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12 REMNANTS GATHERED, COVENANTS FULFILLED

THE TITLE OF MY MESSAGE is “Remnants Gathered, Covenants Fulfilled.” It comes from the Book of Mormon. There the Lord speaks of fulfilling “the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people,” the house of Israel. “Then,” He continues, “shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them” (3 Nephi 20:12–13).

The gathering of those remnants and the fulfilling of that divine covenant are occurring in our day. Yet this big picture is obscure to the eye of many who focus upon bargains at supermarkets and rankings of favorite football teams. Let us examine our place in God’s plan for His children and for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are part of a destiny known by relatively few people upon the earth.¹

During the year 1997, attention across the world was attracted to the history of the Church. Its pioneers arrived at the valley of the Great Salt Lake 150 years ago. Replications of handcarts have been featured from Siberia to Swaziland, from Scandinavia and South America to the isles of the South Pacific. Through theater and stage, printed and electronic media, stories of early converts to the Church have been told.

Generally, writers of these accounts have done well in reporting what these pioneers did. But only a few have captured the reasons why.

Even fewer have understood that history in context of the voices of prophets of the Old Testament that link with the great latter-day work that is now being accomplished.

Connections with the New Testament would be no surprise to any who understand the deep commitment to Jesus Christ held by members of this Church that bears His holy name. Its stalwart pioneers opened the period of the Restoration of all things—the promised dispensation of the fulness of times—as prophesied by Peter and Paul (see Acts 3:21; Ephesians 1:10). Those apostolic records and other scriptures of the New Testament are an integral part of the legacy of the restored Church. Its name describes members as Latter-day Saints to distinguish them from those of the Church in the meridian of time. Members were then called *saints*, as they are now. Paul addressed an epistle “to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:1).² To recent converts of that time and place, Paul said, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19; see also 3:17–19).

In that epistle Paul used the word *saint* at least once in every chapter! The term *saint* does not connote beatification or perfection in this life. It simply describes each member of the Church as a believer in Jesus the Christ. It means that members are committed to love God and their neighbor. They are to sacrifice, to serve, and to build the Church as directed by its inspired leaders.

But the connection between the Church and the Old Testament is less apparent. This symposium, which focuses on the voices of the prophets in the Old Testament, is an opportune time to speak of the strong and significant links between ancient and modern Israel. I would like to limit my discussion to five major links that are of immense importance.

As I speak to this theme, you will doubtless think of additional connections. You will also recognize that much more could be said on each segment that I will discuss. That is good. You can explore these interrelationships later without the limitations of time and talent that press upon me now.

THE LINK OF JOSEPH

The first link I shall label as the link of Joseph. This link applies both to Joseph who was sold into Egypt and to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Few men in the Old Testament are of greater importance to Latter-day Saints than is Joseph of Egypt. Many Bible commentators have described him as a type, or shadow, for the Savior. But we also know him as a specific type for the Prophet Joseph Smith and a generic type for all members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Many of the Church's members claim descent from Joseph through his sons, Ephraim or Manasseh.

The importance of Joseph in the book of Genesis is signified by the fact that he figures prominently in sixteen of its fifty chapters (see Genesis 30; 33; 35; 37; 39–50). Joseph's life span from cradle to grave³ represents only 4 percent of the twenty-seven hundred years covered by the book of Genesis. Yet his life is reported in nearly one-third of its chapters.⁴

In the King James Version, Genesis 50 ends with verse 26, which records the death of Joseph. In the Joseph Smith Translation (JST), that chapter not only adds important information to verses 24 through 26 but provides twelve additional verses that enrich our knowledge of the link of Joseph (see JST, Genesis 50:27–38). Those additions include the following insights, which I paraphrase:

1. A righteous branch would be raised up later out of Joseph's loins (see JST, Genesis 50:24).
2. Israel would be scattered. A branch would be broken off and carried into a far country (see JST, Genesis 50:25).
3. A choice seer would be raised up from Joseph's loins to do work for the fruit of his loins (see JST, Genesis 50:26–29).
4. Writings from the fruit of Joseph's loins would grow together with writings from the fruit of Judah's loins to bring knowledge of their fathers and of everlasting covenants. That knowledge would come in the last days (see JST, Genesis 50:30–32).
5. The promised seer would be called Joseph, after the name of his father, and he would be like unto Joseph, son of Jacob, bringing salvation to the children of the Lord (see JST, Genesis 50:33).

