

# THE FUTURE OF THE PROMISED LAND THE NEW JERUSALEM

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*Men may fail in this country, earthquakes may come, seas may heave beyond their bounds, there may be great drought, disaster, and hardship, but this nation, founded on principles laid down by men whom God raised up, will never fail. This is the cradle of humanity, where life on this earth began in the Garden of Eden. This is the place of the new Jerusalem. This is the place that the Lord said is favored above all other nations in all the world. This is the place where the Savior will come to His temple. This is the favored land in all the world. Yes, I repeat, men may fail, but this nation won't fail. I have faith in America; you and I must have faith in America, if we understand the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are living in a day when we must pay heed to these challenges.<sup>1</sup>*

—Harold B. Lee

**W**riting for publication, the Prophet Joseph stated that the New Jerusalem or “*the City, of Zion, spoken of by David in the 102nd Psalm, will be built upon the Land of America.*”<sup>2</sup> The Lord revealed exactly where this New Jerusalem or the City of Zion would be built in the Doctrine and Covenants, stating that “*the city Zion shall be built...on the borders by the Lamanites*” (D&C 28:8–9).

So where are the “borders of the Lamanites?” The Lord answered, “And thus you shall take your journey into the regions westward, *unto the land of Missouri, unto the borders of the Lamanites*” (D&C 54:8). The revelation giving the exact spot is given by the Lord Himself. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read:

A revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and six elders, as they united their hearts and lifted their voices on high.

Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be *the city of New Jerusalem.*

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<sup>1</sup> Harold B. Lee, *Ye Are the Light of the World*. [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co, 1974], 350–51.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, compiled and edited by Dean C. Jessee [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1984], 273–274. See also Joseph Smith, “The Wentworth Letter,” *Ensign*, July 2002, 27.

*Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased.*

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that *the city New Jerusalem* shall be built by the gathering of the saints, *beginning at this place*, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. (D&C 84:1–4)

The city of the New Jerusalem will be built “on the borders of the Lamanites” and “in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri” beginning at the “temple lot.” Further instruction came from the Lord in D&C 57:1–3. Notice the definite articles and demonstratives used in these two verses. In the first verse it can be seen that “this land” is definite, near, and so specific that the Lord reaffirmed the demonstrative and answered again the question of “which land” by stating the “land of Missouri.”

Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, *in this land, which is the land of Missouri*, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.

Wherefore, *this is the land of promise*, and the place for the city of Zion.

And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse. (D&C 57:1–3)

The Elders having assembled in “this land” (notice the singular) “which is the land of Missouri,” the Lord continued, “which is the land” he has appointed for the gathering. The Lord then declared, “*this is the land of promise*” and “*the place for the city of Zion.*”

Looking at the prophetic statements of Christ, Moroni, and Ether then coupling them with latter-day scripture and the inspired statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith, a more definitive picture of the geographic location of the New Jerusalem becomes clear.

Christ	Moroni	Latter-day Scripture	Joseph Smith
<p>And behold, <i>this people</i> will I establish in <i>this land</i>, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; <i>and it shall be a New Jerusalem</i>. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you.</p> <p>And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that <i>they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem</i>.</p> <p>And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in <i>unto the New Jerusalem</i>. (3 Nephi 21:23–24)</p>	<p>Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake concerning a <i>New Jerusalem upon this land</i>.</p> <p>And that a <i>New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land</i>, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph,</p> <p>Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon <i>this land</i>; <i>and it shall be a land of their inheritance</i>;</p> <p><i>and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old</i>; (Ether 13:4, 6, 8)</p>	<p>...for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be <i>the city of New Jerusalem. Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot</i>, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in <i>the western boundaries of the State of Missouri</i>...</p> <p>Verily this is the word of the Lord, that <i>the city New Jerusalem</i> shall be built by the gathering of the saints, <i>beginning at this place</i>, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. (D&amp;C 84:2–4)</p> <p>...according to my commandments, <i>in this land, which is the land of Missouri</i>, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.</p> <p>Wherefore, <i>this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion</i>. (D&amp;C 57:1–2)</p>	<p>I was also informed concerning the <i>aboriginal inhabitants of this country [America]</i> and shown who they were, and from whence they came; it was [also] made known unto me; I was also told where were deposited some plates on which were engraven an abridgment of the records of the ancient prophets that had existed on this continent. The angel appeared to me three times the same night and unfolded the same things. After having received many visits from the angels of God, unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days.</p> <p>The remnant are <i>the Indians that now inhabit this country</i>. This book also tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His Resurrection.*</p> <p>“The City, of Zion, spoken of by David in the 102 Psalm will be built upon the Land of America.”**</p> <p><small>*Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith, compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1977], 275–276. **The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, ed. by Dean C. Jessee, [Salt Lake City, Deseret Book], 273–274.</small></p>

