

**3 Nephi 21: 1-3**

1

House of Israel:

1. Literal descendant of Jacob
2. True believers in Christ (converts)

Gentiles:

1. People not born into the House of Israel
2. Nations without the Gospel
3. Those who do not accept the Gospel
4. It is possible for a nation to be Gentile

Zion:

1. People “pure in heart”
2. A location (Enoch was called Zion)
3. Jackson County Missouri
4. Broad sense all of North and South America

**3 Nephi 21: 4***Established in the Lord*

2

Brigham Young, at a time when our people were hungry and cold and poor and miserable, when gold had been discovered in California and so many of them wanted to go there, stood in their midst and told them to stay here. He said, among other things, “This will become the great highway of the nations. Kings and emperors... will visit us here.” He told how the ungodly would be envious of our homes and possessions (see James S. Brown *Life of a Pioneer: Being the Autobiography of James S Brown* [1900], 122). I think we are seeing that. I suppose we will have the president of the United States with us [at the 2002 Olympics]. I know that we will have heads of states of Europe with us, and we will be blessed and benefited.

It has been my privilege and opportunity to be interviewed by media men and women from across the world already. They are interested in us.

*Discourses of President Gordon B. Hinckley* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 22005], 2:394.

**3 Nephi 21: 3-5***Destiny of America*

3

And one of the most important of all the requirements of the Church is that they should establish the Lord’s word among the Lamanites.

Spencer W. Kimball, *BYU Speeches of the year*, Apr. 1965 [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press 1965], 7.

Destiny of America

4

That is the reason there is an America. That is the destiny of America... Old Glory was raised up because there was to be a restoration of the gospel.

Mark E. Peterson (*BYU Speeches of the Year*, 1968)

- 5 This nation will endure. It may cost blood, but it is God-ordained for a glorious purpose. We must never forget that the gospel message we bear to the world is to go forth to the world from this nation, and that gospel message can prosper only in an atmosphere of freedom. We must maintain and strengthen our freedom in this blessed land.

Ezra Taft Benson, *This Nation Shall Endure*.

- 6 The establishment of this great Christian nation with a spiritual foundation was all in preparation for the restoration of the gospel following the long night of apostasy...

This then becomes the Lord's base of operations in these latter days. And this base will not be shifted out of its place—the land of America. This nation will, in a measure at least, fulfill its mission even though it may face serious and troublesome days. The degree to which it achieves its full mission depends upon the righteousness of its people.

Ezra Taft Benson, *A Nation Asleep*, pp. 8, 10.

- 7 There is not another nation under heaven but this, in whose midst the Book of Mormon could have been brought forth. The Lord has been operating for centuries to prepare the way for the coming forth of the contents of that Book from the bowels of the earth... It was the Lord who directed the discovery of this land to the nations of the Old World and its settlement, and the war for independence, and the final victory of the colonies, and the unprecedented prosperity of the American nation, up to the calling of Joseph the Prophet. The Lord has dictated and directed the whole of this, for the bringing forth and establishing of His kingdom in the last days.

Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 11:17.

- 8 I have a firm conviction that the true destiny of America is *religious*, not political; it is *spiritual*, not physical...

I have chosen two of these spiritual and therefore God-purposed reasons for reference:

First: America was found to fulfill a covenant that God made with the patriarchal ancestors of the house of Israel. The Lord, speaking unto a remnant of this house who had inhabited this land, has this to say:

“For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with his people, O house of Israel” 3 Ne. 21:4).

Alvin R. Dyer, Conference Report, Oct. 1968 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1968], 106-107.

- 9 This glorious gospel was ushered in with the appearance of the Father and the Son to the boy Joseph. The dawn of the dispensation of the fulness of times rose upon the world. All of the good, the beautiful, the divine of all previous dispensations was restored in this most remarkable season...

Do we really comprehend, do we understand the tremendous significance of that which we have?...

We of this generation are the end harvest of all that has gone before. It is not enough to simply be known as a member of this Church. A solemn obligation rests upon us. Let us face it and work at it.

