

September 14–20
Isaiah 1–12
“God Is My Salvation”



Nephi Helps Us Understand Isaiah

2 Nephi 11:2,8

2) And now I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah, for my soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people, and I will send them forth unto all my children, for he verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him.

8) And now I write some of the words of Isaiah, that whoso of my people shall see these words may lift up their hearts and rejoice for all men. Now these are the words, and ye may liken them unto you and unto all men.

Russell M. Nelson

“Because Isaiah is quoted so extensively, he deserves mention as one of the major contributors to the Book of Mormon.... Some 433 verses of Isaiah—roughly a third of the entire book—are quoted in the Book of Mormon.... One scholar of Isaiah documents that no less than 391 of the verses refer to the attributes, appearance, majesty, and mission of Jesus Christ (see Monte S. Nyman, “Great Are the Words of Isaiah”).”
(CR, Oct. 1999)

Nephi Helps Us Understand Isaiah

2 Nephi 25:1-2,7

1) Now I, Nephi, do speak somewhat concerning the words which I have written, which have been spoken by the mouth of Isaiah. For behold, Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand; for they know not concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews.

2) For I, Nephi, have not taught them many things concerning the manner of the Jews; for their works were works of darkness, and their doings were doings of abominations.

7) But behold, I proceed with mine own prophecy, according to my plainness; in the which I know that no man can err; nevertheless, in the days that the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled men shall know of a surety, at the times when they shall come to pass.

Nephi Helps Us Understand Isaiah

Nephi emphasizes these points from Isaiah:

- Judah will be taken captive because of their iniquity.
- Christ's earthly ministry.
- The scattering and scourging of the Jews.
- The latter-day restoration and gathering of Israel.

Destruction of Judah

2 Nephi 25:9-10

9) And as one generation hath been destroyed among the Jews because of iniquity, even so have they been destroyed from generation to generation according to their iniquities; and never hath any of them been destroyed save it were foretold them by the prophets of the Lord.

10) Wherefore, it hath been told them concerning the destruction which should come upon them, immediately after my father left Jerusalem; nevertheless, they hardened their hearts; and according to my prophecy they have been destroyed, save it be those which are carried away captive into Babylon.

Destruction of Judah

Isa 5:1-2

What does the vineyard represent, and what do the other elements symbolize?

Destruction of Judah

Isa 5:3-6

How does the Lord respond when His vineyard produces “wild grapes”?

What happens when the Lord removes His protection from the vineyard?

What does the vineyard’s destruction symbolize about Jerusalem and Judah?

Destruction of Judah

Isa 5:11-13

What was the cause of the Jews' captivity?

What spiritual condition is Isaiah describing through the metaphors in verse 13?

Destruction of Judah

Isa 3:16-24

What does their focus on appearance and possessions reveal about some of the inhabitants of Zion?

Wilford Woodruff

“There are some prophecies pertaining to these latter days that are unpleasant to contemplate.... I have been reading the third chapter of Isaiah, and I have been hoping, all the days of my ministry, that the sayings contained in that chapter would never apply to the daughters of Zion in our day.... In spite of the follies that some among us delight in, we are going to build up Zion.... By and by, when we are sanctified and made perfect, when we are chastised and humbled before the Lord, when we have got our eyes opened, and our hearts set upon building up the kingdom of God, then will we return and rebuild the waste places of Zion.”

(JD, 16:263)

Christ's Earthly Ministry

2 Nephi 25:12-13

12) But, behold, they shall have wars, and rumors of wars; and when the day cometh that the Only Begotten of the Father, yea, even the Father of heaven and of earth, shall manifest himself unto them in the flesh, behold, they will reject him, because of their iniquities, and the hardness of their hearts, and the stiffness of their necks.

13) Behold, they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead, with healing in his wings; and all those who shall believe on his name shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, my soul delighteth to prophesy concerning him, for I have seen his day, and my heart doth magnify his holy name.

Christ's Earthly Ministry

Isa 7:14

Isa 9:6-8

What do the names and titles of Christ in these verses teach us about who He is and what He will do?

Thomas S. Monson

"For generations, enlightened mankind anxiously sought the fulfillment of prophecies uttered by righteous men inspired of Almighty God. For did not Isaiah declare: 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.' And again, 'For unto us a child is born... and his name shall be called... The Prince of Peace.'...

"With the birth of the babe in Bethlehem, there emerged a great endowment—a power stronger than weapons, a wealth more lasting than the coins of Caesar. This child was to be the King of kings and Lord of lords the Promised Messiah, even Jesus Christ the Son of God." (CR, Oct. 1965)

The Scattering of the Jews

2 Nephi 25:15-16

15) Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations.

16) And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations for the space of many generations, yea, even down from generation to generation until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind—and when that day shall come that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things.

Christ's Earthly Ministry

Isa 3:1-8,12

Why did the Lord remove Judah's wise and capable leaders, and what resulted from their absence?

Hugh Nibley

“The costly fashions reflect a world in which people are out to impress and impose themselves on others.

Everyone is after a career, everyone is aspiring to be a VIP: ‘The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient. The captain... and the honorable man, and the counselor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.’

What about them? ‘I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.’ So much for their authority--and why? Because everyone is out for himself.... They stubbornly think they can go it alone.”

