

# Israel: The Scattering and Gathering

02/06

“It is a principle I esteem to be of the greatest importance to those who are looking for salvation in this generation, or in these, that may be called, ‘the latter times.’ All that the prophets that have written, from the days of righteous Abel, down to the last man that has left any testimony on record for our consideration, in speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days, goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the gathering.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 83)

*Monumental Message: As with Israel so goes Judah* - (1 Nephi 15:17, 20; Mormon 5:14; Jeremiah 3:6-18)

## Scattering Defined

(What, Who, When, Where, Why, How)

*What - Scattering* (2 Kings 17:5-13, 18)

*Who - ‘the more part of all the tribes’* (1 Nephi 22:2-5; James 1:1\*)

*When - 721bc-Assyria, 587bc-Babylon, 70ad - Rome, 132ad - Bar-Kokhba Revolt, etc. - present.* (2 Nephi 25:9-15)

*Where - ‘north countries’ and ‘the four corners of the earth’* (Leviticus 26:33; Isaiah 11:11-12)

*Why - Rejection of the Messiah, His Mouthpiece (Prophet), His Message (Scripture), etc.* (2 Nephi 25:16-18)

*How - ‘by way of the Gentiles’* (1 Nephi 15:17, 3 Nephi 16:8; 1 Nephi 19:13-14; 2 Nephi 10:5-6)

## Gathering Defined

(What, Who, When, Where, Why, How)

*What - Gathering* (3 Nephi 5:24-26; 3 Nephi 10:4-6)

*Who - ‘whole house of Israel’ and ‘Gentile’* (Ezekiel 37:1-28; Jeremiah 3:14, 18; 3 Nephi 16:4-17; Ruth)

*When - 1829ad-Book of Mormon, 1830-restored Church, 1836-keys, 1842-temple, etc. - present, millennium.* (1 Nephi 15:17-20; 3 Nephi 21:25-35; D&C 58:45; D&C 66:11)

*Where - ‘north countries’ and ‘the four corners of the earth’* (D&C 110:11; D&C 133:25-35)

*Why - Acceptance of the Messiah, His Mouthpiece (Prophet), His Message (Scripture), etc.* (1 Nephi 19:15-16; 2 Nephi 10:7-8; 2 Nephi 9:2; D&C 45:52; Book of Mormon Title page-Mormon 3:18)

*How - ‘by way of the Gentiles’* (1 Nephi 15:17; 2 Nephi 10:9; 3 Nephi 21:23; Jeremiah 16:16)

Common Conclusion: God’s Desire is in His Children - (Isaiah 18:7; Isaiah 62:2-4; Moses 1:39)

\*(The Number Ten: The Lord uses the number 10 as a Symbol of **Physical “Quantitative” Completeness; Ordinal, Wholeness:**

- 5 wise virgins/ 5 foolish virgins (Matt 25:2)

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- Commandments (Exodus 20:3-13)
- Plaques (Ex. 7:20-11:5)
- Tithe [10%] (D&C 19:14)
- 5 Books of Law = Pentateuch + “Prophets” = complete
- Genesis divided into 10 parts

1 Nephi 15:13-20	3 Nephi 16:4-20	2 Kings 17:5-13, 18
1 Nephi 19:13-16	3 Nephi 21:20-29	Leviticus 26:33
1 Nephi 22:2-7	Mormon 5:14	Jeremiah 3:6-18
2 Nephi 9:2	D&C 45:52	Jeremiah 16:16
2 Nephi 10:5-9	D&C 58:45; D&C 66:11	Ezekiel 37:1-28
2 Nephi 25:9-18	D&C 110:11	Isaiah 11:11-12
3 Nephi 5:24-26	D&C 113:8-10	Isaiah 18:7
3 Nephi 10:4-6	D&C 133:25-35	Isaiah 62:2-4

### Scattering-Why

**01 – “Israel was scattered because she apostatized; because she broke the Ten Commandments; because she rejected the prophets and seers and turned to wizards that peep and mutter; because she forsook the covenant; because she gave heed to false ministers and joined false churches; because she ceased to be a peculiar people and a kingdom of priests. When she became as the world, the Lord left her to suffer and live and be as the world then was.”** (Bruce R. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, pg. 186)