We must live as true followers of the Christ, with charity toward all, returning good for evil, teaching by example the ways of the Lord, and accomplishing the vast service He has outlined for us.

Gordon B. Hinckley, Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 84-85; or *Ensign*, May 2004, 83-84.

### **3 Nephi 21: 5-6**

*Gentiles numbered among Nephites*

- 10 Every person who embraces the gospel becomes of the house of Israel. In other words, they become members of the chosen lineage, or Abraham's children through Isaac and Jacob unto whom the promises were made. The great majority of those who become members of the Church are literal descendants of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph. Those who are not literal descendants of Abraham and Israel must become such, and when they are baptized and confirmed they are grafted into the tree and are entitled to all the rights and privileges as heirs. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:246.

- 11 The effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham.  
*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. By Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976], 150.

- 12 By the *law of adoption* those who receive the gospel and obey its laws, no matter what their literal blood lineage may have been, are adopted into the lineage of Abraham (Abra. 2:9-11)...

The faithful are adopted into the family of Christ; they become "*the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters*"; they are "*spiritually begotten*," for their "hearts are changed through faith on his name," thus being "born of him," becoming "his sons and his daughters" (Mosiah 5:7). Paul explained the doctrine of adoption by saying, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," because they receive "the Spirit of adoption," being or becoming Israelites, "to whom pertaineth the adoption" (Rom. 8:14-24; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5).

### **3 Nephi 21: 8-9**

*Work a work*

- 13 Joseph Quincy, a man who became the mayor of Boston, visited Joseph Smith in Nauvoo. He later wrote: "It is by no means improbable that some future textbook, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory may be thus written: Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet. And the reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants." (*Figures of the Past*, Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1883, pp. 376-7.) It is reported that Count Leo Tolstoy, in speaking of the Mormons, said: "Their principles teach the people not only of heaven and its attendant

glories, but how to live so that their social and economic relations with each other are placed on a sound basis. If the people follow the teachings of this church, nothing can stop their progress—it will be limitless. There have been great movements started in the past but they have died or been modified before they reached maturity. If Mormonism is able to endure, unmodified, until it reaches the third and fourth generation, it is destined to become the greatest power the world has ever known.”

Thomas J. Yates, *Improvement Era*, February 1939, 94.

14 Now, I think we all understand that this great latter-day kingdom has been set up for the last time, never again to be destroyed...

...The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [is] to remain among men to prepare a people for the second coming of the Son of man.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Conference Report*, October 1958, 115.

### **3 Nephi 21: 10**

15 **They shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them.** Though cruel and wicked men would murder the head of this final dispensation, yet the work which he would set in motion, the marvelous work and a wonder—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—would roll forward to eventually fill the whole earth.

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol 4, p. 149.

### **3 Nephi 21: 22-24**

*Who shall build New Jerusalem*

16 The “New Jerusalem” of the last days will be built on the American continent by (1) “the remnant of Jacob,” (2) the gentiles who “shall come into the covenant and be numbered among... the remnant of Jacob,” and (3) “as many of the house of Israel as shall come.” (3 Nephi 21:22-25. Read also 3 Nephi 20:22; Ether 13:1-12.) After quoting extensively from chapters 20 and 21 of 3 Nephi, President Marion G. Romney explained the role of the “remnant of Jacob” in building the New Jerusalem:

“From these declarations of Jesus, it is certain that the believing, repentant, righteous, faithful Indians shall be among ‘the remnant of Jacob’ who are to build the New Jerusalem to which the Savior will come.

As early as 1831 the Lord assured the Prophet Joseph that “before the great day of” his coming should arrive “Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose.” (D&C 49:24.)

Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 281.

17 The Latter-day Saints in these [Rocky] mountains never can have the privilege of going back to Jackson County and building that city which is to be called the New Jerusalem, until quite a large portion of the remnants of Joseph [Lamanites] go back with us. Now then, here is a work for us, and we have no need to pray to the Father to return us to Jackson County until the work is done.

Orson Pratt (as quoted by Paul E. Felt, *The Book of Mormon, the Lamanite, and His Prophetic Destiny*, pp. 32-33.