The prophetic position of these scriptures and statements of Joseph Smith together leaves little room for doubt as to the place where the New Jerusalem will be built and the nation directly associated with the “land of promise” and the City of Zion. The Prophet Joseph Smith, speaking about the New Jerusalem and the “very continent” where it shall be built, stated, “It has been said by many of the learned and wise men, or historians, that the Indians or aborigines of *this continent*, are of the scattered tribes of Israel...” Joseph Smith then quoted the words of the Savior in 3 Nephi, “Behold *this people* will I establish in *this land*, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob, and *it shall be a New Jerusalem.*” The Prophet continued his commentary on the verse in 3 Nephi 21:22 by stating, “Now *we learn from the Book of Mormon the very identical continent and spot of land upon which the New Jerusalem is to stand...*”<sup>3</sup>

Joseph Smith made it clear that we “learn from the Book of Mormon the very identical continent and spot of land” upon that continent that “the New Jerusalem is to stand” in the latter days. The Prophet continued:

Now many will feel disposed to say, that this New Jerusalem spoken of, is the Jerusalem that was built by the Jews on the eastern continent. But you will see, from Revelation 21:2, there was a New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband; that after this, the Revelator was caught away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and saw the great and holy city descending out of heaven from God. *Now there are two cites spoken of here.* As everything cannot be had in so narrow a compass as a letter, I shall say with brevity, that *there is a New Jerusalem to be established on this continent*, and also Jerusalem shall be rebuilt on the eastern continent (see Book of Mormon, Ether 13:1–12). “Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come; after it should be destroyed, it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord, wherefore it could not be a New Jerusalem, for it had been in a time of old.” This may suffice, upon the subject of gathering, until my next.<sup>4</sup>

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared that “this land” shall be the place of the New Jerusalem and added that and that it is to be “established on this continent.” Here the prophet linked “this continent” with the “very spot of land” for the New Jerusalem, indicating that it was not a hemispherical setting of which he was thinking. Joseph knew where the New Jerusalem was to be built, what “continent,” and what “spot of land” prophesied of in the Book of Mormon.

One of the oldest and earliest prophecies recorded in scripture is about the New Jerusalem, recorded by Enoch in Moses 7:62. The record of the Jaredites and the words of Christ both discuss the prophecies of the City of Zion that will be built upon this American continent. A key element of this prophecy that can be known for certainty within scripture is “where” the New Jerusalem will be built. This is the same land Ether and Moroni were speaking about, as they declared the place of the New Jerusalem as “this land.” That is, their land of promise. The Lord declared that the “promised land” and place for this important religious center is “the land of Missouri.”

As mentioned briefly in a chapter above, there are only two “promised lands” mentioned in scripture—only two lands that are choice and chosen by the Lord for the latter-day capitals of Israel. These are the land of Jerusalem of old, and the land of the New Jerusalem. Prophecy about these two lands in the scriptures declare “for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the

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<sup>3</sup> TPJS, 85.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 85.

word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3). The following two scriptures clearly designate the two promised lands and the gathering that is to take place there. These are the words Christ received from the Father as He taught the Nephites in the Book of Mormon.