### Gathering-When

**02 – “When the day comes that the Gentile nations shall close their doors, and their time is ended so far as preaching the gospel is concerned, then cometh the day when the promise of the Lord made to the house of Israel—all branches of the house shall be remembered—and he shall fulfill his promises. I declare unto you that the day of the dawning of the redemption of all branches of the house of Israel is at hand. The Lord has brought the Latter-day Saints up into these mountains to put them in training to prepare them to perform a great service, even as he took Joseph away from his brethren, and separated him from them and took him into the land of Egypt to make him a Savior for all of the house of Israel. In a like manner he has separated and brought out from the nations of the world Joseph’s descendants to make them in the last days a Savior to all the branches of the house of Israel.”** (Melvin J. Ballard, *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin J. Ballard*, pg. 145) (Ether 13:17-18)

### Gathering-Why

**03 – The gathering of Israel now involves conversion.**

“Now, we are concerned with the gathering of Israel. This gathering shall continue until the righteous are assembled in the congregations of the Saints in the nations of the world. This reminds us of the Tenth Article of Faith wherein the Prophet Joseph Smith said to his inquirer, ‘We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in

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the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the new Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.’...

**Now, the gathering of Israel consists of joining the true church and their coming to a knowledge of the true God. Any person, therefore, who has accepted the restored gospel, and who now seeks to worship the Lord in his own tongue and with the Saints in the nations where he lives, has complied with the law of the gathering of Israel and is heir to all of the blessings promised the Saints in these last days.”** (Spencer W. Kimball, *TSWK*, pg. 438)

### Gathering-Why

**04 – “But this gathering will consist of accepting Christ, joining the Church, and receiving anew the Abrahamic covenant as it is administered in holy places. The present assembling of people of Jewish ancestry into the Palestinian nation of Israel is not the scriptural gathering of Israel or of Judah. It may be prelude thereto, and some of the people so assembled may in due course be gathered into the true church and kingdom of God on earth, and they may then assist in building the temple that is destined to grace Jerusalem’s soil. But a political gathering is not a spiritual gathering, and the Lord’s kingdom is not of this world.**

### Gathering-Where

**05 – ...There is something mysterious and fascinating about believing the Ten Tribes are behind an iceberg somewhere in the land of the north, or that they are on some distant planet that will one day join itself with the earth, or that the tribe of Dan is in Denmark, the tribe of Reuben in Russia, and so forth. A common cliché asserts: ‘If we knew where the Lost Tribes were, they would not be lost.’ True it is that they are lost from the knowledge of the world; they are not seen and recognized as the kingdom they once were; but in general terms, their whereabouts is known. They are scattered in all the nations of the earth, primarily in the nations north of the lands of their first inheritance.**

... there will be no prophets among them except the elders of Israel who belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Ten Tribes are to come back like anyone else: by accepting the Book of Mormon and believing the restored gospel. There cannot be two separate and independent church organizations on earth at one and the same time; at least it cannot be in a day when it is possible to govern the Church from one place. The President of the Church holds the keys whereby the Ten Tribes will be led from the lands of the north to their Palestinian homeland. He, not they, will direct their return. But will they not bring their scriptures with them? Probably not; at least there is no such promise. Yes, we and they will have their scriptures; and those scriptures will tell of the visit of the Risen Lord among their forebears. How they shall be brought to light is not known. It may be in much the same way the Book of Mormon was revealed to the world. And once again it will be by or under the direction of the President of the Church, for he holds the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom and of the things that are sealed and hidden up.

...Many of these ideas, though true when properly interpreted, give a wholly false view of what is to be when they are simply paraphrased from the scriptures. In the literal sense of the word, the Ten Tribes will not return with armies and trumpets and banners; with the ice flowing down at their presence; on a highway spanning oceans and continents over which their legions shall march in regal majesty. Their return will be marvelous, with miracles attending. They will tread the highway of righteousness, and it will be as though a nation had been born in a day, because the wicked will have been destroyed and the Lord himself will be reigning on earth. The return of the Ten Tribes is, of course, a Millennial event.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pg. 519-21)

### Gathering-Why

**06 – “It is not the place of gathering that will save the scattered remnants, but the message of salvation that comes to them in their Redeemer’s name... Salvation is not in a place but in a person. It is in Christ.”** (Bruce R. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, pg. 200)

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### Gathering-Why

**07 – “Now, what is the instrument that God designed to convince the world that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is His prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. It is that scripture which is the keystone of our religion. It is the most correct book which, if men will abide by its precepts, will get them closer to God than any other book. It is the Book of Mormon.”** (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, May 1987, pg. 85)

