutely and more keenly he would have done so.” (**John Taylor**, *Journal of Discourses* 24:264)

“God knows what his children can become and tries them to help them reach their potential...In time each person will receive a "**customized challenge**" to determine his dedication to God.”

(**Neal A. Maxwell**, BYU, "Link Truths" *The Daily Universe*, Oct. 7, 1983)

“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of-- throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.”

(**C.S. Lewis**, *Mere Christianity*, p. 174)

“Joseph, son of Jacob, because of his faithfulness and integrity to the purposes of the Lord, was rewarded with the birthright in Israel. It was the custom in early times to bestow upon the firstborn son special privileges and blessings, and these were looked upon as belonging to him by right of birth. Reuben, the first of Jacob’s sons, lost the birthright through transgression, and it was bestowed upon Joseph, who was the most worthy of all the sons of Jacob [1 Chronicles 5:1–2].

“When Jacob blessed Joseph, he gave him a double portion, or an inheritance among his brethren in Palestine and also the blessing of the land of Zion—‘the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.’ He also blessed him with the blessings of heaven above, of the deep which lieth under, and of posterity [Genesis 49:22–26]. Jacob also blessed the two sons of Joseph with the blessings of their father, which they inherited, and he placed Ephraim, the younger, before Manasseh, the elder, and by inspiration of the Lord conferred upon Ephraim the birthright in Israel.” (**Joseph F. Smith**, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:250–51.)

“Through a careful study and consideration of the blessings of the Lord pronounced through Jacob, upon his twelve sons, it is evident that they were not to share equally in the promises of the Lord.

“It is evident that the blessings given to Judah and Joseph were choice above the blessings pronounced upon their brothers.” (**LeGrand Richards**, *Israel! Do You Know?* pp. 9–10)

President Harold B. Lee made this observation:

“When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.’ (Deut. 32:8.)

“Now, mind you, this was said to the children of Israel before they had arrived in the ‘Promised Land,’ which was to be the land of their inheritance.

“Then note this next verse: ‘For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.’ (Deut. 32:9.)

“It would seem very clear, then, that those born to the lineage of Jacob, who was later to be called Israel, and his posterity, who were known as the children of Israel, were born into the most illustrious lineage of any of those who came upon the earth as mortal beings.

“All these rewards were seemingly promised, or foreordained, before the world was. Surely these matters must have been determined by the kind of lives we had lived in that premortal spirit world. Some may question these assumptions, but at the same time they will accept without any question the belief that each one of us will be judged when we leave this earth according to his or her deeds during our lives here in mortality. Isn’t it just as reasonable to believe that what we have received here in this earth life was given to each of us according to the merits of our conduct before we came here?”
([“Understanding Who We Are Brings Self-Respect,”](#) *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, p. 5.)

Excerpts & Quotes from the Abrahamic Covenant Chart as shown in the Pearl of Great Price Student Manual

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/the-pearl-of-great-price-student-manual-2018/the-abrahamic-covenant?lang=eng>

This blessing specifically refers to the land “from the river of Egypt [not the Nile, but a river that separates Egypt from Israel] unto ... the river Euphrates” ([Genesis 15:18](#)), which actually goes beyond the boundaries of what we usually call Canaan (or Israel, or Palestine). Since the time of Abraham, some or all of that extended area has been inhabited by Abraham’s posterity through Ishmael, Isaac, and the sons of Keturah. When the Lord renewed the covenant with Abraham’s grandson Jacob, he indicated that the children of Israel would have the land of Canaan as an inheritance but would also spread “to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south” ([Genesis 28:14](#)).

For example, the posterity of Jacob’s (Israel’s) son Joseph were promised a special land beyond Canaan where they would “push the people together to the ends of the earth” ([Deuteronomy 33:17](#); see [verses 13–17](#); see also [Genesis 49:22–26](#)). This prophecy refers to the Western Hemisphere, where the people of the Book of Mormon—who were descendants of Joseph—settled and where the gospel was

restored in the latter days to those of the tribe of Ephraim who were mixed among the Gentiles. (Ephraim was Joseph’s birthright son; Brigham Young said that “Joseph Smith was a pure Ephraimite” [*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 322].) Furthermore, Joseph Smith taught that “the whole America is the Zion itself—from north to south” (“Discourse, 8 April 1844, in William Clayton Diary,” quoted in *The Words of Joseph Smith*, comp. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook [1980], 362; punctuation and spelling standardized), where it is prophesied that others of the lost tribes gather to receive their blessings of the Abrahamic covenant “by the hands of ... the children of Ephraim” ([D&C 133:32](#); see [verses 26–34](#)). The Lord even designated a place in North America for the city of Zion (see [D&C 57:1–3](#)), the place of the New Jerusalem (see [D&C 84:2–5](#)).

All of the tribes, or families, of Israel will yet receive inheritances in the land of Canaan, but the land has been noted especially as a gathering place for the tribe of Judah (see [D&C 109:62–64](#)).

Ultimately, this promise of an “everlasting” inheritance of land is fulfilled when the righteous inherit the earth in its glorified state (see [Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12](#) [in the Bible appendix]; [D&C 45:57–59](#); [63:20](#); [88:17–20](#)).

Before Abraham, the saving ordinances of the gospel were administered through fathers, in a patriarchal order (see [D&C 107:40–56](#)). Abraham’s father apostatized and did not have authority to administer these ordinances to Abraham as Abraham desired (see [Abraham 1:2–5](#)). Because of Abraham’s great desire, faith, and obedience, he received the blessings of the priesthood from those who had authority to give them as well as the right to administer them to his posterity. This opened a new dispensation of the gospel—with Abraham set up as the “father”—wherein all who desired these same blessings for themselves and their posterity could receive them in the way Abraham did. Because Abraham received the promise that his posterity would have the right to the priesthood from his day until the end of the world, all who desire the blessings of the saving priesthood ordinances receive them at the hand of Abraham and his descendants. In this way...In this way, regardless of whether the blood of Abraham literally flows in their veins, all who accept the gospel become the children of Abraham. We should note that the Prophet Joseph Smith said that “the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile is to purge out the old blood and make him actually of the seed of Abraham” (“Discourse, between circa 26 June and circa 2 July 1839, as Reported by Willard Richards,” 18–19, [josephsmithpapers.org](#); ; capitalization standardized), so all who are baptized and receive the Holy Ghost are actually sons and daughters of Abraham. Furthermore....Furthermore, Christ was a descendant of Abraham and is the one who made possible the fulfillment of all the blessings promised to Abraham (see [Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12 \[in the Bible appendix\]](#)). When individuals receive the gospel and are born again, they become sons and daughters of Christ (see [Mosiah 5:7](#)) and, consequently, his heirs. Christ was the first to fully obtain all of the blessings promised to Abraham. Only by first becoming sons and daughters of

Christ may we qualify as heirs of all that the Father has (see [D&C 84:38](#)), which is what was promised to Abraham and his seed (see [Galatians 3:27–29](#); see also “Salvation and Eternal Life,” no. 3, in this chart). Taking upon oneself the name of Christ is the most important way to be a son or daughter of Abraham. If an individual is of the literal posterity of Abraham but never accepts the gospel of Christ, he or she becomes disinherited with regards to the covenant and its blessings (see [2 Nephi 30:2](#)). This is why the Book of Mormon emphasizes that the children of Abraham must not only come to know who they are as a people, but they must be gathered to Christ and restored to their covenant relationship with him (see [2 Nephi 30:4–5](#)).

President Russell M. Nelson and Sister Wendy W. Nelson, “Hope of Israel”, Worldwide Youth Devotional • June 3, 2018 • Conference Center, Salt Lake City, Utah <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/new-era/2018/08-se/hope-of-israel?lang=eng>

On June 3, 2018, **President Russell M. Nelson and his wife, Wendy W. Nelson**, invited the youth to “enlist in the youth battalion of the Lord” and take part in “the greatest challenge, the greatest cause, and the greatest work on earth.”