### Jerusalem of Old

And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people; and I have covenanted with them that *I would gather them together* in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again *the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land* unto them forever, saith the Father. (3 Nephi 20:29)

### The New Jerusalem

And they [the Gentiles] shall assist my people, *the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.*

And then shall they assist my people that *they may be gathered* in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, *in unto the New Jerusalem.* (3 Nephi 21:23–24)

During His personal ministry among the descendants of Lehi, the Savior taught about the New Jerusalem in respect to “this people” and “this land.”

And behold, *this people* will I establish *in this land*, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and *it shall be a New Jerusalem.* And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you. (3 Nephi 20:22)

“This land” is described as the place where the New Jerusalem will be built and would be intimate in proximity to the speaker, which would be Christ in the land Bountiful.

### The Land of Zion

The New Jerusalem is to be built in Jackson County, Missouri, which the Lord calls “the land of promise” in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 57:2) and the “place for the city of Zion. Zion can be a city, a place, or a people. Brigham Young made a few interesting statements about Zion and how the gospel will be taught and spread throughout the world; which the whole earth will eventually become a ‘Zion’ for the Lord’s people. This ‘world Zion’—which will consist of the righteous—is not to be confused with the promised land of the Book of Mormon.

*The Land of Zion—This is the land of Zion.* West of us is a body of water that we call the Pacific, and to the east there is another large body of water which we call the Atlantic, and to the north is where they have tried to discover a northwest passage; these waters surround the land of Zion. 4:301.

And what is Zion? In one sense Zion is the pure in heart. *But is there a land that ever will be called Zion? Yes, brethren. What land is it? It is the land that the Lord gave to Jacob, who bequeathed it to his son Joseph, and his posterity, 2:253.*

*This American continent will be Zion;* for it is so spoken of by the prophets. Jerusalem will be rebuilt and will be the place of gathering, and the tribe of Judah will gather there; *but this continent of America is the land of Zion.* 5:4.

*This is the land of Zion—this is the continent whereon the Lord has commenced his work for the last time, and whereon Jesus will make his appearance the second time, when he comes to gather and save the House of Israel. 8:81–2.*

Zion will extend, eventually, all over this earth. There will be no nook or corner upon the earth but what will be in Zion. It will all be Zion. 9:138.<sup>5</sup>

Eventually with the preaching of the gospel, all the world will become the “land of Zion” as the stakes and wards cover the earth. However, not all the world is the “promised land” of the Book of Mormon, nor is all the world the land of promise discussed in scripture. There is a difference between the City of Zion, which will become the New Jerusalem; Zion (the church throughout the world); and the promised lands discussed in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.<sup>6</sup>

The establishment of Zion and a Zion people has been the goal of every prophet, yet it has failed in almost every dispensation because of spiritual wickedness called Babylon and those ever-present secret oaths and combinations. There have been two times that we are aware of in scripture that a people of the Lord have created a Zion society that was eventually taken to heaven because of their righteousness and the wickedness of the world around them. “And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself” (D&C 105:5).

The first account of the establishment of Zion is that of Enoch and his city where the people were converted and lived the laws and covenants of Zion.

The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land, and they were blessed upon the mountains, and upon the high places, and did flourish.

And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.

And Enoch continued his preaching in righteousness unto the people of God. And it came to pass in his days, that he built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion.

And it came to pass that Enoch talked with the Lord; and he said unto the Lord: Surely Zion shall dwell in safety forever. But the Lord said unto Enoch: Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed.

