
Isaiah 11

Angel Moroni appeared to the youthful Prophet Joseph Smith on 21 September 1823. Moroni, among other things, “commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament,” among which “he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, saying that it was about to be fulfilled” (JS-H 1:40). What a feeling of excitement runs through my body as I think of these things. In a chapter such as this one, where there is so much written on the text of Isaiah from the Brethren, and from other scriptures, there is less of a need to explore every possible translation and interpretation than in those chapters of Isaiah where little interpretative information is found. Nevertheless, some value can be obtained from a limited exploration. Where there has been much said by the Brethren, I have included additional comments mostly under the subheadings *VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES*, although in some instances it has been incorporated into the exegetical comments. “With respect to the application of this prophecy to the Messiah,” says Henderson, interpreters seem to be almost unanimous. Barnes says, “It was a general principle with the Hebrew prophets, and particularly with Isaiah, when any event tending to console the people, or to excite the nation’s gratitude, occurred, to cast the eye forward to that great future deliverance which they anticipated under the Messiah.” Isaiah 11, then, deals with Messiah as a righteous judge, of the millennial day, and of the glorious gathering of Israel.

vv. 1-5. Speaking of these verses John Taylor said, “The first of this was fulfilled when our Saviour came on this earth before; the second will be when he comes again, ‘he will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips will he slay the wicked.’”¹ In D&C 113 we have revelation given by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith on these verses. Through it we learn several important facts: 1) something about the *rod*; 2) that the *stem of Jesse* mentioned in verse 1 is Christ; 3) that the focus of Isaiah 11:2-5 is on the *stem of Jesse*, or on Christ; and 4) that the *root of Jesse* mentioned in Isaiah 11:10 seems to have very similar characteristics as the *rod* mentioned in Isaiah 11:1.

1 ¶ AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse. Jesse is the father of King David. The *Stem of Jesse* is another way of saying, “He who sprang forth through the line of David,” or Christ. David was a descendant of Judah. Judah was promised in his patriarchal blessing, that the Messiah would come forth out of his lineage: “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” (Genesis 49:10). Thus it is that the New

Testament begins with the words “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1). The *rod* out of Christ (i.e., *out of the stem of Jesse*), we are informed, is “a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power” (D&C 113:4b). This servant receives his power through Christ. In verse 11 we learn a little more about this servant, where he is called the *root of Jesse*. So who is this *rod* (v. 1) or *root of Jesse* (v. 11)? Latter-day Saints are generally in agreement that these refer to the Prophet Joseph Smith. President Brigham Young said: “Joseph Smith was a rod in the hands of the Lord to scourge the Elders of Israel; he was the mouthpiece of the Almighty, and was always ready to rebuke them when requisite.”² Monte S. Nyman has, “There can be no question that this is describing the Prophet Joseph Smith. By revelation he was told that he held the right to the priesthood (see D&C 86:8-9). That the keys of the kingdom had been given to him is a matter of record; that his labors were to stand as an ‘ensign’ to which the nations of the earth will gather is also a matter of scriptural promise (D&C 29:4, 7-8; 35:25; 38:33; 39:11; 45:9, 28).”³ ¶ *And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.* The expression “his roots” refers to David. Christ is the Branch that would grow out of David. The Stem of Jesse and the Branch both refer to the Messiah. Jeremiah speaks of this Branch: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I

² *Journal of Discourses*. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot. Volume 8, September 30, 1860, p. 190.

³ Monte S. Nyman, ed., *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*, 1984 Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, p. 18.

¹ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852.

will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:5-8); “In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness” (Jeremiah 33:15-16).⁴ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum reads, “And a king shall come forth from the sons of Jesse, and an Anointed One (or, *Messiah* מָשִׁיחַ) from his sons’ sons shall grow up.” Hengstenberg quotes Luther on this passage: “This is a short summary of the whole of theology and of the works of God, that Christ did not come till the trunk had died, and was altogether in a hopeless condition; that hence, when all hope is gone, we are to believe that it is the time of salvation, and that God is then nearest when He seems to be farthest off.” Calvin makes the contrast between the growing shoot that rises out of what is left of the tree even stronger: “I have ... preferred translating עֵצ אֲדָמָה a *dry stock*, rather than a *root*, though it makes little difference as to the meaning, but the former expresses more fully what the Prophet meant, namely, that though *the stock* be dry, *the branch which shall spring* from it shall be more excellent than all the forests. Hence we infer that this prediction applies solely to the person of Christ; for till he came no such *branch* arose. *** We see therefore that to the ... Jews, consolation was held out in the Messiah alone, and that their hope was held in suspense till he appeared. At the time of his appearance, there would have been no hope that the kingdom would be erected and restored, if this promise had not been added; for the family of David appeared to be completely extinct.