And what is the greatest challenge? The gathering of Israel.

“My dear extraordinary youth, you were sent to earth at this precise time, the most crucial time in the history of the world, to help gather Israel,” the prophet said. “There is *nothing* happening on this earth right now that is more important than that. There is *nothing* of greater consequence. Absolutely *nothing*. This gathering should mean *everything* to you. This *is* the mission for which you were sent to earth.”

Sister Wendy Nelson:

“While that question simmers in your mind, let’s shift and talk about why you are here on earth—at *this particular time*, which is such a unique time in the history of the earth.

Why are you here on earth right now?

Why were you not born back in the 1880s? or 30 years from now?

Let me tell you of an experience that taught me firsthand about the historic days in which we live.

We often talk about living in the latter days. We are, after all, Latter-day Saints. But perhaps these days are more “latter” than we have ever imagined.

This truth became a reality for me because of what I experienced during one 24-hour period of time that commenced on June 15, 2013. My husband and I were in Moscow, Russia.

While President Nelson met with priesthood leaders, I had the privilege of meeting with nearly 100 of our sisters. I *love* our Russian sisters. They are spectacular!

When I stepped to the pulpit to speak, I found myself saying something I'd never anticipated. I said to the women: "I'd like to get to know you by lineage. Please stand as the tribe of Israel that represents the lineage declared in your patriarchal blessing is spoken."

"Benjamin?" A couple of women stood.

"Dan?" A couple more.

"Reuben?" A few more stood.

"Naphtali?" More stood.

As the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were announced—from Asher to Zebulun—and as the women stood, we were all amazed with what we were witnessing, feeling, and learning.

How many of the twelve tribes of Israel do you think were represented in that small gathering of fewer than 100 women on that Saturday in Moscow?

Eleven! Eleven of the twelve tribes of Israel were represented in that one room! The only tribe missing was that of Levi. I was astonished. It was a spiritually moving moment for me.

Immediately after those meetings my husband and I went directly to Yerevan, Armenia. The first people we met as we got off the plane were the mission president and his wife. Somehow, she had heard about this experience in Moscow, and with great delight, she said, "I've got Levi!"

Just imagine our thrill when my husband and I met their missionaries the next day, including an elder from the tribe of Levi who just happened to be from Gilbert, Arizona.

The Twelve Tribes of Israel

God promised Abraham that his descendants would be His covenant people. This promise came to Abraham's son Isaac and grandson Jacob, also called Israel. He had 12 sons whose descendants are known as the 12 tribes of Israel. Manasseh and Ephraim were sons of Joseph. Ancient prophets foretold the scattering of Israel. They also foretold that Israel would be gathered again in a future day. To learn more, see President Nelson's October 2006 general conference message, "[The Gathering of Scattered Israel.](#)"



Illustrations by Bryan Beach

Now, when I was a little girl attending Primary in Raymond, Alberta, Canada, I learned that in the last days—before the Second Coming of the Savior—the twelve tribes of Israel would be gathered. That truth was thrilling to me and, at the same time, quite overwhelming to wrap my mind around. So imagine what it was like for me to be with members of all twelve tribes of Israel within one 24-hour period of time!

I have since learned that I probably should not have asked those sisters to identify themselves by lineage because patriarchal blessings are sacred and the lineage declared in them is personal. Yet I am so grateful for the privilege I had of seeing the fruits of the gathering of Israel firsthand. The impact of that experience has never diminished in my heart or mind.

My dear brothers and sisters, these are indeed the latter days! There has *never* been a time like this in the history of this world. Never! Premortally, you and I committed to do a great work while we are here on earth. And with the Lord's help, we will do it! In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

There has never been a time like this in the history of this world. Never! Premortally, you and I committed to do a great work while we are here on earth. And with the Lord's help, we will do it!

President Russell M. Nelson: Thank you, Wendy. I love you! Isn't she wonderful?

My dear young brothers and sisters, these surely *are* the latter days, and the Lord is hastening His work to gather Israel. That gathering is the most important thing taking place on earth today. Nothing else compares in magnitude, nothing else compares in importance, nothing else compares in majesty. And if you choose to, if you want to, you can be a big part of it. You can be a big part of something big, something grand, something majestic!

When we speak of the *gathering*, we are simply saying this fundamental truth: every one of our Heavenly Father's children, on both sides of the veil, deserves to hear the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. They decide for themselves if they want to know more.

Those whose lineage is from the various tribes of Israel are those whose hearts will most likely be turned to the Lord. He said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."³ Those who are of the house of Israel will most easily recognize the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and will desire to be gathered into His fold. They

will want to become members of His Church, make covenants with Him and Heavenly Father, and receive their essential ordinances.

The Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith that now, meaning our day, is the eleventh hour and the last time that He will call laborers into His vineyard for the express purpose of gathering the elect from the four quarters of the earth.⁴

My question tonight to every one of you between the ages of 12 and 18 is this: Would you like to be a big part of *the greatest* challenge, *the greatest* cause, and *the greatest* work on earth today?

Would you like to help gather Israel during these precious latter days? Would you, who are the elect, be willing to help find the elect who have not heard the message of the restored gospel? Would you like to be among those “swift messengers” of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke?⁵



Now, participating in the gathering of Israel will require some sacrifice on your part. It may even require some changes in your life. It will definitely take some of your time and energy and your God-given talents. Are you interested?

Just think of the excitement and urgency of it all: every prophet commencing with Adam has seen our day. And every prophet has talked about *our* day, when Israel would be gathered and the world would be prepared for the Second Coming of the Savior. Think of it! Of all the people who have ever lived on planet earth, we are the ones who get to participate in this final, great gathering event. How exciting is that!

Our Heavenly Father has reserved many of His most noble spirits—perhaps, I might say, His finest team—for this final phase. Those noble spirits—those finest players, those heroes—are *you!*

I testify that the gathering is now, and it is real. In the year I was born, the total membership of the Church was less than 600,000 people, with no members in South America. Today there are more than 16 million members worldwide, with nearly 3 million members in South America.

America.



Our Heavenly Father has reserved many of His most noble spirits—perhaps, I might say, His finest team—for this final phase. Those noble spirits—those finest players, those heroes—are you!

“What can I, as a teenager, do to help gather Israel?”.....

We first asked, “What is the gathering of Israel? And what does it mean to you?” Their answers varied, but the majority indicated they weren’t quite sure what it was. Tonight, we want you to know that the gathering of Israel ultimately means offering the gospel of Jesus Christ to God’s children on both sides of the veil who have neither made crucial covenants with God nor received their essential ordinances.

Every child of our Heavenly Father deserves the opportunity to *choose* to follow Jesus Christ, to accept and receive His gospel with all of its blessings—yes, all the blessings that God promised to the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, as you know, is also known as Israel.

My dear extraordinary youth, you were sent to earth at this precise time, the most crucial time in the history of the world, to help gather Israel. There is *nothing* happening on this earth right now that is more important than that. There is *nothing* of greater consequence. Absolutely *nothing*.

This gathering should mean *everything* to you. This is the mission for which you were sent to earth.

So my question to you is “Are you willing to enlist in the youth battalion of the Lord to help gather Israel?” Please think about it. Don’t answer just yet.

Christ’s Masterful Isaiah Sermon to the Nephites

(Compiled by Clark Anderson)

3 *Nephi* 16:10 “Thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you...