And after that Zion was taken up into heaven, Enoch beheld, and lo, all the nations of the earth were before him;

And Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, Zion is Fled. (Moses 7:17–20, 23, 69)

Where this City of Enoch was located has become a discussion for many. Perhaps the scriptures answer the question within the prophecies of Joseph Smith and in the Doctrine and Covenants. We know where the “New Jerusalem” will be built: not far from Adam-ondi-Ahman. Scripture and prophetic statements are sufficient enough to need no discussion. The New Jerusalem will be

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<sup>5</sup> Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Widtsoe, [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1954], 119.

<sup>6</sup> See *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, compiled and edited by Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook [Provo:BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980], 415–416, see also page 418, notes 1, 5, and 8.)

in Jackson County, Missouri. It is here that the City of Enoch will return (see Moses 7:62–64). The first Zion will return to the last Zion—to the New Jerusalem, the place from which she fled.

The second time that this same type of Zion was established was during the reign of the King of Righteousness, the King of Salem, Melchizedek. This “*melek*” (king) of “*tzadek*” (righteousness) preached and converted the people in a profane world as did Enoch before:

Now this Melchizedek was a king over the land of Salem; and his people had waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness;

But Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days; therefore he was called the prince of peace, for he was the king of Salem; and he did reign under his father. (Alma 13:17–18)

Melchizedek was the King of Salem, which is identified with the modern name of Jerusalem. The oldest mention of Salem is found in the Amarna Tablets, which are explained in the Bible Dictionary under “Salem:”

The home of Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18; Hebrews 7:1–2; Alma 13:17–18). Salem was called Jebus at the time the Israelites came into Canaan. However, the Tell el-Amarna tablets of about 1400 B.C. give the name of the city as Uru-Salem (an older name than Jebus), which is easily identified as Jerusalem, the “City of Peace,” the city of Melchizedek about 2000 B.C.

Uru-Salem is the older Semitic form of “*Ur*” meaning “city” and in the more modern Aramaic or Hebrew renders it “Jeru-Salem.” Jerusalem was the place of the second establishment of Zion and the translation of a city established in righteousness as was Enoch’s.

Now Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire.

And thus, having been approved of God, he was ordained an high priest after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch,

For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself; that every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course;

To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world.

And men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into heaven.

And now, Melchizedek was a priest of this order; therefore he obtained peace in Salem, and was called the Prince of peace.

*And his people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, or the end of the world;*

And this Melchizedek, having thus established righteousness, was called the king of heaven by his people, or, in other words, the King of peace. (JST Genesis 14:26–27, 30–34, 36)

The City of Enoch and the City of Peace were each established in cities that were to be called Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem where Melchizedek established Zion and the New Jerusalem where the City of Enoch will return:

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3; 2 Nephi 12:3).

This will be just as it was done anciently by the greatest prophets and patriarchs that ever lived.

### **Adam-ondi-Ahman**

Near the place of the New Jerusalem is the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, the first patriarch Adam gathered his righteous posterity and bestowed upon them his blessing:

Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of *his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman*, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.

These *things were all written in the book of Enoch*, and are to be testified of in due time. (D&C 107:53, 57)

The land of Adam-ondi-Ahman is not far from the area where the New Jerusalem will be built for the gathering again of Adam's righteous patriarchal posterity. The first patriarchal responsibility given to Adam is concluded by the last patriarchal responsibility of the descendants of Joseph, the son of Jacob. This is the place of the beginning and the ending of; ordinations, blessings, priesthood keys, including prophetic and patriarchal keys and responsibilities given to the patriarchs from Adam to Enoch. These events take place, and are accomplished and realized, in the same promised land in which the New Jerusalem shall be built and the city of Enoch will return.

And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other. (Moses 7:62–63)

Finally, all of the priesthood keys will be returned to Adam—the Ancient of Days—who will then return the keys to Christ as the work is finished.<sup>7</sup> Speaking of the second coming of Christ,

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<sup>7</sup> TPJS, 157. See also Mark E. Petersen, *Adam: Who Is He?* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 11–12.