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and

⁴ The Messiah is called by the name of Branch in numerous scriptures, in Jeremiah, Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah (e.g., “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him” Isaiah 53:2).

might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

Verses 2 through 5 begin to describe the Messiah. Through the principle of Divine Investiture, Christ speaks on behalf of the Father. ¶ *And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.* All these are the attributes of King Messiah. **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The LXX reading is: “And the Spirit of God shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness shall fill him; the spirit of the fear of God.” The Syriac renders it, “And he shall be at peace, and the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the reverence of the LORD.” To Calvin, “*the fear of the Lord means a sincere desire to worship God.*” Of particular interest are Calvin’s feelings that this verse has reference to the gifts of the Spirit, but more particularly, to the following comment that agrees so well with the Book of Mormon, regarding such gifts: “Whenever therefore we feel that we are in want of any of these [spiritual] gifts, let us blame our unbelief” Regarding all these spiritual gifts, Barnes says, “If it be asked how one, who was Divine in his own nature, could be thus endowed by the aid of the Spirit, the answer is, that he was also to be a man descended from the honoured line of David, and that *as a man* he might be furnished for his work by the agency of the Holy Ghost.” Furthermore, Barnes says that *shall rest on him*, means, “It shall not merely *come* upon him, but shall attend him permanently.” It is as if one were to say that the Spirit of the Holy Ghost was His constant companion. Rawlinson says that regarding the Messiah, and the Spirit of the Lord, “These influences were not in him transient or occasional, as in too many men...” Barnes continues, “That he *was* thus under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is abundantly taught in the New Testament. Thus in Matthew 3:16, the Holy Spirit is represented as descending on him at his baptism. In John 3:34, it is said, ‘For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him’ (compare Colossians 1:19⁵).” The JST revolving around John 3:34, reads, “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth *him* not the Spirit by measure, *for he dwelleth in him, even the fullness.*” The next verse reads: “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all

⁵ “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell” (Colossians 1:19). Our LDS footnote says, regarding this verse, “Jesus Christ, relationships with the Father.”

things into his hand” (John 3:34), or as is found in Moffatt: “The Father loves the Son and has given him control over everything.” We also read, “For since He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God [proclaims God’s own message], God does not give Him His Spirit sparingly *or* by measure, *but* boundless is the gift God makes of His Spirit! [Deuteronomy 18:18⁶.] The Father loves the Son and has given (entrusted, committed) everything into His hand. [Daniel 7:14⁷.]” (AB).

3 And shall make him of quick understanding ✓ in the fear of the LORD; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.

✓ scent or, smell⁸

And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD. We continue looking at the traits to be had by the Lord and Savior. These are the very traits—which He holds to perfection—that we are expected to cultivate in our own lives. So, what does it mean to *fear the Lord*? It means to love Him and to put our trust in Him. As I invite people to come unto Christ, many are worried and anxious about earthly consequences. To fear the Lord means that we put aside all apprehensions, except that of offending our Lord and exemplar. It was the constant preoccupation of our Savior to do those things that would please His Father. There is something infinitely tender in the words of the Savior: “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19). Truly, “The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom” (Psalms 111:10a). Many commentators make note of the marginal reading of the expression *quick understanding*, **וְהָיָה רָחֵם**.

Barnes, leaning on Gesenius, explains that this word is derived from **רָחַם**, “used only in Hiphil, *to smell*; and is kindred with **רֵיחַ**, *wind, breath*, for fragrant substances *breathe out* an odour” and thus by extension

⁶ “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deuteronomy 18:18).

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

⁸ “He shall sense the truth” or “His sensing (shall be)” (Tanakh). The complete verse “He shall sense the truth by his reverence for the LORD: He shall not judge by what his eyes behold, Nor decide by what his ears perceive” (Tanakh).

it means to “to take delight in smelling.”⁹ Kay contributes the following grammatical note: “The rendering of the A.V. may be fairly justified by the analogy of the verb **וְהָיָה**; which has generally a simple transitive meaning, ‘to understand;’ yet sometimes signifies to ‘cause to understand’ (Job 6:24), or, ‘to give understanding’ (Job 32:8). Similarly, **וְהָיָה** though it commonly means ‘to smell,’ may signify, ‘to give him quick scent.’” In other words, to quickly size up a situation. Or perhaps even better, quick to perceive and obey. ¶ *And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.* One of my favorite scriptures is: “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for [the LORD seeth] not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). President Brigham Young taught that we need to cultivate a spirit of meekness in terms of others and be slow to judge, and rather “Bear with them.”¹⁰

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove ✓ with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

✓ or, argue

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught, “When that time shall come, the ‘earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’ Wickedness shall be

⁹ To LDS this is also important in its anthropomorphic implications. The idea of smelling is one very often in the Old Testament one of acceptance of the sacrifices of men, or their *sweet odours*. God, in contrast to the dumb idols, can smell, and see, hear and eat. “And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell” (Deuteronomy 4:28).