18 How I wish you could go with me through the Indian reservations and particularly Navajo lands and see the poverty, want, and wretchedness, and realize again that these are sons and daughters of God; that their miserable state is the result, not only of their centuries of wars and sins and godlessness, but is also attributable to us, their conquerors, who placed them on reservations with such limited resources and facilities, to starve and die of malnutrition and unsanitary conditions, while we become fat in the prosperity from the assets we took from them. Think of these things, my people, and then weep for the Indian, and with your tears, pray; then work for him. Only through us, the “nursing fathers and mothers,” may they eventually enjoy a fulfillment of the many promises made to them... They shall prosper in the land and will, with our help, build up a holy city, even the New Jerusalem, unto their God. Only in our doing all in our power to restore these people to their heritage, can we even approach a justification for having taken their promised land.

*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, pp. 605-606.

19 The Zion of God, or the place where the city of the New Jerusalem shall be built, where shall be the first of the cities of Zion, shall, therefore, be established in Jackson County, Missouri.

Alvin R. Dyer, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, Feb. 7, 1967, p. 7.

20 “What then is the power of the Book of Mormon? It will build the New Jerusalem; it will prepare a people for the Second Coming; it will usher in the Millennium—at least it will play such an important part in all of these that its value and power can be scarcely overstated.

Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982], 171.

21 Much confusion ensues among some Latter-day Saints because of narrow reading of certain passages in the Book of Mormon. The phrase “remnant of Jacob” is not confined wholly to the descendants of Lehi, nor should we limit the Lord or the prophetic word to that interpretation. The remnant of Jacob refers to all the house of Israel (see *Doctrines of Salvation* 2:247-51; *The teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.600). See 1 Nephi 15:17; 20; 3 Nephi 29:8; Mormon 5:14 for examples of how prophets seek to broaden our scope of the prophetic picture.

Joseph McConkie, Robert Millet, and Brent Top, *BOM Commentary*, Vol 4 p. 151

22 President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: “I think this [3 Nephi 21:23] is the stumbling block. This has been interpreted to mean that the remnant of Jacob are those of the descendants of Lehi, but there is nothing in the passage as I read it which should convey this thought. Remember, that all through the Lord has been speaking of the remnant of Jacob or Israel, and of the great promises made to the gentiles who are on this land and in all other lands, if they will

only come into the Church and be numbered with the house of Israel. Their privileges would be to assist in building the New Jerusalem, and if they refuse, then shall the punishments come unto them.

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 Vol., 4:151.

23 I take it we, the members of the Church, most of us of the tribe of Ephraim, are of the remnant of Jacob. We know it to be the fact that the Lord called upon the descendants of Ephraim to commence his work in the earth in these last days. We know further that he has said that he set Ephraim, according to the promises of his birthright, at the head. Ephraim receives the “richer blessings,” these blessings being those of presidency or direction. The keys are with Ephraim. It is Ephraim who is to be endowed with power to bless and give to the other tribes, including the Lamanites, their blessings. All the other tribes of Jacob, including the Lamanites, are to be crowned with glory in Zion by the hands of Ephraim.

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 Vol., 4:151.

24 Now do the scriptures teach that Ephraim, after doing all of this is to abdicate, or relinquish his place and give it to the Lamanites and then receive orders from this branch of the “remnant of Jacob” in the building of the New Jerusalem? This certainly is inconsistent with the whole plan and with all that the Lord has revealed in the Doctrine and Covenants in relation to the establishment of Zion and the building of the New Jerusalem....

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 Vol., 4:152.

25 That the remnants of Joseph, found among the descendants of Lehi, will have part in this great work is certainly consistent, and the great work of this restoration, the building of the temple and the City of Zion, or New Jerusalem, will fall to the lot of the descendants of Joseph, but it is Ephraim who will stand at the head and direct the work. (*Doctrines of Salvation 2:250-51*, italics in original.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 Vol., 4:151.