3 *Nephi* 16:12-13 (3 *Nephi* 16:11 (3 *Nephi* 20:29 / 3 *Nephi* 21:4 / 3 *Nephi* 21:23-26) “If the Gentiles will repent and return unto me...they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel—I will remember my covenant which I have made with my people, O house of Israel” **Isaiah 44:21**

(NOTE: He begins and ends with this message about remembering His people and how this land is part of the Abrahamic Covenant and how the inhabitants of this land from the Joseph tribes (Ephraim/Manasseh) are to build the New Jerusalem and even refers to this reference throughout)

3 *Nephi* 16:15 (3 *Nephi* 20:16 / 3 *Nephi* 21:12— *note how He repeats this 3 times*)—I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them and shall tread them down... **Isaiah 5:29/Micah 5:8-15**

3 Nephi 16:16 “The Father commanded me—that I should give unto this people this land for their inheritance and THEN the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled which say...(Isaiah 52:8-10)

[Note: This Isaiah passage **Isaiah 52:8-10** appears 4 times in the BofM = most frequently quoted Isaiah reference]; 3 Nephi 16:18-20 (Mosiah 12:22-24 / Mosiah 15:29-31 / 3 Nephi 20:31-33)—

“Thy watchmen shall lift up their voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.” **Isaiah 52:8-10**

3 Nephi 17:2-3 “I perceive that ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time. Therefore, go ye unto your homes and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.”

GAP IN TIME (Jesus teaches the Nephites...see 3 Nephi 17—20). Then He returns to it...NOTE HIS BRILLIANCE!

3 Nephi 20:10 “Behold now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning this people, who are a remnant of the house of Israel. Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled...then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel...”

3 Nephi 20:13—“Then shall the remnants...be gathered in from the east, west, south, north and...” **Jeremiah 46:27**

3 Nephi 20:13—“Shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them.” **Ezekiel 20:42-44**

3 Nephi 20:14 “The Father commanded me—that I should give unto this people this land for your inheritance...”

3 Nephi 20:16-17 (3 Nephi 21:12 / 3 Nephi 16:15)—“Ye shall be a lion among the beasts of the forest...a young lion among the flocks of sheep...all thine enemies shall be cut off” **Isaiah 5:29/ Micah 5:8** (Note: this is a repeat from earlier)

3 Nephi 20:18-21—“I will gather my people...I will make my people...even upon all the nations of the Gentiles. I will establish my people, O house of Israel” **Micah 4:12-13**

3 Nephi 20:22—“This people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of covenant made with Jacob (Abrahamic); and it shall be a New Jerusalem...even I will be in the midst of you.” **Isaiah 2:2-3/Micah 4:1-2**

3 Nephi 20:23-24—“I am he whom Moses testified: A prophet shall the Lord raise up. All prophets testify of me” (Acts 3 was quoted by Moroni to 17 year old Joseph Smith when informing him of the BofM plates) **Acts 3:19-23**

3 Nephi 20:24-26—Ye are children of the prophets and of the house of Israel and children of the covenant” **Acts 3:24-26**

3 Nephi 20:28—“If they harden their heart will return their iniquities upon their own heads” **Isaiah 51:23**

****NOTE: This is where He gets REALLY profound and impressive how He provides details to what He began back in 3 Nephi 16 when He first mentioned God remembering His covenant with His people (3 Nephi 16:11/Isaiah 44:21)***

3 Nephi 20:29 (3 Nephi 16:11-13 / 3 Nephi 21:4 / 3 Nephi 21:23-26)—“I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people” **Isaiah 44:21** (*Note: He begins and ends with this reference*)

3 Nephi 20:29—“I will gather them (Judah) the land of Jerusalem...their promised land forever” **Amos 9:15**

3 Nephi 20:30-31—“The time cometh, when the fullness of my gospel shall be preached unto them (Judah in Jerusalem) and they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (*Note: This is HUGE and EXCITING!*)

3 Nephi 20:32 (3 Nephi 16:18-20 / Mosiah 12:22-24 / Mosiah 15:29-31)—Then shall their watchmen lift up their voice, sing together and see eye to eye **Isaiah 52:8**

****Note: This is the reference that appears 4 times in the BofM and how He uses it here is impressive in concert with and the context that He provides***

3 Nephi 20:33—“Father will gather them and give unto them Jerusalem (New) for their inheritance” **Isaiah 18:7**

3 Nephi 20:34 (3 Nephi 22:1)—“Break forth into singing” **Isaiah 54:1**

3 Nephi 20:34-35—“Sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem; the Father hath comforted his people and redeemed Jerusalem and made bare his holy arm...all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Father.” **Isaiah 52:9**

3 Nephi 20:36-38—“Awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments O Jerusalem...ye shall be redeemed without money” **Isaiah 52:1-3**

He Inserts: “Verily, Verily, I say unto you, that my people shall know my name; yea, in that day they shall know that I am he that doth speak.” (3 Nephi 20:39)

3 Nephi 20:40—“Then...How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings unto them that publisheth peace...that sayeth unto Zion: Thy God reigneth!” **Isaiah 52:7**

3 Nephi 20:41-45 (3 Nephi 21:29)—“Then shall a cry go forth...’Depart ye...touch not the unclean; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. Go not out with haste or by flight; the Lord will go before you, and be your rearward...shall see & consider new...” **Isaiah 52:11-15**

Inserts: “Verily, Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall surely come, even as the Father hath commanded me. Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance.” (3 Nephi 20:46)

3 Nephi 21:1-33—“I give unto a *sign* that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place—that I should gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel and shall establish again among them my Zion...” **Isaiah 66:19**

**Jesus then provides 4 signs whereby they may know that the Father is fulfilling His work (3 Nephi 21:2-11):*

1. This land is set up as a free people by the power of the Father (3 Nephi 21:4) [Establishment of the USA]
2. The Father will work a work...a great and a marvelous work among them [Restoration] (vs 9) **(Isaiah 29:14)**
3. The life of my servant shall be in my hand...he shall be marred...I will show that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil (vs 10) [116 pages/Joseph Smith]
4. He shall bring my word (BofM) forth unto the Gentiles (vs 11) [Coming forth of the Book of Mormon]

**Note: He now comes back to the Isaiah reference (Isaiah 44:21 as well as Isaiah 5:29/Micah 5:8-15) He began with...*

3 Nephi 21:23-26 (3 Nephi 6:11 / 3 Nephi 20:29 / 3 Nephi 21:4)—“The covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with his people, O house of Israel.” **Isaiah 44:21**

3 Nephi 21:12 (3 Nephi 16:15 / 3 Nephi 20:16)—“My people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles...as a lion” **Isaiah 5:29/Micah 5:8-15**

3 Nephi 21:17—“Thy graven images I will also cut off...no more worship the works of thy hands” **Isaiah 41:24-29**

3 Nephi 21:21—"I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even upon the heathen, such as they have not heard." **Isaiah 34:8/Isaiah 61:2**

****He now Reviews, Summarizes, & Emphasizes His point! This summary in and of itself is amazing!***

3 Nephi 21:22-26—"If they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance; and they (Americas) shall assist my people (see 3 Nephi 16:8-15 where this all began), the remnant of Jacob and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem (see 3 Nephi 20:21-22,39). And then shall they assist my people (see 3 Nephi 21:6) that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven (see 3 Nephi 20:22) come down among them; and I also will be in the midst (**Isaiah 2:2/Isaiah 59:20-21**). And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, (see 3 Nephi 20:29-34) even when this Gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people (see 3 Nephi 21:6-7). Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem. Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, they they may call on the Father in my name. Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance. And they shall go out from all nations; and 'they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward (**Isaiah 52:11-12**). *NOTE: Then He quotes **the entire chapter of Isaiah 54** (3 Nephi 22) which **verse 1** was quoted in His stream of Isaiah references in 3 Nephi 20:32-46.*

AND THEN THIS PLEA FOR US TO STUDY ISAIAH...

3 Nephi 23:1-6 "And now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to *search these things (specifically 3 Nephi 16, 20-22)*. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye *search these things diligently*; for great are the words of Isaiah. For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel; therefore it must needs be that he must speak also to the Gentiles (**Isaiah 49:6**). And *all things that he spake have been and shall be*, even according to the words which he spake. Therefore give heed to my words; write the things which I have told you; and according to the time and the will of the Father they shall go forth unto the Gentiles (BofM). And whosoever will hearken unto my words and repenteth and is baptized, the same shall be saved. Search the prophets, for many there be that testify of these things. And now it came to pass that when Jesus had said these words he said unto them again, after He had expounded all the scriptures unto them which they had received, He said unto them: Behold, other scriptures I would that ye should write, that ye have not..."