¹⁰ “Judge not, that ye be not judged. Let no man judge his fellow being, unless he knows he has the mind of Christ within him. ... Do not judge such persons [who have transgressed], for you do not know the design of the Lord concerning them; therefore, do not say they are not Saints. What shall we do with them? Bear with them. ... A person who would say another is not a Latter-day Saint, for some trifling affair in human life, proves that he does not possess the Spirit of God. Think of this, brethren and sisters; write it down, that you may refresh your memories with it; carry it with you, and look at it often. If I judge my brethren and sisters, unless I judge them by the revelations of Jesus Christ, I have not the spirit of Christ; if I had, I should judge no man.” Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854-1886. Volume 1, December 5, 1853, p. 339.

destroyed, for with righteousness shall Jehovah ‘judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.’ In that day there shall be no ‘divided Christianity.’¹¹ All who will not repent and receive the gospel shall soon be removed, and they who shall remain shall learn to worship the true and living God in spirit and in truth. The Church of Jesus Christ shall have sway over all the earth, for Christ shall be the King and Deliverer. Peace shall prevail both among men and among beasts. Satan shall be bound and his dominion, which he has held by usurpation and fraud since the beginning of the earth’s temporal existence, shall come to an end. The rightful King shall reign and his saints shall possess the kingdom according to the vision of Daniel. Jerusalem shall become a righteous city when Israel is gathered and redeemed. Zion also shall be cleansed of all iniquity, and in that day, when Christ shall rule, the word of the Lord to Isaiah shall be fulfilled, ‘for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.’¹² ¶ *And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.* President John Taylor taught, “when he comes again, ‘he will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips will he slay the wicked.’ The spirit of the Lord will be withdrawn from the nations, and after rejecting the truth, they will be left in darkness to grope their way, and being full of the spirit of wickedness, they will rage and war against each other, and finally, after dreadful struggles, plagues, pestilence, famine, etc., instigated by the powers of darkness, there will be a great gathering of the nations against Jerusalem, for they will be infuriated against its inhabitants, and mighty hosts will assemble, so that they will be like a cloud to cover the land, and the Lord will appear himself to the deliverance of his people, and the destruction of the wicked.”¹³ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum reads, “But he shall judge with truth the poor, and adjudge with faithfulness the needy among the people; and he shall smite the guilty of the land with the word (Memra) of his mouth, and by the utterance of his lips shall the wicked die.”¹⁴

¹¹ This must be later on in the Millennium, as there will be a time where different religions will exist, as taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

¹² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Doctrines of Salvation*. Compiled by Bruce R. McConkie. 3 vols. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1954-56, Volume 1, p. 169.

¹³ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852. Ch. 11.

¹⁴ “The Chaldee Paraphrast,” says Barnes of his Targum translation, “translates it, ‘And by the word of his lips he shall slay the impious Armillus.’” Barnes, leaning on Castell, adds, “By *Armillus*, the Jews mean the last great enemy of their nation, who would come after Gog

The LXX renders it, “But he shall judge the cause of the lowly, and shall reprove the lowly of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he destroy the ungodly one.” Alma was involved in a mission to bring back the apostate Zoramites. The Zoramites were puffed up, “their hearts were lifted up unto great boasting, in their pride” (Alma 31:25). Yet Alma found a poor people about them who were ready to hear the word, for “their afflictions had truly humbled them and that they were in a preparation to hear the word” (Alma 32:6). Calvin suggests, “When the Prophet says, *by the breath of his lips*, this must not be limited to the person of Christ; for it refers to the word which is preached by his ministers.” Calvin then refers to Luke 10:16, “He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.”¹⁵ In 2 Thessalonians we find a similar verse, in reference to the defeat of Satan and those who would oppose our Savior: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” Alexander suggests this refers to the defeat of the Anti-Christ (see term defined in LDS BD). Hengstenberg suggests that the expression “rod of His mouth” is equivalent to “And out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.”