These additions are good examples of “plain and precious” truths that have been restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith (see 1 Nephi 13:40).

He and the ancient Joseph had much in common, as shown by other scriptures that I will cite. From the Book of Mormon we read: “A part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved and had not decayed. . . . Even as this remnant of garment . . . hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of [Joseph’s] seed . . . be preserved by the hand of God” (Alma 46:24).

We are remnants of that precious seed. Joseph Smith had been chosen by the Lord to take up the labors of the tribe of Joseph, son of Jacob. Centuries ago that same Joseph had prophesied of Joseph Smith and described their linkage. Again I quote from the Book of Mormon: “Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers. And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work” (2 Nephi 3:7–8).

The link of Joseph applied not only to Joseph Smith Jr. but to his father as well. Again I quote from Joseph who was sold into Egypt: “Behold, that seer [Joseph Smith] will the Lord bless; . . . for this promise, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled. . . . And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation” (2 Nephi 3:14–15).

Joseph and Joseph Smith had more in common than their lineage linking. At age seventeen, Joseph, son of Jacob, was informed of his great destiny (see Genesis 37:2). At that same age, Joseph Smith was informed of his destiny regarding the Book of Mormon: He was seventeen when first visited by the angel Moroni, who told the boy prophet that “God had a work for [him] to do.” He was to translate a book written upon golden plates containing the fulness of the everlasting gospel.

His “name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues” (Joseph Smith—History 1:33; see also 1:34–41).

Both Josephs were persecuted. Joseph in Egypt was falsely accused of a crime he did not commit and was put into prison (see Genesis 39:11–20). Joseph Smith was incarcerated on trumped-up charges and false accusations.⁵

Joseph’s coat of many colors was taken from him by his brothers in a cruel attempt to convince their father that Joseph had been killed (see Genesis 37:2–33). Joseph Smith’s life was taken from him, largely because of betrayals by false brethren.

Anciently, “when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do” (Genesis 41:55). In the latter days, people starving for nourishment that only the gospel can provide are again to be fed—by Joseph. The Lord declared that “this generation shall have my word through [Joseph Smith]” (D&C 5:10). Today we “feast upon the words of Christ” because of Joseph Smith (2 Nephi 32:3).

This link of Joseph is summarized in lines from the book of Ether:

The Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not. . . .

Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land [of America]; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old. . . .

. . . and blessed are they who dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who are numbered among the remnant of the seed of Joseph, who were of the house of Israel.

. . . and they are they who were scattered and gathered in from the four quarters of the earth, and from the north countries, and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham. (Ether 13:7–8, 10–11)

THE LINK OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Link number two I shall identify as the link of the Book of Mormon. In September 1997 I had the extraordinary privilege of seeing portions of the original manuscript and virtually all of the printer's manuscript of the Book of Mormon.⁶ That was an incredible experience!

Voices of prophets in the Old Testament foretold of this great book. You are familiar with the prophecy of Isaiah: "Thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust" (Isaiah 29:4).

Could any words have been more descriptive of the Book of Mormon, coming as it did "out of the ground" to "whisper out of the dust" to people of our day?

Other Old Testament passages foretold the Book of Mormon. One such came to mind last January when I attended a prayer breakfast at the White House in Washington DC, hosted by President Bill Clinton. During an informal reception that preceded the breakfast, I was chatting with a distinguished and scholarly Jewish rabbi from New York. Our conversation was interrupted by another rabbi who asked his colleague from New York if he could recall the scriptural reference to the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph that would come together one day. My friend paused for a moment, stroked his chin pensively, and then replied, "I think you will find that in the book of Ezekiel."

I could not restrain myself. "You might look in the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel," I interjected. "There you will find the scriptures that you seek."

My rabbi friend was surprised. "How did *you* know that?"

"This doctrine," I said, "is very important in our theology."

Indeed it is. You know it, and I know it. I would like to read it: "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" (Ezekiel 37:16–17).