*He then gave them **Malachi 3 and 4** which relate specifically to the 2nd Coming (3 Nephi 24 and 25)*

A Message to Judah from Joseph

By President Ezra Taft Benson

Of the Council of the Twelve

An address to Mormons, Non-Mormons, and Jews at the Jubilee Auditorium, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, May 2, 1976

My brethren and sisters—I use that as an inclusive greeting to all assembled, for it is a part of my faith that we are all children of one Father. To our Jewish friends I say, “*Shalom Haverim*,” which is to say, “Good evening, brothers.” It is a privilege and honor to be with you tonight.

Cherished Associations with Jewish People

Among some of my most cherished experiences and recollections are the fond association I have enjoyed in past years with the Jewish people in the United States and the land of Israel. I have visited Israel three times. I have met hundreds of government officials, farmers, business and trade people, and leaders in professions. No visits have been more impressive than the visits with David Ben-Gurion, Levi Eshkol, and Moshe Dayan. During a luncheon given in my honor, chaired by Mr. Eshkol in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, Mr. Ben-Gurion sent a handwritten note to me from the hospital, asking would I call on him if my time permitted. This I did. He was sitting in a rocker with one leg elevated as I walked into his hospital room. You may recall that some crank threw a bomb into Parliament and his ankle was injured. As we greeted each other, he said, “Would you mind if the press came in while we visit? They’ve been trying to see me, but I haven’t seen anyone except my wife and the nurse.” I told him I would have no objection. The press came in, and then he began talking to me and asking questions. He wanted to know what the attitude of the Mormons was toward the Jews. We had a most interesting conversation. On my second visit to Palestine, I toured the entire country by small plane, helicopter, and automobile, and was shown every possible courtesy and consideration. I had a further meeting with Ben-Gurion and Levi Eshkol, and then met with General Moshe Dayan, the man who had led their forces against the Egyptians. Dayan, former minister of agriculture, gave a buffet dinner in my honor, served on the patio and lawn at his home. As we walked around the lawn, he told of the campaign they had against the Egyptians. He said in substance, “I’m not what people would call a spiritual man, but no one will ever convince me that there wasn’t a higher power with us as we met the Egyptians down on the Sinai.” I could not help but be reminded of Zechariah’s great prophecy: “Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place. . . . ‘In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God.’” ([Zech. 12:6, 8.](#)) My next visit was while serving my church as a General Authority over Europe in 1964. We had two congregations at Beirut, Lebanon. I was visiting those branches and wrote in advance to Mr. Eshkol, who had become prime minister when Ben-Gurion had retired. I indicated that I would like to come to Jerusalem again, and if his time permitted I would be happy to call and pay my respects. He wrote back immediately urging me to come and sent me a handwritten note from Ben-Gurion, asking that I set aside one night that my wife and I might spend an evening with them. We had two visits with these men at that time. We spent an evening with Ben-Gurion and his wife in their apartment in Tel Aviv. Most of the time was spent in the library, where there were books from the floor to the ceiling on three walls. During the evening he said, “I want you to pray to God that he’ll spare me for a few more years. I’m writing a history of the Jewish people, and it will take time to finish it.” As we were leaving at the door that evening, he said, “You know, there are no people in this world who understand the Jews like the Mormons.”

We Have Cosuffered with the Jews

Yes, there is a great affinity for the Jews by the Mormons. The Jews have endured great persecution and suffering. This we understand, for our people have also undergone severe persecution and extermination. Indeed, the man we revere as a modern prophet, Joseph Smith, was martyred for his testimony in 1844. In 1846 our people had to exodus from the United States because of the threat of annihilation. We settled in a desert region similar to the topography around the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. There we have developed our “land of promise.” Yes, we can empathize with the suffering of the Jews, for we have cosuffered with them. But our affinity toward modern Judah is not prompted merely out of mutual suffering; it is prompted out of a knowledge of our peculiar relationships together—relationships which claim a common heritage. Jeremiah has prophesied that in the latter times “the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together.” ([Jer. 3:18](#).) My prayer is that because of evenings spent together like this one, this prophecy will come to be fulfilled. We need to know more about the Jews, and the Jews ought to know more about the Mormons. When we understand one another, then perhaps you will understand *why* Ben-Gurion said, “There are no people in the world who understand the Jews like the Mormons.”

Kindred Doctrines of the Mormons and the Jews

Among the kindred doctrines of the Mormons and the Jews is our mutual belief in Jehovah, a God of revelation. We share a common belief in the Messiah who will come. We further hold reciprocal beliefs in prophets. We hold a common commitment to the return of the Jews to the “land of Jerusalem,” in fulfillment of the words of the ancient prophets. There are many other doctrinal and social similarities.

Foundation of the Church Known as “the Mormons”

The foundation of the Church, which is sometimes referred to by nonmembers as the “Mormon” Church, is a belief in revelation—modern revelation by God of his purposes and directions to living prophets. We believe as Amos declared: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” ([Amos 3:7](#).) We declare that secrets long since hidden through the ages have been revealed again through a prophet by the revelation of “a new and everlasting covenant” to Israel. That prophet’s name was Joseph Smith. These are the words of his own testimony: “On the evening [of] the 21st of September, A.D. 1823, while I was praying unto God, and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room, indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire; the appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body; in a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that with which I was already surrounded. This messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled. . . . I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation.” (*History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:536–37.)

The Mormons’ Interest in the Jews

From the very inception of this latter-day work, which claims to be a restoration of the covenants given by God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, this church has had a deep interest in the remnant of the house of Israel, the descendants of Judah. In 1836, the Mormons completed their first temple at Kirtland, Ohio. In the dedicatory prayer which was offered on that occasion, Joseph Smith petitioned the “Lord God of Israel”: “O Lord . . . thou knowest that thou hast a great love for the children of Jacob, who have been

scattered upon the mountains for a long time. ...“We therefore ask thee to have mercy upon the children of Jacob, that Jerusalem, from this hour, may begin to be redeemed; “And the yoke of bondage may begin to be broken off from the house of David; “And the children of Judah may begin to return to the lands which thou didst give to Abraham, their father.” (D&C 109:60–64.) This was said during the Passover season, March 27, 1836.

The Orson Hyde Expedition to Israel

Before Joseph Smith was killed, he dispatched a Jewish apostle by the name of Orson Hyde to dedicate the land of Palestine for the return of the Jews. This concern for a homeless people and the sending of this apostle was done at a time when the Mormons themselves were virtually homeless, having been dispossessed of their lands and possessions in Missouri. Orson Hyde left on his assignment in the fall of 1840. He arrived in Palestine in October 1841. On October 24, 1841, he ascended the Mount of Olives all alone, built an altar to the Lord, and offered a dedicatory prayer. Here are some portions of that prayer: “Thy servant ... has safely arrived in this place *to dedicate and consecrate this land unto Thee, for the gathering together of Judah’s scattered remnants, according to the predictions of the holy Prophets—for the building up of Jerusalem* again after it has been trodden down by the Gentiles so long, and for *rearing a Temple* in honor of Thy name. ... “O Thou, Who didst covenant with Abraham, Thy friend, and Who didst renew that covenant with Isaac, and confirm the same with Jacob with an oath, that Thou wouldst not only give them this land for an everlasting inheritance, but that Thou wouldst also remember their seed forever. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have long since closed their eyes in death, and made the grave their mansion. Their children are scattered and dispersed abroad among the nations of the Gentiles like sheep that have no shepherd, and are still looking forward for the fulfillment of those promises which Thou didst make concerning them. ...“Let the land become abundantly fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs; let it again flow with plenty to feed the returning prodigals. ... *Incline them to gather in upon this land according to Thy word. Let them come like clouds and like doves to their windows.* [This was uttered before the airplane was invented.] *Let the large ships of the nations bring them* from the distant isles; and let kings become their nursing fathers, and queens with motherly fondness wipe the tear of sorrow from their eye. ... “Let them know that it is Thy good pleasure to restore the kingdom unto Israel—raise up Jerusalem as its capital, 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, 4:456–57; italics added.) This was said at a time when Jewish immigration was but a trickle. Today the gathering has been realized in part with over three million Jews back in the land of their fathers. On at least two separate occasions, leaders of the nation of Israel have requested that I relate to them the story of Orson Hyde. The first occasion was at the luncheon to which I alluded previously. Mr. Eshkol asked me to tell the luncheon audience about Orson Hyde and his visit to Palestine. I replied, “Do you mean that?” He said that he did. So I related that account to them. Another occasion was my last visit with David Ben-Gurion. He requested, “I would like you to send me all the information you have about Orson Hyde and his visit to Palestine in 1841. I would like to include it in my history.” We subsequently sent that information to him.