26 In December, 1963, Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, dedicated the mission home for the Southwest Indian Mission in Holbrook, Arizona. Speaking to the Lamanites present that day, he said:

“You must blossom as the rose upon the mountain. You must flourish, and you must become a great people so that you can go back to Jackson County with us and we with you, and we will build there the magnificent temple which Orson Pratt said will be the most beautiful building that ever was built or that ever will be built. It will be the culmination of everything that is beautiful and wonderful, and within its walls [will be] the sealing power.

“And the Indians are going to assist with the temple... The Indian boys and girls [must] learn the arts and the sciences as these prophets have said.

Why? Because with all their artistic ability—and they are superior in art—perhaps they will be the ones to decorate the temple and to help build it. Accordingly, they must know the building trades... Because the Lamanites and we, the other children of Jacob, will work together in the building of the great temple in Jackson County....

“...Do you know why I think people who are actually promised that they would live to see the temple built are dying before the completion of the temple? Because we haven’t converted the Indians in large enough numbers; never shall we go to Jackson County until we have converted and brought into this Church great numbers of Lamanites. Now you just as well set that down as a basic fact...

“...Well, whether it comes to pass in the sixties, or in the seventies, or the eighties, or nineties, depends largely upon you and me and all of us, doesn’t it? And it depends upon you, the Indian folks, here. What are you doing? Are you doing all you can to spread the cause? Spencer W. Kimball, from a copy of a talk obtained from President Kimball’s secretary

27 We know it to be the fact that the Lord called upon the descendants of *Ephraim to commence his work* in the earth in these last days. We know further that he has said that he set Ephraim, according to the promises of his birthright, at the head. Ephraim receives the ... blessings... of *presidency* or direction. *The keys are with Ephraim*. It is Ephraim who is to be endowed with *power to bless and give to the other tribes, including the Lamanites, their blessings*. All the other tribes of Jacob, including the Lamanites, are to be crowned with glory in Zion *by the hands of Ephraim*.

Now do the scriptures teach that Ephraim, after doing all of this is to abdicate, or relinquish his place, and give it to the Lamanites and then receive orders from this branch of the “remnant of Jacob” in the building of the New Jerusalem? This certainly is inconsistent with the whole plan and with all that the Lord has revealed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* in relation to the establishment of Zion and the building of the New Jerusalem...

That the remnants of Joseph, found among the descendants of Lehi, will have *part* in this great work is certainly consistent, and the great work of this restoration, the building of the temple and the City of Zion, or New Jerusalem, will fall to the lot of the descendants of Joseph, but it is *Ephraim who will stand at the head and direct the work*.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955], 2:250-251.

28 I’ve known people who have been promised in their patriarchal blessings that they would live to see the temple built and some of them are dying and haven’t seen the temple built. Do you know why? In my estimation, the Lord’s timetable is directed a good deal by us. We speed up the clock or we slow the hands down and we turn back to *our* activities at our procrastinations. And do you know why I think people who are actually promised that they would live to see the temple built are dying before the completion of the temple? Because we haven’t converted Indians in large enough numbers: never shall we go to Jackson County until we have converted and brought into this Church great numbers of Lamanites.

*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed., by Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 441-442.

**3 Nephi 21:24***Gather to New Jerusalem*

29 The Zion of God, or the place where the city of the New Jerusalem shall be built, which shall be the first of the cities of Zion, shall, therefore, be established in Jackson County, Missouri. Alvin R. Dyer, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, 7 Feb. 1967 [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1967], 7.

30 What then is the power of the Book of Mormon? It will build the New Jerusalem; it will prepare a people for the Second Coming; it will usher in the Millennium—at least it will play such an important part in all of these that its value and power can be scarcely overstated. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982], 171.

31 The revealed word relative to the gathering to Independence and its environs will come through the prophet of God on earth... That call will not be for the saints in general to assemble there. The return to Jackson County will be by delegates, as it were. Those whose services are needed there will assemble as appointed. The rest of Israel will remain in their appointed places. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982], 294.