Saints of modern Israel in 160 nations across the world are blessed to hold the Bible and the Book of Mormon as one in their hands. The worth of this privilege must never be underestimated.

Keys of authority for the Book of Mormon—the stick of Ephraim—were held by the angel Moroni (see D&C 27:5). The Book of Mormon is the great amplifying, clarifying, and converting scripture. It is indeed “Another Testament of Jesus Christ” (Book of Mormon, title page).

Children of the Lord have ever been admonished to “search the scriptures” (John 5:39; Alma 14:1; 33:2; 3 Nephi 10:14). In addition, we of modern Israel have been specifically commanded to study one particular voice and prophet of the Old Testament. Which one? Isaiah! (see 3 Nephi 20:11; 23:1). The importance of that commandment is underlined by the fact that 433 verses of Isaiah appear in the Book of Mormon. Studying them is not repetitious. Sidney B. Sperry reported that 234 of those verses differ from their biblical counterparts.⁷ In addition, the Doctrine and Covenants has more than seventy quotations from or paraphrases of Isaiah.⁸ Study the words of Isaiah! Do we get the message?

Other prophets of the Old Testament were quoted to our modern prophets. Malachi’s teachings have been repeated.⁹ Elijah,¹⁰ Moses,¹¹ and others have taught people of both ancient and modern Israel (see D&C 27:5–13).

Isaiah described the spirit of the Book of Mormon as “familiar.” It resonates with people who know the Old Testament, especially with those who are conversant with its Hebrew language. The Book of Mormon is filled with Hebraisms—traditions, symbolisms, idioms, and literary forms. It is familiar because more than 80 percent of its pages come from Old Testament times.¹²

THE LINK OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

Link number three I shall designate as the link of the house of Israel. It includes doctrines of the Abrahamic covenant and of the scattering and gathering of Israel.

About four thousand years ago, Abraham received a promise from the Lord that blessings would be offered to all of his mortal posterity

(see D&C 132:29–50; Abraham 2:6–11). Included were promises that the Son of God would come through Abraham’s lineage, that certain lands would be inherited by his posterity, that nations and kindreds of the earth would be blessed through his seed, and more. Knowledge of and reaffirmations of this covenant are evident in scriptures of the Old Testament (see Genesis 26:1–4, 24; 28; 35:9; 48). Although certain aspects of that covenant have already been fulfilled, many have not. The Book of Mormon teaches that we of modern Israel are among the covenant people of the Lord (see 1 Nephi 14:14; 15:14; 2 Nephi 30:2; Mosiah 24:13; 3 Nephi 29:3; Mormon 8:15). And, most remarkably, it teaches that the Abrahamic covenant will be fulfilled only in these latter days (see 1 Nephi 15:12–18). The Lord bestowed this Abrahamic covenant upon the Prophet Joseph Smith for the blessing of him and posterity after him (see D&C 124:56–59). Did you know that Abraham is mentioned in more verses of modern revelation than in all the verses of the Old Testament?¹³ Abraham—this great patriarch of the Old Testament—is inextricably linked to all who join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹⁴

Doctrines relating to the scattering and gathering of the house of Israel were also among the earliest lessons taught in the Book of Mormon. I quote from the first book of Nephi: “After the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered together again; . . . the natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer” (1 Nephi 10:14).

The Old Testament is replete with prophecies that relate to the scattering of Israel. May I cite one from the book of First Kings: “For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them” (1 Kings 14:15).

In this citation, the word “scatter” was translated from the Hebrew verb *zarah*, which means “to scatter, cast away, winnow, or disperse.” The richness of the Hebrew language provides other verbs to describe similar actions. For example, from the book of First Kings we also read: “I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd” (1 Kings 22:17).

In this instance, “scattered” was translated from the Hebrew verb *puwts*, which also means “to scatter” or “to be dispersed.”

Isaiah used yet another verb in this prophecy: “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” (Isaiah 11:12; emphasis added).

In this case “dispersed” was translated from the Hebrew verb *naphats*, which means “to shatter, break, dash, or beat in pieces.”

References to the scattering were also recorded in the New Testament. For example, the book of James begins with these words: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting” (James 1:1).