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

A *girdle* is a sash or cloth that is worn about the body. Barnes explains: “The *girdle of his loins* refers to the cincture, or band, with which the ancients girded themselves. A part of their dress consisted of an outward, loose, flowing robe. This robe it was necessary to gird up, or to confine close to the body in active labour, or in running; and the meaning of the figure here used is, probably, that the virtues of righteousness and justice would *adhere* to him as closely and inseparably as the garment does to the body to which it was bound.” The *loins* correspond to the lower back, “between the hipbones and the ribs” (Webster).¹⁶ The *reins* here also correspond to the lower back, that is, to the region of the back corresponding to the location of the kidneys. The term is derived from the renal system. The

and Magog and wage furious wars, and who would slay the Messiah ben Ephraim, whom the Jews expect, but who would be himself slain the rod of the Messiah ben David, or the son of David.”

¹⁵ We agree with Calvin but warn that the words of Paul must be added to these: “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Hebrews 5:4).

¹⁶ In scripture, in other contexts, the term is often used as a euphemism for the procreative area or genitalia.

Messiah, then, would be covered by righteousness and faithfulness.

vv. 6-9. These verses focus on the peacefulness of the millennium, with the earth returning to its paradisiacal glory. Regarding the Millennium and these verses in Isaiah, President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: “A change shall come over every living creature, and all enmity shall depart and only love and peace remain.”¹⁷

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

The Targum makes it clear that this will take place during the Messianic age, when Messiah shall reign: “In the days of the Anointed One (or, *Messiah*) of Israel peace shall be multiplied in the land, and the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall dwell with the kid; and the calf and the lion and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them.” From the animal kingdom, the wolf and the leopard are chosen as types of violent behavior in animals. In his 2001 address to CES Institute and Seminary teachers, Elder Eyring suggested that there is much that we can do now—without waiting for the Millennium—to begin to change our human natures. In Mosiah we read: “And now, it came to pass that when king Benjamin had thus spoken to his people, he sent among them, desiring to know of his people if they believed the words which he had spoken unto them. And they all cried with one voice, saying: Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:1-2).

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nature of the beasts will revert to that which existed before the fall. The Targum says, “And the cow and the bear shall feed; together shall their young dwell: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” The LXX reads, “And the ox and bear shall feed together; and their young

shall be together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” It is rendered in the Syriac as: “And the cow and the bear shall feed together; and their young ones shall grow up together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.”

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp. If there is presently enmity between beasts, such hostility exists between man and beast. Not only will there be peace within the animal kingdom, but also man and beast will live in perfect harmony. Henderson says regarding the word *play*, “שָׁעַע, the Pilp. of שָׁעַע, *to stoke, to rub gently with the hand*; then as here, generally, *to caress, play with the hand, find delight in playing.*” Regarding פְּתֵן, or snake, Henderson has, “... *an asp, or a kind of serpent, whose poison kills almost instantaneously; in all probability, the species found by Hasselquist on the island of Cyprus, and called aspik by the modern Greeks. It is seldom more than a foot in length, but in thickness resembles the arm of a man* (Bochart, Vol. III, p. 380 &c.; Michaelis, Supplement No. 2100). The Greek Πυθων, *Python*, is doubtless a derivative from this root.” ¶ *And the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.* Regarding the adder, viper, or cockatrice, Henderson tells us, “צַפְעוֹנִי, Aq. Basil ijskoz, *Vulgate regulus, the basilisk; according to Michaelis, the Cerast or horned serpent—a small viper, little more than a foot in length; so called from the feelers which are protruded from its head, while it lies hid in the sand. It is exceedingly venomous. Compare Isaiah 59:5; Jeremiah 8:17; Proverbs 23:32; and Isaiah 14:29, where the cognate צַפַּע occurs. In most of these passages, נָחָשׁ is used along with it.*” Cheyne, leaning on Tristram opines, “Why go to Africa for the basilisk? One of the most beautiful but venomous of the vipers of Palestine is the large yellow on, called *Daboia xanthina.*”

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. President John Taylor said: “Thus, having cleansed the

¹⁷ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951. p. 310. On other conditions related to the Millennium, read pp. 310-314.

¹⁸ A snake or serpent, נָחָשׁ.