**3 Nephi 21: 26**

32 This is a millennial setting. It is a setting in which wickedness and crime and vengeance are no longer on earth. It is an era when goodness and decency and integrity are the order of the day. In this setting, in this day, the work of the Father—the work of the gathering of Israel—shall commence. Commence? Has not the work of gathering, the manner in which individuals are baptized, confirmed, ordained, endowed, and sealed been in full operation since the days of Joseph Smith? Yes, the work of the Father shall commence in the great millennial day, in the sense that its magnitude shall be infinitely greater than anything we can even identify with today. All that has gone on in the past will seem to pale into insignificance when missionary work goes forward during the thousand years (compare 2 Nephi 30:7-15). Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. 4: 153.

Jehovah spake through Jeremiah: “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.” And then the Master described the manner in which missionaries would search out the people: “Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.” (Jeremiah 16: 14-16.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols, 4:152.

*10 Lost Tribes*

33 We have seen earlier through a modern revelation that the setting for the great work of the gathering, particularly of the ten lost tribes, is millennial (see D&C 133:23-34). Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written: “We do not say that occasional blood descendants of Reuben or

Naphtali or others of the other tribal heads shall not return to their Palestinian Zion, or assemble in an American Zion, or find their way into the stakes of Zion in all nations, all before the Second Coming of Christ. Some shall no doubt return to Canaan as true believers and members of the true Church, with the intent and purpose of fulfilling the scriptures and building up the ancient cities of Israel. This may well happen in some small measure, and to it there can be no objection. Great movements have small beginnings, and floods that sweep forth from bursting dams are first forecast when small rivulets trickle from pent-up reservoirs. But we do say that the great day of the return of the Ten Tribes, the day when the assembling hosts shall fulfill the prophetic promises, shall come after our Lord's return." (*Millennial Messiah*, p. 323; see also *New Witness*, p. 521.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols, 4:153.

### **3 Nephi 21: 27-28**

34 Through this scattering the Lord has caused Israel to mix with the nations and bring the Gentiles within the blessings of the seed of Abraham. We are preaching the gospel now in all parts of the world, and for what purpose? To gather out from the Gentile nations the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is by this scattering that the Gentile nations have been blessed, and if they will truly repent they are entitled to all the blessings promised to Israel...

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 2:57.

35 But, says one, are they [the lost tribes of Israel] not in a body somewhere in the land of the north? Answer: They are not; they are scattered in all nations. The north countries of their habitation are all the countries north of their Palestinian home, north of Assyria from whence they escaped... Query: What happened to the Ten Tribes after the visit of the Savior to them...? Answer: The same thing that happened to the Nephites. There was righteousness for a season, and then there was apostasy and wickedness... In this day when the head of the Church can communicate with all men on earth, there is no longer any need for one kingdom in Jerusalem and another in Bountiful and others in whatever place or places the Ten Tribes were when Jesus visited them. This is the promised day when there shall be one God, one Shepherd, one prophet, one gospel, one church, and one kingdom for all the earth. This is the day when one man shall direct all of the Lord's work in all the earth; the day when he shall bring all Israel into one fold.

Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah*, pp. 216-217.

36 Here is the summation of it all: Men and women gather first to Christ the Lord, accept his gospel, call upon the Father in his name, partake of the sanctifying powers of his atoning blood, and in process of time become perfect in him. Second, those who gather to Christ also gather to where the people of Christ congregate, to the lands of their inheritance. For millions it will be in such diverse places of gathering as Korea, Brazil, Germany, New Zealand, or ten thousand like places. For the time being, Latter-day Saints are asked to remain where they are, in those nations where they hold citizenship. In this manner the tent of Zion is expanded and strengthened as more and more stakes are driven into the earth. "The revealed word relative to the gathering to

independence and its environs will come through the prophet of God on earth. When it does come-with the consequent return of the saints to that Zion which shall not be moved out of its place-that call will not be for the saints in general to assemble there. The return to Jackson County will be by delegates, as it were. Those whose services are needed there will assemble as appointed. The rest of Israel will remain in their appointed places.”(Bruce R. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, p. 294.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, Brent Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols., 4:154.