In this reference, “scattered” was translated from the Greek feminine noun *diaspora*, which means “dispersed” or “scattered.” You may wish to look up the word *diaspora* in the Bible Dictionary (Bible Dictionary, “Diaspora,” 657). There the scattering of the house of Israel is succinctly summarized.

Saints of modern Israel know that Peter, James, and John were sent by the Lord with “the keys of [His] kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times; and for the fulness of times,” in which He would “gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (D&C 27:13).¹⁵

The travels and travail of our pioneers were of eternal consequence. Their mission was not limited to an international immigration or a transcontinental migration with wagons and handcarts. They were to lay the foundation of an endless work that would “fill the world.”¹⁶ They were essential to Jeremiah’s prophecy: “Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jeremiah 31:10).¹⁷

They got the message. Missionaries were sent very early to “the isles afar off” to commence the work of the Lord. As a result, the Church was established in the British Isles and in the islands of French Polynesia years before the pioneers entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake. It has been my privilege to participate in sesquicentennial celebrations in

the British Isles in 1987 and in French Polynesia in 1994. Now in 1997, I celebrate this one with you in Utah.

Another aspect of the gathering of Israel reflects back to our first link regarding Joseph. The word *Joseph* comes from the Hebrew masculine personal noun *Yowceph*, the literal meaning of which is “Jehovah has added.” *Joseph* also relates to the Hebrew root *yasaph*, which means “to add,” and “to *asaph*,” which means both “to take away” and “to gather” (see Genesis 30:24, footnote a).

The Hebrew verbs *yacaph* and *acaph*¹⁸ are used in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament 186 and 180 times respectively. Both words were usually translated into English as “gather” in one of its several forms. For example, in the verse, “David *gathered* together all the chosen men of Israel” (2 Samuel 6:1; emphasis added), the Hebrew verb *yacaph* was used.

Another scripture from Genesis deserves special comment. It reports the naming of Jacob and Rachel’s firstborn son: “She called his name *Joseph*; and said, The Lord shall *add* to me another son” (Genesis 30:24; emphasis added).¹⁹ In that verse both the words “Joseph” and “add” were derived from the Hebrew root *yacaph*.

The lineage of Joseph—through Ephraim and Manasseh—is the seed appointed to lead in the gathering of Israel.²⁰ The pioneers knew—through their patriarchal blessings and from doctrines of the Old Testament, amplified by scriptures and revelations of the Restoration—that the long-awaited gathering of Israel was to commence with them.

THE LINK OF EXODUS

The fourth link connecting ancient and modern Israel I shall name the link of the Exodus. At a Church Educational System fireside satellite broadcast in September 1997, I spoke to the subject of “The Exodus Repeated.” Then I spoke of some connections between ancient and modern Israel that will also be relevant to a more comprehensive coverage of the topic, “Remnants Gathered, Covenants Fulfilled.” Fascinating are the many parallels between the exodus from Egypt of the Israelites under Moses and the exodus from the United States of the pioneers under Brigham Young.

Both peoples were oppressed by their governments. The ancient Israelites were “bondmen” (Deuteronomy 6:21). The Latter-day Saints were persecuted by their own government.²¹

Moses had been prepared in the courts of Egypt and had gained much experience in military and other responsibilities (see Hebrews 11:24, 27). Brigham Young was likewise prepared for his leadership role. In the march of Zion’s Camp, he observed the leadership of the Prophet Joseph Smith under difficult conditions.²² Brigham Young aided in the removal of the Saints from Kirtland and directed the move of the persecuted Saints from Missouri to Nauvoo.²³

God preserved ancient Israel from plagues that He sent upon Egypt (see Exodus 15:26). God preserved the Saints from the plague of the United States Civil War that caused more American deaths due to war than any other war.

Both groups had to leave their homes and earthly possessions. Both had to learn to rely wholly upon the Lord and be sustained by Him during their travels. Both traversed deserts, mountains, and valleys of untamed wilderness. Ancient Israelites left Egypt via the waters of the Red Sea “as by dry land” (Hebrews 11:29). Some pioneers left the United States by crossing the wide waters of the Mississippi River—frozen to become a highway of ice.²⁴ Both groups endured trials of their faith during which the weak were winnowed away and the strong were empowered to endure to the end (see Ether 12:6; D&C 101:4–5; 105:19).