The Mormon Interest in the Jews Is Based on Kinship

Historically, we must recognize that this interest in the restoration of the Jews to their homeland is older than modern Zionism and the great work of Theodor Herzl and others. There were a number of Christian sects in the nineteenth century which held millennial views and saw the return of the Jews to their homeland as a “sign of the times” which would precede the second advent of Jesus Christ. The Mormon interest was and is more than this. Our concern and interest is a kinship to our Jewish brothers. Our

common heritage goes back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God reiterated to Jacob the same promises which were given to Abraham, and then gave Jacob the new name of Israel. His posterity—*all those* who descended through his twelve sons—were known by this designation. They were variously referred to as the “house of Israel,” “children of Israel,” or “tribes of Israel.” I emphasize that *all of his posterity* received the family name designation through the twelve sons. Today it has become common practice to identify only one of his twelve sons, Judah, with the family designation “Israelite” because they have maintained their separate identity.

Israel’s Blessing to Joseph

As you carefully read the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, you will find that Jacob, or Israel, pronounced blessings on *all* his twelve sons. Each was given a peculiar and distinctive blessing. Time will only permit a consideration of the blessings to two of these sons, whose blessings were preeminent above the blessings of the others. I refer to the blessings pronounced on Judah and Joseph. May I read first the blessing pronounced on Joseph: “Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: “The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:

“But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:) “Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: “The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.” ([Gen. 49:22–26](#).) There are several points which we should note carefully about this blessing: 1. Joseph’s posterity would be numerous; that is, he would be a “fruitful bough.” 2. His posterity or “branches” would “run over the wall.” 3. His descendants would be sorely persecuted, which is the meaning of the phraseology “the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.” 4. The blessings on Joseph’s posterity were to prevail “above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.” Later I shall comment on the interpretation of this blessing as it affects the relationships of the present-day Mormons and Jews; but first it will be instructive to review the history of the descendants of Israel after they came into the land promised to Abraham as “the land of Canaan ... an everlasting possession.” ([Gen. 17:8](#).)

The Scattering of Israel

For a time the confederated tribes were a united monarchy under Saul, David, and Solomon, but ultimately they divided into two major kingdoms. The kingdom to the north—which comprised 10 1/2 tribes, including the descendants of Joseph—retained the designation *Israel*. The kingdom to the south—made up primarily of the tribe of Judah—adopted the name of *Judah*. (See [1 Kgs. 11:31–32](#); [1 Kgs. 12:19–24](#).) Prophets were raised up among these two nations to call them to repentance because of their idolatry and wickedness. The prophet Amos predicted the results of this disobedience to God. “Now shall they [Israel] go captive with the first that go captive.” ([Amos 6:7](#).) “I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.” ([Amos 9:9](#).)

The northern kingdom, Israel, was subsequently taken into captivity by the Assyrians 721 years B.C.E., or Before Common Era. The Old Testament contains no history of Israel, nor of Joseph’s descendants after this date. Are we to believe that God’s promises to Joseph were for naught, that the prophecy of his posterity being numerous, “running over the wall,” being sorely persecuted, and going to the “utmost bound of the everlasting hills” would not be fulfilled?

Separate Records to Be Kept

Because of the division which occurred between the two kingdoms, the Lord made special provision that separate records were kept. The prophet Ezekiel spoke of these records in these words: “The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, “Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: “And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. “And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? “Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. “And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.” (Ezek. 37:15–20.) From this commandment from God to the prophet Ezekiel, these provisions should be noted: 1. That a stick or record was to be kept for Judah, and that a stick or record was to be kept for Joseph; 2. That the two records were to be joined together into “one stick,” or record, in the hands of that prophet. Where is the fulfillment of this important commandment? Who claims to have the record of Joseph today?

The Book of Mormon Fulfills Joseph’s Prophecy

The record of Joseph has been brought forth in this day to Joseph Smith by a messenger sent from God. That record is called the Book of Mormon, named after one of the seed of Joseph who abridged the records of his people. The record tells the account of a colony of Israelites, descended from Joseph, who left Jerusalem before its great destruction during the Babylonian siege under King Nebuchadnezzar. It tells how these descendants of Joseph came “over the wall”—a metaphoric expression which denoted a barrier to them. That barrier was the great ocean between the continents of Asia and the Americas. This record tells how they were guided by the hand of the Lord to the land of America, a land of promise to Joseph and his descendants, a land “of everlasting hills.” It tells how Joseph’s posterity became very numerous upon the land until they filled it with a mighty nation. All this was in fulfillment of Joseph’s blessing! The Book of Mormon further records the destruction of this mighty civilization because of their departure from the commandments of the God of Israel. The records of these people lay buried in the earth for centuries. Then in 1827, a heavenly messenger turned them over to Joseph Smith. They were subsequently translated from their ancient reformed Egyptian writing into the English language and were published to the world in the year 1830. The Judean prophet Ezekiel had declared that these records were to be “one in thine hand.” I witness before you the fulfillment of that prophecy—the record of Judah in one hand, the record of Joseph in the other—one in our hands today.

Judah’s Scattering and Persecution

But what about the prophecies that pertain to the house of Judah? The northern tribes of Israel were not the only ones to be dispersed according to prophecy. Judah, the southern kingdom, was also to be scattered: “And the Lord said, I will remove Judah *also* out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.” (2 Kgs. 23:27; italics added.) The history of the scattering of the nation Judah is so well known as to be regarded proverbial. Under the seizure of Babylon, the nation was taken into exile. A remnant returned to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple after the Persians came into power. Since that time, except for a short period of independence under the Maccabees, Judah has been under the yoke of foreign domination: the Macedonian Empire; the tripartite government rule by Egypt, Syria, and Macedonia; Syrian domination;

then the Roman rule, and a final dispersion among all nations. Time will not permit extensive comment about the depth of the suffering and their persecution among many nations. Some of the most evil of those deeds were perpetrated upon the remaining Jews in Palestine in the name of Christianity during the Crusades. Will Durrant has correctly written of this sad chapter of human suffering, “No other people has ever known so long an exile, or so hard a fate.” I remember standing on the ruins of what was the largest Jewish ghetto in Europe in the Jewish section of Warsaw, Poland, in August 1946. There we were given a description of what had transpired as being somewhat typical of that which had gone on in various parts of Europe through the establishment of the medieval ghetto. Here 250,000 descendants of Judah had lived prior to the war. Under the Nazi rule, through forced labor, Jews were required to build a wall around the ghetto. Later some 150,000 Jews from other parts of Europe were brought into that area. The Germans first tried to starve them out, but when that did not work, they transported over 310,000 Jews to the extermination camps. When Himmler found that there were still some 60,000 Jews alive in the ghetto, he ordered their “resettlement.” When they forcibly resisted, the German S. S. General Stroop ordered the tanks, artillery, flamethrowers, and dynamite squads on the ghetto. The extermination which was to have taken three days lasted four weeks. The final report by the general read, “Total number of Jews dealt with: 56,065, including both Jews caught and Jews whose extermination can be proved.” This report left 36,000 Jews unaccounted for which were no doubt claimed by the gas chambers. (William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publishers, 1965, p. 1272.) As we stood on the crumbled brick and mortar and the rubble some fifteen feet deep, with only the spire of one burned synagogue showing—no other building in that vast area—we were told that thousands of bodies still remained under the rubble of those once great buildings in this section of Warsaw. I have visited some of the concentration camps, the mass graves, and the crematoriums where, it is estimated, six million of the sons and daughters of Judah lost their lives, reducing their world population from seventeen to eleven million. I have been impressed to tears as I visited some of these wanderers, those persecuted and driven sons of our Heavenly Father, my brethren of Judah. Yes, the prophecies regarding the dispersion and suffering of Judah have been fulfilled. But the gathering and reestablishment of the Jews was also clearly predicted.