earth, and glorified it with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea, and having poured out his Spirit upon all flesh, both man and beast becoming perfectly harmless, as they were in the beginning, and feeding on vegetable food only, while nothing is left to hurt or destroy in all the vast creation, the prophets then proceed to give us many glorious descriptions of the enjoyments of its inhabitants.¹⁹ ¶ *For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.* (See also Habakkuk 2:14.) President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that Isaiah’s words would soon be fulfilled, and that the earth would be transformed again, “Soon [the earth] is to be changed and brought back very largely to the condition in which it was found before man transgressed in the Garden of Eden and brought upon himself and the earth the temporal change. In this changed condition, which is shortly to take place, the earth will endure for one thousand years as a terrestrial sphere in purity and sanctification. The Savior will come to reign and take his rightful place. All kingdoms and governments will come to an end, and be superseded by Christ’s government. There will be no more war, but peace and righteousness, for the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea.”²⁰ On another occasion Joseph Fielding Smith said, “Joseph Smith holds the keys of this great dispensation which must endure until all things are finished. This Gospel is decreed to ‘roll forth’ until it shall eventually fill the earth. When Christ comes the wicked shall be destroyed, and righteousness will follow until it will cover the earth as the waters do the sea. (Isaiah 11:9). In that day the kingdom in heaven will come down and will be joined to the kingdom of God on earth, and they will be united in one kingdom.”²¹ In Jeremiah we read: “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: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying,

¹⁹ President John Taylor quoted Parley P. Pratt, from *Voice of Warning*, stating that it cannot be described better (see pp. 110-122). Quoted in Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852. Ch. 12.

²⁰ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Restoration of All Things*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973, p. 292.

²¹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, p. 16.

Know the LORD: *for they shall all know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-34, emphasis added). Nyman wrote, “Joseph Smith also gave a different rendering of the last part of verse 9—‘the earth will be filled with sacred knowledge, as the waters cover the great deep’ (TPJS, p. 93)—and indicated that this prophecy would be fulfilled after Israel is gathered.” **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum reads, “They shall do no evil, nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the fear of the Lord, like the waters which cover the sea.” The LXX version has it, “And they shall not hurt, nor shall they at all be able to destroy anyone on my holy mountain: for the whole *world* is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as much water covers the seas.” Cheyne explains, “... it is by no means certain that ‘mountain’ in the passages mentioned means the Holy Land.—The next clause shows that the harmlessness of the animals on the holy mountain is only a symbol of ‘paradise regained’ throughout the whole world.” Barnes says, regarding the expression *waters cover the sea*, “The vast waters of the ocean cover its depths, find their way into all the caverns, flow into all the recesses on the shore—and thus shall the knowledge of Jehovah spread like deep, flowing waters, until the earth shall be pervaded and covered with it.”

vv. 10- 16. In the previous verses Isaiah has spoken of the millennial day. Now he turns to the gathering of Israel and to the punishment of those who oppress His people. Regarding this great event, Zechariah says: “And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.” (Zechariah 10:6-9).

10 ¶ And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the

Gentiles seek. “What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter? Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph,²² unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days” (D&C 11:5-6). Just as the Lord called Ezekiel, “son of man,” a title that really belonged to the Savior, so is Joseph Smith the “root of Jesse,” a title that belongs to Jesus. The term Root of Jesse is used of the Savior in the Book of Revelations: “And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain ...” (Revelations 5:1-6a). The true *Ensign of the Nations* is our Lord Jesus Christ, our Standard, *Jehovahnessi*, יְהוָה נְסִי (Exodus 17:15). Yet He employs servants: “What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38). I call this the *how beautiful upon the mountains principle*.²³ Joseph Smith Jr. stands

²² So, if Brother Joseph is a descendant of Ephraim how can he be a descendant of Ephraim and Judah? Hyrum L. Andrus wrote, “Brigham Young apparently understood the rights and promises of the divine patriarchal order; he believed that the Prophet was a legal heir to its presidency in the last days. He spoke of Joseph Smith as ‘a pure Ephraimite,’ not that he had only the blood of Ephraim in his veins, but that ‘his descent from Joseph that was sold into Egypt was direct, and the blood was pure in him.’ ‘That is why the Lord chose him,’ President Young explained. ‘The decrees of the Almighty will be exalted—that blood which was in him was pure and he had the sole right and lawful power [to receive and exercise the keys of the priesthood in the flesh], as he was the legal heir to the blood that has been on the earth and has come down through a pure lineage.’ Because President Young understood that the line of Joseph Smith’s descent had been revealed, he affirmed: ‘I know who has the right to the Keys—the Prophet has!’ The latter-day Seer had ‘the blood and the Priesthood’ to extend the divine order to others. ‘The keys will rest upon the Prophet,’ President Young emphasized, ‘and there is no power on earth or in hell to take it from him.’” (Doctrines of the Kingdom, p.538.)