The children of ancient Israel had a portable tabernacle wherein covenants were made and ordinances were performed to strengthen them on their journey.²⁵ Originally the tabernacle was intended to be a portable temple, before the Israelites lost the higher law (see D&C 84:23–26; 124:38; JST, Exodus 34:1–2). Similarly, many Latter-day Saints were endowed in the Nauvoo Temple before their trek.

The journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai took about three months (see Exodus 12:2, 3, 6, 18; 13:4; 19:1). The journey from Winter Quarters to the valley of the Great Salt Lake also took about three months.²⁶

The promised land for each group also bore similarities. That of ancient Israel had an inland sea of salt water, the inlet to which was the River Jordan. That for the pioneers also had an inland sea of salt water,

fed by the Jordan River. The destination of each group was described by the Lord as a land “flowing with milk and honey.”²⁷ The pioneers turned their wilderness into a fruitful field (see Isaiah 32:15–16) and made the desert blossom as a rose (see Isaiah 35:1)—precisely as prophesied by Isaiah.

For both the Israelites and the Saints, civil and ecclesiastical law were unified under one head. Moses bore that responsibility for the early Israelites.²⁸ Brigham Young—a modern Moses²⁹ (see D&C 103:16)—led the Latter-day Saints’ movement west, with the Lord’s blessing (see D&C 136:1–42). Moses and Brigham Young followed parallel patterns of governance (see Exodus 18:17–21; D&C 136:1–4). And each of them endured dissension from their close associates.³⁰ Nevertheless, that same unified pattern of government will again prevail when the Lord shall be “King over all the earth” (Psalm 47:2; Zechariah 14:9), and He shall govern from Zion and Jerusalem (see Isaiah 2:1–4).

The Israelites celebrated their exodus from Egypt. The Latter-day Saints commemorated their exodus with the establishment of the world headquarters of the restored Church in the tops of the mountains. Both celebrations acclaimed their miraculous deliverance by God (see Jeremiah 16:15; 23:7).³¹ The link of the exodus reminds us of an Old Testament scripture of gratitude: “Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place” (Exodus 13:3).

THE LINK OF THE TIMELESS TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL

The fifth connection between ancient and modern Israel I shall denote as the link of the timeless truths of the gospel. Those truths are included in the unending priesthood order of Melchizedek, though he is mentioned but twice in the Old Testament (see Genesis 14:18; Psalm 110:4). The Melchizedek Priesthood was removed from ancient Israel shortly after the exodus from Egypt (see JST, Exodus 34:1–2; D&C 84:23–25). Thereafter, ancient Israel functioned under the Levitical Priesthood and the law of carnal commandments (see D&C 84:27).

Timeless truths and principles of the gospel were and are important to people of ancient and modern Israel. The Sabbath day, for example,

was honored for different reasons through the generations. From the time of Adam to Moses, the Sabbath was observed as a day of rest from the labor of creation (see Exodus 20:8–11; 31:13; Mosiah 13:16–19). From the time of Moses to the Resurrection of the Lord, the Sabbath also commemorated the liberation of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt (see Deuteronomy 5:12–15; Isaiah 58:13; Ezekiel 20:20–22; 44:24). In latter days, Saints keep the Sabbath day holy in memory of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.³²

The restoration of the priesthood rejuvenated the principle of tithing, linking to the Old Testament teachings of Genesis and Malachi (see Genesis 14:20; Malachi 3:8–12). Saints of modern Israel know how to calculate their own tithing from this simple instruction: “Those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord” (D&C 119:4).

In contrast, have you ever amused yourself with the thought, on or about April 15th each year, that the filing of income tax returns is a bit more complicated? I’ll confess that I have.

Turning our attention again to the timeless truths of the gospel, none are more vital than those associated with temple worship. They compose another link between ancient and modern Israel. The Bible Dictionary states that “whenever the Lord has had a people on the earth who will obey his word, they have been commanded to build temples in which the ordinances of the gospel and other spiritual manifestations that pertain to exaltation and eternal life may be administered” (Bible Dictionary, “Temple,” 781).