### Gathering-Why

**08 – “What was the object of gathering the Jews, or the people of God in any age of the world?...**

**The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose.**

**It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world. Jesus did everything to gather the people, and they would not be gathered, and He therefore poured out curses upon them. Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles.**

**It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings, etc....**

**Why gather the people together in this place? For the same purpose that Jesus wanted to gather the Jews—to receive the ordinances, the blessings, and glories that God has in store for His Saints.”** (Joseph Smith, *HC*, 5:423-424, 427)

### Gathering-Why

**09 – “What is the gathering for? Why was it that the Savior wished the children of Israel to gather together? It was that they might become united and provide a place wherein he could reveal unto them keys which have been hid from before the foundation of the world; that he could unfold unto them the laws of exaltation, and make them a kingdom of Priests, even the whole people, and exalt them to thrones and dominions in the celestial world.”** (George Albert Smith, *JD*, 2:214)

### Gathering-Why

**10 – “Now I call your attention to the facts, set forth in these scriptures, that the gathering of Israel consists of joining the true Church, of coming to a knowledge of the true God and of his saving truths, and of worshipping him in the congregations of the Saints in all nations and among all peoples.”** (Bruce R. McConkie, Rulon T. Burton, *We Believe*, ‘Gathering’, ACR Mexico City, pg. 295)

### Gathering-Why

**11 – “Now, the gathering of Israel consists of joining the true church and their coming to a knowledge of the true God....Any person, therefore, who has accepted the restored gospel, and who now seeks to worship the Lord in his own tongue and with the Saints in the nations where he lives, has complied with the law of the gathering of Israel and is heir to all of the blessings promised the Saints in these last days.”** (Spencer W. Kimball, *TSWK* pg. 439)

### Gathering-How

**12 – “It is evident from these and many other scriptures that the time of the full recovery or redemption of the Jews is to be determined by their acceptance of Christ as their Lord. When that time comes, they are to be gathered to the land of their fathers; and in the work of gathering, the Gentiles are destined to take a great and honorable part.”** (James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, pg. 303)

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### Gathering-How

**13 – “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, ‘which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.’”** (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 2:57)

**14 – “This latter-day restoration of the same gospel taught by Jesus and his apostles is the most important of all the signs of the times. It is the greatest of all the events destined to occur before the end of the world, and of it many prophets have borne record.”** (Bruce R. McConkie, *DNTC*, 1: 650)

**15 – “The gathering of the Jews to Palestine is one of the most outstanding and significant of all the signs of the times.”** (Mark E. Petersen, *CR*, October 1965, pg. 61)

**16 – “Because Jeremiah the prophet understood that blood lineage is more important than other factors in bringing people to the truth, he wrote the following revelation: (Jeremiah 3:14–15)**

**Everybody knows that more people live in a city than live in a family. Why then didn’t the Lord say two of a city and one of a family? It was because of this promise of priesthood heritage. The family to which we belong is more important than where we live.”** (Theodore M. Burton, *Ensign*, May 1975, pg. 70)

**17 – “It is evident that the plan of gathering comprises:**

1. Assembling in the land of Zion of the people of Israel from the nations of the earth.
2. Return of the Jews to Jerusalem.
3. Restoration of the Lost Tribes.

The sequence of these events as here presented is that of convenience and has no significance as to the order in which the several gatherings are to be accomplished.” (James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, pg. 305)

**18 – “The Lord has sent those noble spirits into the world to perform a special work, and appointed their times; and they have always fulfilled the mission given them, and their future glory and exaltation is secured unto them; and that is what I understand by the doctrine of election spoken of by the Apostle Paul and other sacred writers. Such persons, were called and chosen and elected of God to perform a certain work at a certain time in the world’s history and in due time he fitted them for that work....**