Prophecies Concerning the Gathering of Israel and the Jews

This predicted gathering has three phases: the gathering of Israel to the land of Zion, the American hemisphere; the return of the Ten Tribes from the north countries; and the reestablishment of the Jews in Palestine which had been long ago predicted by the prophets in these words: “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, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and *gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*” (Isa. 11:11–12; italics added.) “For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel *and* Judah, . . . and I will cause *them* [plural] *to return* to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.” (Jer. 30:3; italics added.) “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.” (Jer. 31:31.) And hear the words of Zechariah: “I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them. . . . “I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them.” (Zech. 10:6, 8.) I have witnessed this spirit work upon the Jews. In 1946, I was impressed as we interviewed many to find how determined they were to return to Palestine. As they would come to the relief agencies and the displaced-person camps to get temporary help, we would ask them why they did not settle nearby, and often would invite them to stay. But most had but one desire—to return to the land of their fathers. The Book of Mormon is no less explicit in its prophecy concerning Israel’s and Judah’s gathering from a long dispersion: “And it shall

come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion, from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; and the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance. “Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers.” (2 Ne. 10:8–9.) I saw the fulfillment of this prophecy with my own eyes in war-torn Europe in 1946 when ships of Great Britain smuggled the Jews to Palestine in response to the powerful spirit of gathering. The Mormon people understand this spirit. Here is a further prophecy from the Book of Mormon regarding the scattering and the restoration of Judah: “Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations. “And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations for the space of many generations ... “And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men.” (2 Ne. 25:15–17.) Since 1948, the people of the world have witnessed a marvelous drama taking place before their eyes; and yet it is a miracle that has gone rather unnoticed and unappreciated. One of the greatest events in history is the literal gathering of the Jews to their homeland from “the four corners of the earth.” It is, as Isaiah prophesied, “a marvelous work and a wonder.” (See Isa. 29:14.) In 1950, I said, “There has been much confusion over the Palestine question—much talk of division of the land, of quotas, import restrictions—but out of it all I cannot help feeling that we will see a complete fulfillment of the prophecies which have been made regarding this people. These prophecies are in rapid course of fulfillment before our very eyes today.” (*Conference Reports*, April 1950, p. 77.) Since that time, the nation of Israel has fought three wars, regained Jerusalem and the western wall (Wailing Wall), and added the Golan Heights and much of the Sinai Peninsula to its territory.

The Blessing of Israel Pronounced on Judah

We previously considered the blessing that Jacob, or Israel, pronounced on Joseph. Let us now consider the blessing pronounced on Judah: “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? “*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* “Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: “His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.” (Gen. 49:8–12.) The great blessing to Judah is that it contemplated the coming of Shiloh who would gather his people to him. This prophecy concerning Shiloh has been subject to several rabbinic and Christian interpretations and the object of considerable controversy. The interpretation given this passage by the Mormon Church is one based on revelation to modern prophets, not on scholarly commentary. It was revealed to Joseph Smith that Shiloh is the Messiah. (See *JST*, Gen. 50:24.) President Wilford Woodruff, the apostle who became the fourth President of the Church I represent, said this to the Jews in the year 1879: “And this is the will of your great Elohim, O house of Judah, and whenever you shall be called upon to perform this work, the God of Israel will help you. You have a great future and destiny before you and you cannot avoid fulfilling it; you are the royal chosen seed, and the God of your father’s house has kept you distinct as a nation for eighteen hundred years, under all the oppression of the whole Gentile world. You may not wait until you believe on Jesus of Nazareth, but when you meet with *Shiloh* your king, you will know him; your destiny is marked out, you cannot avoid it. It is true that after you return and gather your nation home, and rebuild your City and Temple, that the Gentiles may gather together their armies to go against you to battle ... ; but when this affliction comes, the living God, that led Moses through the wilderness, will deliver you,

and *your Shiloh will come* and stand in your midst and will fight your battles; and you will know him, and the afflictions of the Jews will be at an end, while the destruction of the Gentiles will be so great that it will take the whole house of Israel who are gathered about Jerusalem, seven months to bury the dead of their enemies, and the weapons of war will last them seven years for fuel, so that they need not go to any forest for wood. These are tremendous sayings—who can bear them? Nevertheless they are true, and will be fulfilled, according to the sayings of Ezekiel, Zechariah, and other prophets. Though the heavens and the earth pass away, not one jot or tittle will fall unfulfilled.” (Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff*, Bookcraft, 1964, pp. 509–10; italics added.) The Book of Mormon, which was also written to the Jew, testifies *who* the Shiloh is, “for there is save one Messiah spoken of by the prophets.” (2 Ne. 25:18.) “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.” (Gen. 49:10.) We see the fulfillment of the Shiloh prophecy this way: Judah came to power when David was exalted to the throne. Even after the division of the northern and southern kingdoms, the kings of Judah sat on the throne. Following the Babylonian captivity, “lawgivers” were provided to the Jewish remnant who returned to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah are examples. Subsequently, the Sanhedrin was established, and it continued as the ruling body of the Jews until the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jews. From that time, the Jews had no lawgiver to whom they could turn. Shiloh had come. He was Jesus of Nazareth, who was later crucified as “King of the Jews.” Christian history has emphasized the point that the Jews as a nation rejected their Messiah. Overlooked has been the fact that many Jews did believe him to be the Messiah. Among those Jews who did so were his twelve apostles and thousands of other Jews who were converted by their ministry. We declare that after his ministry in Palestine, the resurrected Messiah personally visited the house of Joseph in this land of America, taught them, blessed them, and renewed the everlasting covenant with them. His ministry to America is recorded in the Book of Mormon.

The Story of Joseph Revisited

You will recall the episode of Joseph and his brethren in the Old Testament, and how he was sold into Egypt. You will remember that, because of a famine in the land of Canaan, his brethren were compelled to go to Egypt to purchase corn from the granaries. Joseph had risen to the position of governor over the land, and was in charge of those granaries. One of the most touching scenes recorded in the Torah is when Joseph made himself known to his brethren: “I am Joseph your brother ...” (Gen. 45:4.) To you, our friends of modern Judah, we declare, “We are Joseph, your brothers.” We claim kinship with you as descendants from our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We belong to the same family. We, too, are the house of Israel. There is yet another parallel to this story of Joseph.

The brethren of Joseph in times past came to him during a famine for physical sustenance. Today there is another famine in the land, “not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.” (Amos 8:11.) Has not the Lord God said through Isaiah, “Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. ...