Brigham Young taught that “he will appear first on the land where he commenced his work in the beginning, and planted the Garden of Eden, and that was done *in the land of America*.”<sup>8</sup> Could all these events be at the same location and same continent as Adam-ondi-Ahman, the promised land, and the New Jerusalem? It is interesting to note that all four of these fundamentally important spiritual events of the restoration and return of the priesthood keys occurred at or near the same location from the beginning to the end of time. It is to New Jerusalem that the city of Enoch shall return. Could this be the place or area that the city of Enoch might have been anciently? If Adam-ondi-Ahman is, as Joseph Smith stated, the place where Adam gathered all his righteous posterity<sup>9</sup> (historically and prophetically) could it also be the area of Enoch? We know Enoch was there (D&C 107:48). The Book of Moses teaches that the righteous posterity of Adam lived in the “land of promise” (Moses 6:17) and that Enoch taught and built his city in a “land of righteousness” (Moses 6:41).

Below is a list of events that have happened or will happen in the area of Independence and the lands of Adam-ondi-Ahman.<sup>10</sup>

- Adam built an altar.<sup>11</sup>
- Adam gave the priesthood keys to the Patriarchs.<sup>12</sup>
- Christ appeared to Adam.<sup>13</sup>
- Enoch established his city that is taken up.<sup>14</sup>
- Christ appeared at Bountiful and restored priesthood keys to Nephi, a descendent of Joseph.<sup>15</sup>
- A Nephite altar is built on this site.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1954], 122.

<sup>9</sup> *TPJS*, 158. See also Mark E. Petersen, *Adam:Who Is He?* [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1976], 12.

<sup>10</sup> D&C 116. *History of the Church* 3:148.

<sup>11</sup> John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement* [Salt Lake City:Deseret News, 1882], 69–70. “It was stated by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in our hearing while standing on an elevated piece of ground or plateau near Adam-ondi-Ahman (Daviness Co., Missouri), where there were a number of rocks piled together, that the valley before us was the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman; or in other words, the valley where God talked with Adam, and where he gathered his righteous posterity, as recorded in the above revelation, and that this pile of stones was an altar built by him when he offered up sacrifices.” See also Robert J. Matthews, *A Bible! A Bible!* [Salt Lake City:Bookcraft, 1990], 29. According to Wilford Woodruff, President Brigham Young once said, “Joseph, the Prophet, told me that the Garden of Eden was in Jackson County, Missouri. When Adam was driven out he went to the place we now call Adam-ondi-Ahman, Daviess County, Missouri. There he built an altar and offered sacrifices.”

<sup>12</sup> D&C 107:40–53.

<sup>13</sup> D&C 107:54.

<sup>14</sup> Moses 6:17, 41–42; Moses 7:9–20.

<sup>15</sup> 3 Nephi 11:1–8.

<sup>16</sup> *History of the Church* 3:34–35. “We arrived at Colonel Lyman Wight’s home. He lives at the foot of Tower Hill (a name I gave the place in consequence of the remains of an old Nephite altar or tower that stood there), where we camped for the Sabbath. In the afternoon I went up the river about half a mile to Wight’s Ferry, accompanied by President Rigdon, and my clerk, George W. Robinson, for the purpose of selecting and laying claim to a city plat near said ferry in Daviess County, township 60, ranges 27 and 28, and sections 25, 36, 31, and 30, which the brethren called “Spring Hill,” but by the mouth of the Lord it was named Adam-ondi-Ahman, because, said He, it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the Prophet.”

- The New Jerusalem will be built for the gathering of the descendants of Joseph of old.<sup>17</sup>
- Enoch's city of Zion will return.<sup>18</sup>
- The last patriarch returns priesthood keys to Adam.<sup>19</sup>
- Christ appears to Adam as recorded in Daniel.<sup>20</sup>
- First patriarch Adam returns keys to Christ.<sup>21</sup>

The scriptures—the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price—each speak of the “promised land.” This promised land is limited to two places within the Standard Works. Two promised lands for the gathering of Israel. Two promised lands that will have the two religious centers or capitals from which will go forth the law and the word of the Lord. There are two promised lands with capital cities by the name of Jerusalem. Two promised lands that Christ taught the masses in person and at length, as recorded in the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. The two promised lands from which we receive scripture, the ‘Witness’ and ‘Testaments’ of Jesus Christ. Two promised lands from which come the “stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph.” Perhaps this is just coincidence. Perhaps not.