The best-known temple of ancient Israel was Solomon’s temple. Its baptismal font (see 2 Chronicles 4:15) and dedicatory prayer (see 2 Chronicles 6:12–42) provide patterns that are employed for temples today (see D&C 109:1–80). Old Testament scriptures refer to special clothing (see Exodus 28:4; 29:5; Leviticus 8:7–9; 1 Samuel 18:3–4) and ordinances (see Exodus 19:10, 14; 2 Samuel 12:20; Ezekiel 16:9) that are associated with temples (see D&C 124:37–40). How thankful we are that the Lord chose to restore the highest blessings of the priesthood to His faithful sons and daughters! He said: “For I deign to reveal unto

my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times” (D&C 124:41).

Revealed truth that we know as the Word of Wisdom came to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833. Every Latter-day Saint is familiar with it as one of the visible hallmarks of our faith. The final verse of that revelation forges another link back to ancient Israel: “And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them” (D&C 89:21).

This reference to the Passover shows that the Lord wanted obedient Saints of modern Israel to receive physical and spiritual protection just as He had provided for His faithful followers centuries before.

SUMMARY

Ancient Israel and modern Israel are linked arm in arm. In our day, many Old Testament prophecies are being fulfilled. Isaiah foretold: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it” (Isaiah 2:2; see also 2 Nephi 12:2; JST, Isaiah 2:2).

During the past year, visitors from more than one hundred nations have come to visit world headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.³³

Ancient and modern Israel subscribe to an ageless message of the Old Testament: “Know therefore that the Lord thy God . . . keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations” (Deuteronomy 7:9).³⁴

All faithful members of the Church will receive their just reward: “All things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s” (D&C 76:59).

I would like to bear my testimony as one with you, my beloved brothers and sisters. We love our Heavenly Father. We love the Lord Jesus Christ. We are His people. We have taken His holy name upon us. We are His remnants now being gathered and gleaned into His eternal

garners (see Alma 26:5). We are fulfilling “the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people” (3 Nephi 20:12). We are being brought to the knowledge of our Lord who has redeemed us (see 3 Nephi 20:12–13). We are “children of the covenant” (3 Nephi 20:26; see also Acts 3:25; 3 Nephi 20:25) destined to be as was ancient Israel—“a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exodus 19:6; see also D&C 76:56–57). We know that Joseph Smith is the great prophet of the Restoration and that President Gordon B. Hinckley is the prophet of the Lord today.

My testimony, my love, and my blessing, I leave with you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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NOTES

1. Ten million members of the Church compose 0.0017 percent of a world population of 5.8 billion.
2. The term *saints* appears in sixty-two verses of the New Testament.
3. Joseph died at the age of 110 years (see Genesis 50:26).
4. Sixteen of fifty chapters equals 32 percent.
5. See J. Reuben Clark Jr., *On the Way to Immortality and Eternal Life* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1949), 133; Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, April 1954, 58.
6. About 25 percent of the original manuscript is in the historical archives of the Church. The printer’s manuscript is owned by the Community of Christ (formerly the Reorganized LDS Church) and was on loan to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is reported to be complete except for two lines of the title page.
7. See Sydney B. Sperry, “The ‘Isaiah Problem’ in the Book of Mormon,” *Improvement Era*, October 1939, 594.
8. Monte S. Nyman, in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:702. Another is mentioned in Joseph Smith—History 1:40.
9. See 3 Nephi 24:1; D&C 110:14; 128:17; 133:64; 138:46; Joseph Smith—History 1:36.
10. See 3 Nephi 25:5; D&C 2:1; 27:9; 35:4; 110:13, 14; 128:17; 133:55; 138:46, 47; Joseph Smith—History 1:38.
11. Moses is mentioned in 1,300 verses of scripture, 515 (40 percent) of which are in modern revelation.