²³ We read, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (Isaiah 52:7). This scripture is most of all about the

prominent among these servants of the Lord. “Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it” (D&C 135:3). Oh how I love Brother Joseph. I have been immersed in a sweet testimony of his prophetic calling. Victor Ludlow quotes HC 6:363-64: “The Savior said ... the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. ... The testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the priesthood to a witness over all people ... a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days.” This special messenger that will help the world turn its gaze to the Savior is the Prophet Joseph Smith. Each man in his own station in the Church who upholds his priesthood and does rightly before the Lord, and every woman who likewise acts in all righteousness, becomes a “light of the world” (Matthew 5:14) yet none are the Light itself. It is to Jesus—THE ROOT OF JESSE—that all the *nations* (גוֹיִם) will seek. Matthew Henry well writes, “Jacob foretold concerning Shiloh²⁴ that *to him should the gathering of the people be.*” It really is not just the *gentiles*, or the *gentile nations*, but rather, in this instance the word גוֹיִם stands for *nations*, all of them.

יְהוָה. Compare with use of גוֹיִם in verse 12. ¶

And his rest shall be glorious. This scripture seems to refer to the *rest* or eternal life that are obtained by those followers of Christ who are exalted. The Lord is inviting all to accept His word, do His work, and then be exalted in His kingdom. **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum reads, “And it shall come to pass at that time, that the son of the son of Jesse, who is about to arise as a sign to the peoples, to him shall the kingdoms be subject; and his dwelling-place shall be glorious.” The LXX renders it: “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall arise to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust, and his rest shall be glorious.” Regarding the Ensign, Barnes writes: “There is a reference here, doubtless, to the fact that military ensigns were sometimes raised on mountains or towers which were *permanent*, and which, therefore, could be rallying points to an army or a people. The idea is, that the root of *Jesse*, i.e., the Messiah, should be conspicuous, and that the nations should flee to him, and rally around him as a people do around a military standard. Thus the Saviour says (John 12:32): ‘And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.’”

Lord Himself, yet the Lord shares this work with His friends, His servants.

²⁴ “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” (Genesis 49:10).

11 And it shall come to pass in that day [that] the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

The expression וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם, “and it shall come to pass in that day” is an eschatological one. If the Lord would put forth His hand the *second* time to gather Israel, when was the first time? Exegetes tend to disagree here between the Egyptian captivity and the Babylonian. In scripture, the miraculous rescue from Egypt is preeminent. Only the final gathering would overshadow the importance of the Egyptian one. “Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.” (Jeremiah 16:14-15). Besides, the Babylonian diaspora had yet to take place at the time of Isaiah, and the Lord is unlikely to have used it as an example of how the Lord’s hand had rescued Israel. It was the delivery out of Egypt, which was a type and a shadow of both a literal gathering in the last days, as well as of a spiritual delivery. In Deuteronomy 30 we read some reassuring words spoken to the children of Israel, that they should remember in the latter days. “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 30:1-10). Speaking of the Lord setting “his hand again the second time to recover the remnants of his people” the Prophet Joseph Smith has made it clear that “the time has at last arrived” for the fulfillment of this Isaianic scripture (TPJS, p. 14-15). And so it has been. Missionaries have gone forth to almost every corner of the globe and every year take the good news of the Gospel to other remote areas. The descendants of Jacob, beginning with Ephraim and Manasseh have begun to come into the Church by the millions. The day will soon be when descendants from all twelve tribes, including Judah, will join in great numbers from every corner of the earth. The story of the bringing forth of the children of Israel into the Church through the Lamanite line is truly beautiful. While space could not hold this fascinating and uplifting account, I would like to include a few words on the subject. Elder Orson Pratt explained that in the early Church history little had happened to help bring the Lamanites into the fold and the early members were almost discouraged. And then suddenly, this all began to change. They came from hundreds of miles away desiring baptism. “They say that men came to them in their dreams, and spoke to them in their own language, and told them that away yonder was a people who had authority from God to baptize them; but that they must repent of their sins, cease their evil habits and lay aside the traditions of their fathers, for they were false ...”²⁵ I am a witness that these things are true, that the Lamanite nations are joining the Church and that many have had such dreams. An even greater movement occurred in 1946 when Elder Spencer W. Kimball was called to work among the Lamanites by President George Albert Smith, in fulfillment to his patriarchal blessing.²⁶ And the word is to go out not to the Lamanite only, but also the Jew, as explained in these

²⁵ Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854-1886. Volume 24, April 11, 1875, p. 19.

²⁶ Elder Spencer W. Kimball (then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve), April 13, 1965. “Lamanite Prophecies Fulfilled,” An address given to the Brigham Young University Student body, pp. 4-16.

beautiful words by President Joseph Fielding Smith: “The time is now at hand spoken by ancient prophets when the Lord shall feel after them. The words of Isaiah are now being fulfilled: [Isaiah 11:10-12 are quoted here.] Since the British mandate has been established in Palestine, the Jews are returning. The curse has been taken off the land and before many years have passed away they will again be worthy to enter into covenant with the Lord.”²⁷ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The LXX renders the beginning of this verse, “And it shall be in that day, *that* the Lord shall again shew his hand, to be zealous for the remnant that is left of the people” The word translated as *recover* in the KJV is given a very powerful meaning by Alexander, with an allusion to the expiatory sacrifice of our Savior:

“קנית... does not mean merely to possess (Vulgate), but to acquire (Luther), especially by purchase, and so to *redeem* from bondage and oppression (Vitranga).”

