

Old Testament 42
“I Will Write It in Their Hearts”
(Jeremiah 12; 16; 23; 25; 29; 31; 49; 50)
By Lenet Hadley Read

(Jeremiah also gave powerful prophecies of the Latter-day Gathering).

I. President Russell M. Nelson says our work is the “Gathering of Israel.”

A. **This great work was repeatedly prophesied by all of God’s ancient prophets.**

II. First ancient prophets correctly prophesied Israel would be scattered.

A. Several prophesied the northern ten tribes would be taken into captivity by Assyria, eventually to be scattered throughout all nations. This was fulfilled about 721 B.C.

B. They also prophesied that Judah would be taken captive by Babylon, which occurred prior to 600 B.C.

C. Lehi, one who heeded such warnings, led his family and others to safely in the Americas, as told in the Book of Mormon.

III. **Jeremiah’s warnings about the impending destruction of Judah had dual meaning.**

A. He knew the actual captivity under Babylon was a witness of the final overtaking of Judah by a future Babylon in 70 A.D. To understand this deeper warning, we must remember what really happened.

1. When Christ came to the Jews who had been freed from ancient Babylon, most of them rejected Him. The inheritance of His Gospel and Church thus went to the Gentiles.

2. Due to the deaths of the apostles, apostasy began to quickly set in. In its unprotected state, Christ’s church eventually fell into the hands of a new Babylon, or idol worship, as there was a reestablishment of worship of images and relics.

3. The fall of Jerusalem between 65 and 70 A.D. was a repetitive event, also of enormous consequence. All of the House of Israel was now removed from their homeland --- to remain so for centuries.

4. While evidence shows that many of scattered Israel were taught the Gospel by Jesus Himself or apostles or early missionaries, and came to believe in Him, eventually apostasy overcame all of Christ’s people worldwide. This included Lehi’s descendants in the Americas (See 3 Nephi; 4 Nephi; Mormon Ch.1).

IV. Understanding that Jeremiah was also prophesying that Judah would suffer a similar, even more devastating destruction in 70 A.D., that Gentiles would inherit the Gospel, but then would **apostatize, sheds light on much of what he says.**

A. “Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion underfoot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.... **Thus saith the Lord [to those] ... that touch the inheritance which I have [once] caused my people Israel to inherit, if they [the Gentiles]... will diligently learn the ways of my people... then shall they be built in the midst of my people. But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy...**” [So if the Gentiles remain faithful to God’s truths, they will be blessed. If not, they will be cast off as was Israel.] (Jer. 12: 10, 14, 16-17)

- B. “Hath Israel no sons? Hath he no heir? ... the days come... then shall **Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs.**” [Israel will eventually re-inherit the spiritual covenants and blessing they formerly lost] (Jer. 49:1-2).
- C. “**O ye destroyers of mine heritage... Israel is a scattered sheep: the ... king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore... I will punish the King of Babylon... and I will bring Israel again to his habitation...** Call together the archers against Babylon... for she hath been proud against the Lord.... A sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed. A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images” (Jer. 50:11, 17-19, 29, 37-38).

[All these prophecies are that while Gentiles will inherit the covenants of Israel after Christ, for a time, because they will become lifted up in pride, Israel will be re-gathered, and will re-inherit their ancient covenants and blessings].

V. Once we understand the full meaning of Jeremiah’s warnings, we can more clearly understand his promises of a Latter-day re-gathered Israel. **And there are powerful ones.**

- A. “... **it shall no more be said, The Lord brought up the children of Israel from Egypt... but [He] brought up the children from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them.... I will send for many fishers... and many hunters....** (Jer. 16:14-16). [This means, it will be the greater Exodus].
- B. “I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way” (Jer. 31:9). (The Latter-day Saint pioneers were led to their Promised Land by following six-hundred miles of the North Platte River. See Elder LeGrande Richards, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p. 232).
- C. “Behold the days come that I will make **a new covenant with the house of Israel.**” (Jer. 31:31).

VI. Some other Protestant groups understood the writings of Jeremiah and other prophets witnessed of a latter-day Israel being re-gathered and felt that they were that Israel. (Such as the Calvinists who settled in Switzerland’s Mountains and the Pilgrims/Puritans who came to America, etc.).

A. But there are a far, far greater abundance of witnesses that this promise is fulfilled by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Here are just a few:

1. Like others, they crossed the great oceans and settled in a new Promised Land. But they did this a second time by crossing the Mississippi and settling in the greater wilderness of the West.
2. They settled in a desert, which they have made to “blossom as the rose.” (Isaiah 35:1).
3. They settled in the “tops of the Mountains” as prophesied (Isaiah 2:2). The name “Utah” means “top of the Mountains.”
4. They settled by another great Dead Sea, the Great Salt Lake. And they made the surrounding land thrive.

5. Like the priesthood of the Lord's ancient Israel, they are led by living prophets, by twelve apostles, and by Seventies.
6. They have built temples, as occurred whenever the Lord accepted them as His people.
7. In fact, the promise of the coming of Elijah has literally been fulfilled (Malachi 4:5-6). And the works that Elijah was promised to do are being in fact done. The hearts of the children have turned to their fathers! All those who died without receiving Jesus Christ's gospel, both before He came and in lands where they are denied His teachings, can be saved through temple ordinance work done by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
8. For further explanations and many, many more witnesses, see LeGrande Richards' *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book).

VII. This latter-day re-gathering of Israel could not have occurred if it had not been for Jesus Christ and His atonement.

A. "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel...I will... write [My Covenant] in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer. 31:33).

B. How does this "writing upon our hearts" occur?

1. It occurs because of the Second Witness, *The Book of Mormon*, which more plainly testifies of Christ, and verifies the truth of the first record, the Bible.
2. It occurs as further light is poured down in the Restored Gospel which helps us to understand the atonement of Jesus Christ and all scripture.
3. But above all, it occurs as the Holy Ghost, poured out in these last days, imprints upon our hearts a sure witness that He Lives and has worked A Marvelous Work and a Wonder to save all mankind in these last days.

VIII. The Lord revealed precisely how long Israel would be cast out.

- A. "And it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and will make it a perpetual desolation" (25:12).
- B. The Lord reinforced adding "after seventy years be accomplished... I will visit you and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return" (29:10).
- C. This prophecy of Jeremiah's was extremely important to Daniel. He and his people were still captive to Babylon, longing for their restoration as God's people, and he recognized that seventy year period was coming to a close.
- D. Daniel therefore prays that the Lord will restore them now as promised.
- E. And in fact Judah returns to Judea at the appointed time.

IX. But first, Gabriel appeared to Daniel and gave him a series of visions.

- A. Through these highly symbolic visions, the Lord revealed when Christ would come and restore as His people any of those who would accept Him.
- B. Sir Isaac Newton, who was deeply religious and a great mathematician, showed how Gabriel's prophecy was fulfilled precisely by Christ's coming.