“[I will] satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” (Isa. 55:1; Isa. 58:11.) We are also cognizant of God’s charge to Judah through his prophet Jeremiah: “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” (Jer. 2:13.) Of far greater value than the physical sustenance that Joseph of old provided his brethren is the sustenance that modern Joseph has to offer modern Judah today. We offer freely bread to eat and water to drink. I repeat, our interest in Judah is one of kinship, for we are your brothers. We come with a message and say, “We have ‘living water’ from its true source and well, which, if a man will drink

it, ‘shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life.’” (D&C 63:23.) In Jacob’s blessing to Judah, he declared: “Judah is . . . as an old lion; *who shall rouse him up?*” (Gen. 49:9; italics added.) We come as messengers bearing the legitimate authority to arouse Judah to her promises. We do not ask Judah to forsake her heritage. We are not asking her to leave father, mother, or family. We bring a message that Judah does not possess. That message constitutes “living water” from the Fountain of living water. Our prophet, Joseph Smith, was given a commandment by the Lord to turn “the hearts of the Jews unto the prophets, and the prophets unto the Jews.” (D&C 98:17.) We are presently sending our messengers to every land and people whose ideology permits us entrance. We have been gathering Joseph’s descendants for 146 years. We hope you, who are of Judah, will not think it an intrusion for us to present our message to you. You are welcome to come to our meetings. We display no crosses. We collect no offerings. We honor your commitment to your unique heritage and your individuality. We approach you in a different way than any other Christian church because we represent the restored covenant to the entire house of Israel. Yes, we understand the Jews, as David Ben-Gurion said. We understand them because we belong to the same house of Israel. We are your brothers—Joseph. We look forward to the day of fulfillment of God’s promise when “the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel.” (Jer. 3:18.)

A Blessing on Judah

As one who, by special assignment, has been given authority in the house of Israel today, I ask the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to bless my brethren of Judah and have mercy on them; that the land to which Judah has returned after a long night of dispersion shall be fruitful, prosperous, and become the envy to her neighbors; that the nation Israel shall be delivered from all her oppressors and enemies; that Judah will “draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. 12:3) and fulfill all those prophecies that God declared through his prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, even that prophecy through Zechariah that “the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again” (Zech. 2:12). I witness to you, my brothers and sisters of all the house of Israel, that I know that the God of heaven presides over the destinies of all his children. I witness that he has set his hand *a second time* to recover his people from the four corners of the earth to the lands of their inheritance. I testify that *he* has restored his new covenant with Israel. I know the Book of Mormon is a truthful account of God’s dealings with the house of Joseph, that its testimony is true, and that it is the word of the Lord to the Gentiles, Jews, and all the house of Israel. I further witness that Joseph Smith was what he represented himself to be, a prophet of the living God and a messenger of the new covenant to Israel. I would urge all to give heed to the message given by God through him.

Perhaps now, our friends of Judah, you will appreciate the sincerity of our declaration to you, “*Shalom Haverim.*” I pray God’s blessings upon us all. In the name of Jesus Christ—the Messiah. Amen.

The Abrahamic Covenant

Promises	Explanatory Notes
<p data-bbox="215 401 280 426">Land</p> <p data-bbox="215 1682 532 1881">“A strange land ... I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession” (Abraham 2:6; see also Genesis 12:7; 13:14–15; JST, Genesis 15:9–12; Genesis 15:18; 17:8).</p>	<p data-bbox="597 495 1182 926">This blessing specifically refers to the land “from the river of Egypt [not the Nile, but a river that separates Egypt from Israel] unto ... the river Euphrates” (Genesis 15:18), which actually goes beyond the boundaries of what we usually call Canaan (or Israel, or Palestine). Since the time of Abraham, some or all of that extended area has been inhabited by Abraham’s posterity through Ishmael, Isaac, and the sons of Keturah. When the Lord renewed the covenant with Abraham’s grandson Jacob, he indicated that the children of Israel would have the land of Canaan as an inheritance but would also spread “to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south” (Genesis 28:14).</p> <p data-bbox="597 930 1182 1707">For example, the posterity of Jacob’s (Israel’s) son Joseph were promised a special land beyond Canaan where they would “push the people together to the ends of the earth” (Deuteronomy 33:17; see verses 13–17; see also Genesis 49:22–26). This prophecy refers to the Western Hemisphere, where the people of the Book of Mormon—who were descendants of Joseph—settled and where the gospel was restored in the latter days to those of the tribe of Ephraim who were mixed among the Gentiles. (Ephraim was Joseph’s birthright son; Brigham Young said that “Joseph Smith was a pure Ephraimite” [<i>Discourses of Brigham Young</i>, 322].) Furthermore, Joseph Smith taught that “the whole America is the Zion itself—from north to south” (“Discourse, 8 April 1844, in <i>William Clayton Diary</i>,” quoted in <i>The Words of Joseph Smith</i>, comp. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook [1980], 362; punctuation and spelling standardized), where it is prophesied that others of the lost tribes gather to receive their blessings of the Abrahamic covenant “by the hands of ... the children of Ephraim” (D&C 133:32; see verses 26–34). The Lord even designated a place in North America for the city of Zion (see D&C 57:1–3), the place of the New Jerusalem (see D&C 84:2–5).</p> <p data-bbox="597 1711 1182 1822">All of the tribes, or families, of Israel will yet receive inheritances in the land of Canaan, but the land has been noted especially as a gathering place for the tribe of Judah (see D&C 109:62–64).</p> <p data-bbox="597 1827 1182 1881">Ultimately, this promise of an “everlasting” inheritance of land is fulfilled when the righteous</p>

Promises	Explanatory Notes
Land	
	inherit the earth in its glorified state (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12 [in the Bible appendix]; D&C 45:57–59 ; 63:20 ; 88:17–20).

Priesthood and Gospel Blessings

<p>“I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the Priesthood” (Abraham 1:18).</p>	<p>As he desired (see Abraham 1:2–4), Abraham received the priesthood, which is the authority to act in the name of God. He received the priesthood from Melchizedek (see D&C 84:14).</p>
<p>“Through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever” (Abraham 1:19; see also Abraham 2:9).</p>	<p>In addition to preaching the gospel as the Lord’s representatives, this blessing is fulfilled when priesthood bearers administer ordinances, such as baptism, the sacrament, or temple ordinances, that make known the name of the Lord by requiring individuals to take upon them that name (see D&C 20:37, 77; 109:22, 26).</p>
<p>“I will ... make thy name great among all nations” (Abraham 2:9; see also Genesis 12:2).</p>	<p>We know that there is “no other name given ... whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ” (Mosiah 3:17). Because Abraham’s posterity have Christ’s name put upon them and the people of the world know his name because of them (see Abraham 1:18–19), the name of Abraham becomes “great,” or very important and prominent, to all in the whole world who seek eternal life. In other words, Abraham’s name is</p>

Priesthood and Gospel Blessings

	<p>great because he presides over his posterity who administer the blessings of eternal life to all the world. These blessings are called the “dispensation of the gospel of Abraham” (D&C 110:12) and were restored by Elias on April 3, 1836, in the Kirtland temple. Because these keys were restored, all mankind has access to the blessings of exaltation for themselves and their posterity.</p>
<p>“I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee” (Abraham 2:11; see also Genesis 12:3).</p>	<p>This is a promised blessing for those who bear the priesthood and are righteously representing the Savior.</p>
<p>“This right [of the priesthood] shall continue in thee, and in thy seed” (Abraham 2:11).</p>	<p>See “Posterity,” number 5, in this chart.</p>

Posterity

<p>“I will make of thee a great nation” (Abraham 2:9).</p>	<p>In this case, <i>great</i> seems to mean “mighty” or “prominent” and refers to the quality of life the Lord gives to his people (or “nation”) by allowing them to have the gospel and live its principles. The gospel makes all people “great” who live it. Abraham’s seed are also</p>
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Posterity