12. Personal communication from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, June 1997.
13. Abraham is mentioned in 506 verses of scripture, 289 of which are in modern revelation.
14. The covenant may also be received by adoption (see Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8; Galatians 3:27–29; 4:5).
15. Compare with Paul’s prophecy of the Restoration in Ephesians 1:10.
16. Joseph Smith, quoted in Wilford Woodruff, *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946), 39.
17. *Gather* is used to translate the Hebrew verb *qabats*, which means “to gather, assemble.”
18. Spellings in James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (1890; reprint, New York: Abingdon, 1965), “Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary,” 50, 15.
19. Joseph was “added” to Rachel’s family because her handmaid, Bilhah, had given birth to Dan and Naphtali previously (see Genesis 30:5–8). See also Deuteronomy 33:16–17, which refers to the people of Joseph being pushed together “to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.” JST, Genesis 50:34 also affirms that Joseph’s seed would be preserved forever.
20. See Erastus Snow, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–86), 23:183–84.
21. The pioneers were forced out of Missouri under threat of an order signed by Missouri’s governor directing that the “Mormons must be treated as enemies and must be exterminated or driven from the state” (Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1980], 3:175). In 1887, the Congress of the United States of America took the unprecedented step of eliminating the Church’s legal existence by revoking its corporate charter and authorizing federal receivers to assume ownership of virtually all of the Church’s property and other assets, including its most sacred houses of worship—temples in Logan, Manti, St. George, and Salt Lake City (see *The Late Corporation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints v. United States*, 136 U.S. 1 [1890]). Yet the Saints knew that they were Abraham’s seed and heirs to promises and protection from the Lord (see D&C 103:17–20).
22. See Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:6–12, 185; Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Knopf, 1985), 58.
23. See Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:529; 3:252, 261; Preston Nibley, *The Presidents of the Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 41.
24. See Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 21:275–77.
25. Ordinances and covenants of ancient Israel are referenced in 1 Corinthians 10:1–3; for modern Israel, see D&C 84:26–27.
26. One hundred and eleven days.
27. For the people of ancient Israel, see Exodus 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Leviticus 20:24; Numbers 13:27; 14:8; 16:13, 14; Deuteronomy 6:3; 11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3; 31:20;

- Joshua 5:6; Jeremiah 11:5; 32:22; Ezekiel 20:6, 15; JST Exodus 33:1. For the pioneers, see D&C 38:18–19.
28. See Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938), 252.
 29. President Spencer W. Kimball wrote of Brigham Young's role in that exodus: "Since Adam there have been many exoduses and promised lands: Abraham, Jared, Moses, Lehi, and others led groups. How easy it is to accept those distant in time as directed by the Lord, yet the ones near at hand as human calculations and decisions. Let us consider for a moment the great trek of the Mormon refugees from Illinois to Salt Lake Valley. Few, if any, great movements equal it. We frequently hear that Brigham Young led the people to make new tracks in a desert and to climb over mountains seldom scaled and to ford and wade unbridged rivers and to traverse a hostile Indian country; and while Brigham Young was the instrument of the Lord, it was not he but the Lord of heaven who led modern Israel across the plains to their promised land" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972], 28).
 30. See Numbers 12:1–11 (Aaron and Miriam); for latter-day examples, see Smith, *History of the Church*, 1:104–5 (Oliver Cowdery); and 1:226 (William E. McLellin).
 31. Other miracles were shared, such as food provided by the "miracle of the quails." (For ancient Israel, see Exodus 16:13; Psalm 105:40; for the pioneers, see Stanley B. Kimball, "Nauvoo West: The Mormons of the Iowa Shore," *BYU Studies* 18 [Winter 1978]: 142). Protection was provided for ancient Israel by the Lord, who "went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire" (Exodus 13:21; see also v. 22; Numbers 14:14; Deuteronomy 1:33; Nehemiah 9:19). Similar care has been noted for the pioneers (see Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:34; Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, April 1967, 56).
 32. See D&C 20:40, 75–79; 59:9; see also Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10.
 33. Estimate provided by the Temple Square Mission.
 34. See also Deuteronomy 11:1, 27; 19:9; 30:16; Joshua 22:5; 1 John 5:2–3; Mosiah 2:4. Other Old Testament scriptures refer to rewards for those obedient to God's commandments through a "thousand generations" (see 1 Corinthians 16:15; Psalm 105:8).