12 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.

✓ wings

The expression “for the nations” or “to the nations” is the proper translation, here of לְגוֹיִם. This shows that all are invited, and none excluded from coming unto Christ. Verse 10 should also have been translated *nations*, rather than *Gentiles*. Elder Parley P. Pratt said, “Here you behold an ensign to be reared for the nations; not only for the dispersed of Judah, but the outcast of Israel. The Jews are called dispersed, because they are scattered among the nations; but the ten tribes are called outcasts, because they are cast out from the knowledge of the nations into a land by themselves. Now, the reader will bear in mind that the ten tribes have not dwelt in the land of Canaan since they were led captive by Shalmanezar, king of Assyria.”²⁸ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, “That ensign, the fullness of the everlasting gospel, has now been raised; and that trumpet, the gospel trumpet, is now sounding its clarion

²⁷ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. “Assembling the Outcasts of Israel” 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951. p. 134-135.

²⁸ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846). P.35

call. This is the day when the root of Jesse is standing ‘for an ensign of the people’; when ‘the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people,’ from all the lands and islands of their dispersion; when ‘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 11:10-12).”²⁹ An commemorative Ensign was raised in what is called *Ensign Peak* in Utah, “Two days after the Mormon Pioneers entered this valley, Brigham Young and party climbed to that point, and with the aid of field glasses, made a careful survey of the mountains, canyons and streams. In addition to Brigham Young, the party included Heber C. Kimball, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, Ezra Taft Benson, Willard Richards, Albert Carrington and William Clayton. ‘It was suggested that this would be a fitting place to “set up an ensign for the nations” where the Lord “shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth,” as foretold in Isaiah 11:12. It was then named Ensign Peak, and in later years a standard was erected on its summit.’”³⁰

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

The envy also of Ephraim shall depart. / Ephraim shall not envy Judah. After the civil war that divided the nation of Israel into Ephraim (the northern ten tribes) and Judah (the southern two tribes), there was much enmity between the both. Judah had the true temple cult, and Ephraim, in a spirit of envy, constructed two false temples to compete with Judah. “Elder [LeGrand] Richards then suggests that ‘we of Ephraim should lead out in establishing this friendly relationship, for we are to take the everlasting gospel to the Jewish people, including the Book of Mormon, which was preserved for “the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations.”’” (See title page to the Book of Mormon.) He continues by saying that it will be through our doing this and their being restored to the church and fold of God that they ‘shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord to dwell in his presence day and night forever and

²⁹ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985. p. 536.

³⁰ “Marker Memorializes ‘Ensign To Nations,’” *LDS Church News, Deseret News*. July 29, 1989. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company.

ever.”³¹ ¶ *And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. / And Judah shall not vex Ephraim.* Sperry explains, “The gathered remnants of Israel will not harass and vex each other as they did in ancient times after they were divided politically. Ephraim, representing the Northern tribes, and Judah, representing those to the South will, under the gospel banner, get along amicably, each with the other.”³²

14 But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

- ✓ the children of
- ✓ ✓ Edom and Moab shall be the laying on their hand
- ✓ ✓ ✓ their obedience

But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together. The Targum reads: “And they shall be confederate with one accord (literally, *shoulder*), to smite the Philistines that are in the west...” United Israel (Judah and Ephraim) would come together against their former enemies by the border of the Philistines toward the sea (now the area of the Gaza Strip in Palestine). ¶ *They shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.* After attacking the Philistines, Israel would fall upon her other former enemies, including Edom and Moab.

15 And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind he shall shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make [men] go over dryshod.