(Old Testament and Related Studies, pg.224)

The Gathering of Israel

2 Nephi 25:17

17) And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state.

Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men.

18) Wherefore, he shall bring forth his words unto them, which words shall judge them at the last day, for they shall be given them for the purpose of convincing them of the true Messiah, who was rejected by them; and unto the convincing of them that they need not look forward any more for a Messiah to come, for there should not any come, save it should be a false Messiah which should deceive the people; for there is save one Messiah spoken of by the prophets, and that Messiah is he who should be rejected of the Jews.

The Gathering of Israel

Isa 2:2-3

What do you think is meant by “the mountain of the Lord’s house”?

What do you think is meant by “out of Zion shall go forth the law”?

Gordon B. Hinckley

“Ever since the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated, we have interpreted that scripture from Isaiah, repeated again in Micah as applying to this sacred house of the Lord. And of this place, since the day of its dedication, an ever-increasing number from across the world have said in effect, ‘Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He might teach us of His ways, that we might walk in His paths.’

“I believe and testify that it is the mission of this Church to stand as an ensign to the nations and a light to the world. We have had placed upon us a great, all-encompassing mandate from which we cannot shrink nor turn aside. We accept that mandate and are determined to fulfill it, and with the help of God we shall do it.” (CR, Oct. 2003)

Harold B. Lee

"I have often wondered what that expression meant, that out of Zion shall go forth the law. Years ago I went with the brethren to the Idaho Falls Temple, and I heard in that inspired prayer of the First Presidency a definition of the meaning of that term "out of Zion shall go forth the law." Note what they said: "We thank thee that thou hast revealed to us that those who gave us our constitutional form of government were men wise in thy sight and that thou didst raise them up for the very purpose of putting forth that sacred document [the Constitution of the United States - D&C 101]..."

(President Harold B. Lee, Improvement Era, Oct. 1945, pg. 564)

The Gathering of Israel

Isa 11:10-14

Who is the “root of Jesse” mentioned in verse 10?

What is the “ensign” that the Lord will set up to gather Israel?

What will happen to the dispersed of Judah who are scattered throughout the earth?

What do you think is meant by “they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines”?

D&C 113:5-6

5) What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?

6) Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, 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.

John Taylor

"We certainly have a work to perform on the earth, and God our Father has selected us for that purpose. He raised up Joseph Smith and other men, and conferred the holy Priesthood upon them and today they are found organized as Elders, High Priests, Seventies, the Twelve, etc., by whom the Lord expects to lift up a standard to the nations, and an ensign to the people. And notwithstanding the calculations and plans of the world, we are told that when this standard is lifted up, the Gentiles shall seek unto it, 'and his rest shall be glorious.'" (JD, 23:333)

Bruce R. McConkie

"When Isaiah promised that the Lord would 'set up an ensign for the nations' and gather the dispersed of Israel, the ensign, the standard, the divine flag around which all men should rally was to be the holy gospel."
(Bruce R. McConkie, The Millennial Messiah, pg.106)

Ezra Taft Benson

"This miracle of the return of the Jews was to be one of the events to precede Christ's second coming, and the scriptures are very clear with reference to this fact. Isaiah said that they shall gather 'the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth' and 'set them in their own land' (Isa 14:1), that they will 'build the old waste,' and 'repair the waste cities' (Isa 61:4)." (CR, April 1950)

Orson F. Whitney

“We recognize the fulfillment of that prophecy in the founding of this Church by Joseph Smith, a lineal descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who thus lifted the Ensign for the gathering of their descendants from their long dispersion among the nations. But a part of the fulfillment rests with the Gentiles. Their steamships, their railroads, their means of rapid transit and communication -- these are ‘the shoulders of the Philistines,’ upon which the children of Ephraim have been and are being brought to the West, to the land of Zion.” (CR, Oct. 1919)

The Gathering of Israel

Isa 5:26-29

How might the symbolism in these verses relate to the gathering of Israel?

LeGrand Richards

“In fixing the time of the great gathering, Isaiah seemed to indicate that it would take place in the day of the railroad train and the airplane...

“Since there were neither trains nor airplanes in that day, Isaiah could hardly have mentioned them by name. However, he seems to have described them in unmistakable words. How better could ‘their horses’ hoofs be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind’ than in the modern train? How better could ‘their roaring... be like a lion’ than in the roar of the airplane? Trains and airplanes do not stop for night. Therefore, was not Isaiah justified in saying: ‘none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken’? With this manner of transportation the Lord can really ‘hiss unto them from the end of the earth,’ that “they shall come with speed swiftly.’ Indicating that Isaiah must have foreseen the airplane, he stated: ‘Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows’ (Isaiah 60:8)?” (Israel! Do You Know?, pg. 182)

The Gathering of Israel

Isa 4:2-6

Isa 11:6-9

What do these passages teach us about why peace will exist in Zion and throughout the earth?

James E. Faust

"Advances in communication and travel during this last century have hastened the pace at which the word of the Lord goes out from Zion. I feel much like Isaiah, who spoke of our time, when 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' I believe that this marvelous outpouring of knowledge has heightened our ability to take the Lord's saving message to the world, 'that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations' (Luke 24:47)." (CR, April 1999)

Next Week:

September 21–27

Isaiah 13–14; 22; 24–30; 35

“A Marvelous Work and a Wonder”