Their blood has permeated European society, and it coursed in the veins of the early colonists of America. And when the books shall be opened and the lineage of all men is known, it will be found that they have been first and foremost in everything noble among men in the various nations in breaking off the shackles of kingcraft and priestcraft and oppression of every kind, and the foremost among men in upholding and maintaining the principles of liberty and freedom upon this continent and establishing a representative government, and thus preparing the way for the coming forth of the fullness of the everlasting Gospel. And it is the foremost of those spirits whom the Lord has prepared to receive the Gospel when it was presented to them, and who did not wait for the Elders to hunt them from the hills and corners of the earth, but they were hunting for the Elders, impelled by a spirit which then they could not understand; and for this reason were they among the first Elders of the Church; they and the fathers having been watched over from the days that God promised those blessings upon Isaac and Jacob and Joseph and Ephraim. And these are they that will be found in the front ranks of all that is noble and good in their day and time, and who will be found among those whose efforts are directed in establishing upon the earth those heaven-born principles which tend directly to blessing and salvation, to ameliorating the condition of their fellow-men, and elevating them in the scale of their being; and among those also who receive the fullness of the Everlasting Gospel, and the keys of Priesthood in the last days, through whom God determined to gather up again unto himself a peculiar people, a holy nation, a pure seed that shall stand upon Mount Zion as saviors.” (Erastus Snow, *JD*, 23:185-87)

## **Modern Israelite Myths**

(Bruce R. McConkie, *New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pg. 518-521)

### **1. False ideas about a nation being born in a day.**

“This phrase is often used to describe a future day when the Lamanites or Jews or some other part of Israel will be converted almost overnight by the tens and hundreds of thousands. It has a true application; such conversions will occur after the Second Coming among those who have abided the day. In the meantime, the whole house of Israel will be converted one by one and two by two. And any comments about a nation being born in a day are simply figurative and apply to comparatively rapid buildups of the Church in one area or another.”

### **2. The myth of the Jewish gathering.**

“Judah will gather to old Jerusalem in due course; of this, there is no doubt. But this gathering will consist of accepting Christ, joining the Church, and receiving anew the Abrahamic covenant as it is administered in holy places. The present assembling of people of Jewish ancestry into the Palestinian nation of Israel is not the scriptural gathering of Israel or of Judah. It may be prelude thereto, and some of the people so assembled may in due course be gathered into the true church and kingdom of God on earth, and they may then assist in building the temple that is destined to grace Jerusalem's soil. But a political gathering is not a spiritual gathering, and the Lord's kingdom is not of this world.”

### **3. The notion that the scattering of Israel is all past.**

“It is assumed, in an unthinking sort of way, that Israel was scattered in ancient days and is being gathered in modern times. In reality, the scattering of Israel is still going on. Those already scattered continue to be shifted hither and yon, as witness the travails and sorrows of the Jews as they flee from one nation to another. But also, some of gathered Israel is being scattered yet again. It is no different in our day than in ancient Palestine: when any of the house of Israel forsake the Lord, worship false gods, and join apostate churches, have they not withdrawn from the true sheepfold and joined themselves again with the lost sheep of Israel? And those so going back to Babylon, as it were, often find it in their interest to move physically to cities and nations where they can be swallowed up by the world and not have everlastingly before them the sight of Israel worshipping in her latter-day congregations.”

### **4. The myth of the location of the lost tribes of Israel.**

“There is something mysterious and fascinating about believing the Ten Tribes are behind an iceberg somewhere in the land of the north, or that they are on some distant planet that will one day join itself with the earth, or that the tribe of Dan is in Denmark, the tribe of Reuben in Russia, and so forth. A common cliché asserts: "If we knew where the Lost Tribes were, they would not be lost." True it is that they are lost from the knowledge of the world; they are not seen and recognized as the kingdom they once were; but in general terms, their whereabouts is known. They are scattered in all the nations of the earth, primarily in the nations north of the lands of their first inheritance.”

### **5. The myth of the Ten Tribes returning as guided by their prophets.**

“This simply is not true; there will be no prophets among them except the elders of Israel who belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Ten Tribes are to come back like anyone else: by accepting the Book of Mormon and believing the restored gospel. There cannot be two separate and independent church organizations on earth at one and the same time; at least it cannot be in a day when it is possible to govern the Church from one place. The President of the Church holds the keys whereby the Ten Tribes will be led from the lands of the north to their Palestinian homeland. He, not they, will direct their return. But will they not bring their scriptures with them? Probably not; at least there is no such promise. Yes, we and they will have their scriptures; and those scriptures will tell of the visit of the Risen Lord among their forebears. How they shall be brought to light is not known. It may be in much the same way the Book of Mormon was revealed to the world.

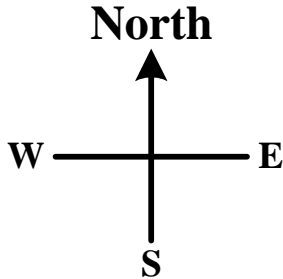
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And once again it will be by or under the direction of the President of the Church, for he holds the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom and of the things that are sealed and hidden up.”