- ✓ in shoes

Regarding the לְשׁוֹן יַם-מִצְרַיִם “Tongue of the Egyptian sea” Gill has, “Which Kimchi and Abarbanel interpret of the Egyptian river Sichor, or the Nile; others of a bay of the Egyptian sea, so called because in the form of a tongue; the destroying of it designs the drying of it up, so that people might pass over it dry shod; the

allusion is to the drying up of the Red Sea, when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and passed through it, as on dry land...” The expression הַנְּהַר “the river,” most often stands for the Euphrates. Elder Orson Pratt wrote: “The Lord says in the sixteenth chapter— ‘Behold the days shall come when it shall no more be said the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;’ but instead of that saying, there will be another more glorious saying, namely that ‘the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel from the north country, and from all other countries whither he had driven them.’ ... But notwithstanding they have retained this saying, it will be one day done away, superseded by the manifestations of God’s power in bringing Israel from the north country and all other countries whither they have been scattered, and gathering them to their own land. The Israel of the latter day has got to cross the sea dry shod, just as ancient Israel did. It is thus predicted in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah.”³³ Elder Parley P. Pratt wrote, “We have also presented before us, in the 15th verse, the marvelous power of God, which will be displayed in the destruction of a small branch of the Red Sea, called the tongue of the Egyptian Sea: and also the dividing of the seven streams of some river, and causing men to go over dryshod; and lest any should not understand it literally, the next verse says, ‘there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.’”³⁴ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum reads, “And the Lord shall dry up the tongue of the sea of Egyptians; and shall lift up the stroke of his mouth against the Euphrates by the word (*Memra*) of his prophets, and shall smite it into seven streams, and they shall walk therein dryshod (literally, *with sandals*).” The LXX reading (as well as the Syriac) is particularly interesting, in respects to *a strong wind*,³⁵ “And the Lord shall make desolate the sea of Egypt; and he shall lay his hand on the river with a strong wind, and he shall smite the seven channels, so that men shall pass through it dry-shod.” In terms of the *seven streams*, Henderson adds, “i.e., *completely* into rivulets or torrents, and so dry up the Euphrates; the number *seven*

³³ Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854-1886. Volume 24, April 11, 1875, p. 24.

³⁴ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846). P.35

³⁵ “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided” (Exodus 14:21).

³¹ Tate, Lucile C. *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1982.

³² Sperry, Sidney B. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1968. 2nd Book of Nephi, p. 228.

being employed to express perfection or completeness. The appropriateness of the figure lies in the multitude of canals into which the Euphrates was divided....”

16 And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said, “. . . those who are left because they have abided the day of our Lord’s coming shall find a highway to lead them to their appointed gathering places. It shall then be, Isaiah says, ‘like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.’ (Isa. 11:16.) As the Lord provided a highway through the Red Sea for his people anciently, as they traveled to their promised land, so will he provide a way for them to travel in the latter days. Our latter-day revelation, after stating that the great deep shall be driven back into the north countries and that the continents shall become one land, states that ‘they who are in the north countries,’ meaning the Ten Tribes, shall return. ‘And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep’ for them. (D&C 133:23-27.) Would we go too far astray if we were to suggest that the highway is created by the joined landmasses, and that as ancient Israel found a dry path through the Red Sea, so latter-day Israel will find a dry path where the Atlantic Ocean once was? It is at least a thought to ponder, for surely we are expected to seek for interpretations relative to all that has been revealed concerning the Lord and his coming.”³⁶ Nyman wrote, “The remnant which left from Assyria are, of course, the ten tribes who were taken into the

north. The apocryphal book of 2 Esdras tells of miracles which will attend their return like those that attended their departure: ‘Then they dwelt there until the last times; and now, when they are about to come again, the Most High will stop the channels of the river again, so that they may be able to pass over. Therefore you saw the multitude gathered together in peace.’ (2 Esdras 13:46-47.) And the Doctrine and Covenants gives an even more sure prophecy of the event spoken of in Isaiah (see D&C 133:26-33). President Joseph Fielding Smith refers to the entire eleventh chapter of Isaiah in speaking of the lost tribes coming to their brother Ephraim, the firstborn in Israel, to receive their crowning blessings (see DS, 3:252).” **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The LXX reads, “And there shall be a passage for my people, that is left in Egypt: and it shall be to Israel as the day when he came forth out of the land of Egypt.” Alexander suggests that the word מִסְלָה does not represent a *path* or *natural way* left after people traverse it, but rather is “an artificial road formed by casting up the earth (from סָלַל to raise).” Regarding the remnant that shall return, Barnes makes some interesting comments. Many of the commentators are very anti-Semitic, but here are some remarks which I like and can identify with very much: “The Jews, when converted, make the best missionaries. There is a freshness in their views of the Messiah when they are converted, which Gentile converts seldom feel. The apostles were all Jews; and the zeal of Paul shows what converted Jews will do when they become engaged in making known the true Messiah. * * * We have every reason therefore, to expect that God intends to make great use of the Jews, whom he has preserved scattered everywhere—though they be but a ‘remnant’—in converting the world to his Son. And we should most fervently pray, that they may be imbued with love to their long-rejected Messiah [that they may become missionaries for Christ].”

³⁶ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, p. 624.