### The Land of Joseph

The Jerusalem of old will be the center place for the gathering of the tribe of Judah and Israel, and the New Jerusalem or Zion will be for the gathering of the descendants of Joseph and the Gentiles who have been “grafted” into the house of Israel.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City:Bookcraft, 1954–1956], 3:66. “There are many references in the Bible to Zion, a land or place separate and distinct from Jerusalem. Two such passages are found in the 2nd chapter of Isaiah and the 4th chapter of Micah. It would be foolish to say that these references to Zion were to the hill in Jerusalem where David dwelt. Through modern revelation the Lord has made it known that the American continent is Zion. It is to be on this land that the city Zion, the New Jerusalem, shall be built. These predictions are clearly stated in The Book of Mormon and are in perfect accord with the writings of the Bible...This western continent is known as the land of Joseph and is also designated as the land of Zion. The holy city which is to be built upon this land is sometimes called the City of Zion. We should keep in mind that these terms (City of Zion and New Jerusalem) have reference to the same sanctified place from whence shall go forth the law, with the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Enoch's city was also called Zion, which means by interpretation, the pure in heart.”

<sup>18</sup> Moses 7:62–64. See also Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds., *Fourth Nephi through Moroni: From Zion to Destruction* [Provo:BYU Religious Studies Center, 1995], 217–218. Speaking of verse 62, Nyman and Tate state, “This verse clearly refers to our time—the dispensation of the fulness of times. Where will the elect be gathered? That gathering, said the Lord, is “unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City...for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem” (Moses 7:62). To Enoch, the archetypal Zionist prophet, the Lord continued, “Then shalt thou and all thy city meet *them there* [that is, Enoch's city Zion, meets Zion, the New Jerusalem, in this land].”

<sup>19</sup> *TPJS*, 157. “Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as the head of the human family.” See also Mark E. Petersen, *Adam: Who Is He?* [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1976], 11–12.

<sup>20</sup> Daniel 7:9–22.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* See also *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 157. “The Priesthood was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in Gen. 1:26–28. He had dominion given him over every living creature. He is Michael, the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures. Then to Noah, who is Gabriel; he stands next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood; he was called of God to this office, and was the father of all living in his day, and to him was given the dominion. These men held keys first on earth, and then in heaven...”

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1957–1966], 2:105. “In the day of regeneration, when all things are made new, there will be three great cities that will be holy. One will be the Jerusalem of old which shall be rebuilt according to the prophecy of Ezekiel. One will be the city of Zion, or of Enoch, which was taken from the earth when Enoch was translated and which will be restored; and the city Zion, or New Jerusalem, which is to be built by the seed of Joseph on this the American continent.”

And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the *seed of Joseph*, for which things there has been a type.

For as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, *the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph that he should perish not.*

Wherefore, *the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away.* (Ether 13:6–8)

The “*remnant of the seed of Joseph*” to be established in this land were the descendants of Lehi, Ishmael, and also includes those Gentiles who are descendants or “remnants” of the seed of Ephraim from Europe. The two “promised lands” are set apart for the inheritance of Israel whose capitals are to be called Jerusalem. The land of Israel for Judah and the other tribes of Israel and the “land of Joseph” for the restoration of his descendants—Manasseh and Ephraim. In 1930, the First Presidency issued a proclamation on the centennial anniversary of the organization of the Church. This proclamation addressed the “land of Joseph” as the gathering place of Ephraim:

It was not by chance that the Puritans left their native land and sailed away to the shores of New England, and that others followed later. They were the advance guard of the army of the Lord, predestined to establish the God-given system of government under which we live, and to make of *America, which is the land of Joseph, the gathering place of Ephraim*, an asylum for the oppressed of all nations, *and prepare the way for the restoration of the Gospel of Christ and the reestablishment of his Church upon earth.* It was under these circumstances and others of which the Lord was the author that the stage was set for the raising of the curtain upon the opening scene of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.<sup>23</sup>

President Alvin R. Dyer of the First Presidency taught in General Conference the importance of this “land of Joseph” in the restoration of the gospel and the Kingdom of God:

Thus, from these brief accounts *we see the reasons why America, or the continent of America, is the promised and choice land, choice above all other lands*, for it was here that the habitation of man began, (Adam) and here that the covenants of God were first established. And it is from the center of this land that God has started his great latter-day work that will carry to the finish. *...America as Zion will not fail. Since America is the land choice above all other lands, and it is in the “Center Place” that Zion will be established, it will not fail.*

America as Zion will not fail, not simply because it is the land of our illustrious independence and constitutional fathers, *but because it is the land of Joseph, the son of Jacob, and has been so established by God’s covenant.* It is the land for the gathering of Israel in the culminating period of the last dispensation, which God has established through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

I bear testimony of the fulfillment and the destiny of the land of America as Zion, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Heber J. Grant, *Conference Report*, April 1930, 7.

<sup>24</sup> Alvin R. Dyer, *Conference Report*, October 1968, Third Day:Morning Meeting, 110.

The descendants of Joseph (Manasseh through Lehi, and Ephraim through Ishmael and the Gentile conversion) are brought to the promised land where the blessings and records of one are shared and taught to the other. This land of promise, designated for the seed of Joseph, is where the record or “stick” of Joseph through Manasseh tragically ended its history. It is from the same burial grounds that this record is resurrected and speaks from the dust of Cumorah by a literal descendant of Joseph through Ephraim: the Prophet Joseph Smith. Each son of Joseph received “this land” as a land of their inheritance (1 Nephi 14:1–2). The resurrection of this ancient record of Joseph restores the plain and precious truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, from which was born The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Both the stick of Judah (the Bible) and the stick of Joseph (the Book of Mormon) were each written on and about their respective lands of promise.

Following instructions from the Lord, the prophet Nephi made plates of gold in order that the “*ministry and the prophecies*” could be recorded “*for the instruction*” of his people and the descendants of Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim) “*who should possess the land*” (1 Nephi 19:3). This record, preserved for Nephi’s latter-day descendants, would come forth “by way of the Gentile” as Moroni described in the Title Page of the Book of Mormon.

The land of promise is described in the Book of Mormon as ‘a land choice above all other lands, a chosen land and a promised land.’ Sacred in scripture and in prophecy, this promised land was to be one of freedom for the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was the place and home of the patriarchs from Adam until Noah. Here Enoch built his city that was taken into heaven, and to the land of promise it shall return. It was to this land that the righteous were led for the protection of their faith, freedom, and families. It is to this land that the Gentiles were prophesied to come and be set up ‘as a free people’ so that the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood, and The Church of Jesus Christ could come forth. It is on this land of promise that the New Jerusalem will be built, to which all nations shall flow. This promised land is the land of inheritance for the seed of Joseph, the patriarch responsible for the temporal and spiritual welfare of all the descendants of Abraham who have accepted the gospel throughout the world. It is the place of Adam—where the gospel was first given with its priesthood and keys for the salvation and exaltation of his posterity. The land of promise is the place where Christ will come with the Ancient of Days to receive the report of the responsibilities given to the first man and the work required and performed by his righteous posterity.

The past, present, and future of the land of promise has always been one of prophecy and of promise—a land chosen of the Lord, a land to be protected and free, a land for the inheritance of the righteous for time and eternity.