	<p>prominent because they bear the authority to perform saving ordinances and bind families together for eternity (see “Priesthood and Gospel Blessings,” no. 3; “Posterity,” no. 5; and “Salvation and Eternal Life,” no. 1, in this chart).</p>
<p>“Thou shalt be a father of many nations” (Genesis 17:4; see also Genesis 17:5–6, 16).</p>	<p><i>Abraham</i> means “father of a multitude” or “father of nations.” Abraham has become the “father of nations” through the posterity of Isaac (Israel), Ishmael (see Genesis 17:20), and the sons of Keturah (see Genesis 25:1–4) and through the house of Israel being scattered and becoming numerous in all the nations of the earth (see Amos 9:9; 1 Nephi 22:3–5).</p>
<p>3. “I will multiply thee, and thy seed after thee, ... and if thou canst count the number of sands, so shall be the number of thy seeds” (Abraham 3:14).</p>	<p>This promise refers to Abraham’s mortal posterity (see no. 2 above) and to the opportunity through eternal or celestial marriage to continue to have posterity throughout eternity (see D&C 132:30; see also “Salvation and Eternal Life,” no. 2, in this chart).</p>
<p>“Kings shall come out of thee” (Genesis 17:6; see also Genesis 17:16).</p>	<p>The kings of Israel and Judah were all descendants of Abraham, as were many other non-Biblical kings who descended from Ishmael, the sons of Keturah, and remnants of the lost tribes of Israel living in the lands of the Gentiles. The most important descendant of Abraham was the King of kings, Jesus Christ, who came through the royal lineage of Judah (see Matthew 1:1). In addition, those who receive the Abrahamic covenant</p>

Posterity

	<p>and are faithful to it are promised they will become kings and priests (or queens and priestesses) unto God (see Revelation 1:6; D&C 76:56).</p>
<p>“Thy seed ... shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations; ...</p> <p>“... This right [of the priesthood] shall continue in thee, and in thy seed” (Abraham 2:9, 11; see also Genesis 17:7, 19; Abraham 1:4).</p>	<p>Bearing the priesthood is both a blessing and a responsibility. Abraham’s descendants are “lawful heirs” of the priesthood and its blessings (see D&C 86:8–9), meaning they have a right to it. They must, however, prove worthy of the blessings (see Alma 13:4).</p> <p>Those who were foreordained to the priesthood (see Alma 13:3; Abraham 3:23) are sent to the earth in times and places where they can fulfill their foreordained callings and administer the ordinances of salvation to all nations. This blessing not only refers to the right to <i>hold the priesthood</i>, but also the right to <i>receive saving priesthood ordinances</i>, so it applies to both male and female descendants of Abraham.</p>
<p>“As many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father” (Abraham 2:10; see also Isaiah 51:1–2).</p>	<p>Before Abraham, the saving ordinances of the gospel were administered through fathers, in a patriarchal order (see D&C 107:40–56). Abraham’s father apostatized and did not have authority to administer these ordinances to Abraham as Abraham desired (see Abraham 1:2–5). Because of Abraham’s great desire, faith, and obedience, he received the blessings of the priesthood from those who had authority to give them as well as the right to administer them to his posterity. This opened a new</p>

Posterity

dispensation of the gospel—with Abraham set up as the “father”—wherein all who desired these same blessings for themselves and their posterity could receive them in the way Abraham did. Because Abraham received the promise that his posterity would have the right to the priesthood from his day until the end of the world, all who desire the blessings of the saving priesthood ordinances receive them at the hand of Abraham and his descendants. In this way, regardless of whether the blood of Abraham literally flows in their veins, all who accept the gospel become the children of Abraham. We should note that the Prophet Joseph Smith said that “the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile is to purge out the old blood and make him actually of the seed of Abraham” (“Discourse, between circa 26 June and circa 2 July 1839, as Reported by Willard Richards,” 18–19, josephsmithpapers.org; capitalization standardized), so all who are baptized and receive the Holy Ghost are actually sons and daughters of Abraham. Furthermore, Christ was a descendant of Abraham and is the one who made possible the fulfillment of all the blessings promised to Abraham (see [Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12 \[in the Bible appendix\]](#)). When individuals receive the gospel and are born again, they become sons and daughters of Christ (see [Mosiah 5:7](#)) and, consequently, his heirs. Christ was the first to fully obtain all of the blessings promised to

Posterity

	<p>Abraham. Only by first becoming sons and daughters of Christ may we qualify as heirs of all that the Father has (see D&C 84:38), which is what was promised to Abraham and his seed (see Galatians 3:27–29; see also “Salvation and Eternal Life,” no. 3, in this chart). Taking upon oneself the name of Christ is the most important way to be a son or daughter of Abraham. If an individual is of the literal posterity of Abraham but never accepts the gospel of Christ, he or she becomes disinherited with regards to the covenant and its blessings (see 2 Nephi 30:2). This is why the Book of Mormon emphasizes that the children of Abraham must not only come to know who they are as a people, but they must be gathered to Christ and restored to their covenant relationship with him (see 2 Nephi 30:4–5).</p>
<p>“He [Abraham] will command his children ... and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment” (Genesis 18:19).</p>	<p>From the beginning of his record, Abraham expressed a desire to not only receive the blessings of the gospel in this life and eternal life in the world to come but to administer these blessings to his posterity (see Abraham 1:2–4). Those who claim Abraham as their father will “do the works of Abraham” (John 8:39), which include bringing up children “in light and truth” (D&C 93:40).</p>

Salvation and Eternal Life

<p>“In thy seed after thee ... shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Abraham 2:11; see also Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18).</p>	<p>The families of the earth are blessed through Abraham because his posterity gives them the blessings of the gospel, which bring “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).</p> <p>Families are even more specifically blessed through the Abrahamic covenant because the crowning blessing of this covenant is eternal marriage (see “Posterity,” no. 3, in this chart). Through this sacred ordinance, parents are bound to their posterity for eternity. In addition, because of keys restored by the prophet Elijah (see D&C 110:13–16), the posterity of Abraham may also perform ordinances in temples for their deceased ancestors and others. Through these priesthood ordinances performed by the seed of Abraham, which include celestial marriage for the living and the dead, families can be eternally bound together. Those who do not accept these ordinances and covenants “remain separately and singly [meaning without marriage and family], without exaltation ... to all eternity” (D&C 132:17).</p> <p>Ultimately, the greatest way in which families of the earth are blessed through Abraham’s seed is through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, a son of Abraham in the flesh. Blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ come to <i>all</i> the families of the earth (see 1 Corinthians 15:21–22; Mormon 9:12–23).</p>
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Salvation and Eternal Life

<p>“I will bless thee above measure ...</p> <p>“... And in thy seed after thee ... shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abraham 2:9, 11; see also Genesis 12:2).</p>	<p>Through Jesus Christ it is possible to have all of the blessings of eternal life. Abraham knew of Christ, saw the work He performed, and believed in Him. This knowledge brought rest to his soul and faith to do all things required in mortality (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12 [in the Bible appendix]; Hebrews 11:8–19).</p> <p>The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that the crowning blessing Abraham received was that of celestial marriage, which qualified him for exaltation and enabled him to become like God (see D&C 131:1–4; 132:29–32, 37). Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote that when we are “married in the temple for time and for all eternity, each worthy member of the Church enters personally into the same covenant the Lord made with Abraham” (<i>A New Witness for the Articles of Faith</i>, 508).</p>
<p>“I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward” (Genesis 15:1).</p>	<p>The words <i>shield</i> and <i>reward</i> describe the blessings that come from our covenants with God in this life and for eternity. Through covenants the Lord shields, or protects, us from the power of the adversary that would prevent us from obtaining eternal life. Also through covenants the Lord gives us promises concerning our eternal reward and the power to obtain it. This reward “is the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7). If we recognize that the Lord has power to fulfill the promises He makes like He did with Abraham (see Genesis 15), we will put Him and His covenants above all other things in</p>

Salvation and Eternal Life

	<p>our lives and receive these promised blessings.</p>
<p>“Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies” (Genesis 22:17).</p>	<p>Because of the power of the gospel, priesthood ordinances, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all of Abraham’s seed (those who accept all of the ordinances and covenants of the Abrahamic covenant) “overcome all things,” because God subdues “all [their] enemies under his feet,” and they may “dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever” (D&C 76:60–62). The enemies God subdues include the devil, “who is an enemy to all righteousness” (Alma 34:23; see also Moroni 7:12).</p>