### **6. Notions about the triumphal return of the Ten Tribes.**

“Many of these ideas, though true when properly interpreted, give a wholly false view of what is to be when they are simply paraphrased from the scriptures. In the literal sense of the word, the Ten Tribes will not return with armies and trumpets and banners; with the ice flowing down at their presence; on a highway spanning oceans and continents over which their legions shall march in regal majesty. Their return will be marvelous, with miracles attending. They will tread the highway of righteousness, and it will be as though a nation had been born in a day, because the wicked will have been destroyed and the Lord himself will be reigning on earth. The return of the Ten Tribes is, of course, a Millennial event.”

## Alignment of the Compass



**NORTH** (Hebrew) [*semole*] Left Side

Denotes the place of dwelling for the heathen Gods.

(Isaiah 14:13 fn. 13e; Psalms 48:2 fn. 2d; Jeremiah 1:13-15)

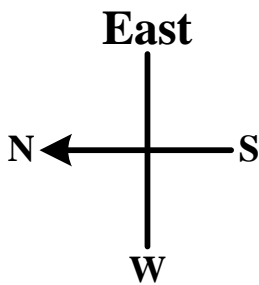
**EAST** (Hebrew) [*qedem*] **Frontward or Faceward**

Denotes the place of residence for the true and living God of Israel.

(Genesis 2:8; JS-Matthew 1:26; Tabernacle or Temple; Winds, etc.)

**SOUTH** (Hebrew) [*barak*] Right Side

Denotes the place of blessing or kneeling.



If the compass is realigned so that the directions are in proper orientation, then one begins to gain insights on the declarations and descriptions of the Lord, especially on the gathering of the house of Israel from the north (Ether 13:11, D&C 110:11, D&C 133:26).

Further consideration is the concept of left and right sides. In scripture as well as in heraldry and anatomy there is great significance in the left and right sides. This significance is explained by Joseph Fielding Smith :

“The right hand is called the dexter, and the left, the sinister; dexter means right and sinister means left. Dexter, or right, means favorable or propitious. Sinister is associated with evil, rather than good. Sinister means perverse.” (DS, 3:107-108)

Therefore, the powerful concept is declared that Israel shall be gathered (3 Nephi), but not to a place, but rather to righteousness and covenants...

“It is not the place of gathering that will save the scattered remnants, but the message of salvation that comes to them in their Redeemer’s name... Salvation is not in a place but in a person. It is in Christ.” (Bruce R. McConkie, Millennial Messiah, pg. 200)



## **A Pattern In The Book Of Ruth On The Scattering And Gathering Of The House Of Israel**

### **Contents / Theme of Old Testament**

- The Five Books of Moses (Torah) ▶ Establishment of the laws and the covenants of Israel
- Joshua and Judges ▶ Israel's struggle in keeping their covenants
- RUTH** ▶ **A FORESHADOWING OF THE SCATTERING AND GATHERING OF ISRAEL**
- Historical Books ▶ Israel's breaking of covenants and their scattering
- Prophetic Books ▶ Prophecies concerning the scattering and gathering of Israel

### **The Pattern**

- Elimelech, Naomi, Sons (Ruth 1:1-2) ▶ Israel: God's Covenant People
- Bethlehem (Ruth 1:1-2) ▶ Kingdom of God on Earth
- Famine in Bethlehem (Ruth 1:1-2, 6) ▶ Apostasy of Israel
- Country of Moab (Ruth 1:7-18) ▶ Scattering of Israel Throughout the World
- Ruth & Orpah (Ruth 1:14-16) ▶ Non-Covenant People (Gentiles)
- Return to Bethlehem - Famine is Over (Ruth 1:7, 19, 22) ▶ Gathering of Israel Throughout the World (Gentiles)
- Naomi's "Mara" Bitter - Lost Inheritance (Ruth 1:20-21) ▶ Bitterness of Bondage - Israel Inheritance Lost/God's Kingdom
- Boaz: Kinsman - "Go'El" (Ruth 2:1, 4, 20) ▶ JESUS CHRIST REDEEMER OF ISRAEL
- Marriage of Ruth and Boaz. (Ruth 3:3, 9) (Ruth 4:9-15) ▶ Ordinances Available - Israel (Adopted Gentiles) Reinstated into God's Kingdom