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Next Weeks Lesson: Lesson 41 "He Did Expound All Things unto Them" ([3 Nephi 22-26](#))

Today's Lesson: Lesson 40 "Then Will I Gather Them In" ([3 Nephi 16](#); [3 Nephi 20-21](#))

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| What is the house of Israel? |
| Why was Israel scattered? |
| Who are the Gentiles? |
| What do the Gentiles have to do with the scattering and gathering of Israel? |
| What is the gathering of Israel? |
| What sign has been given to show that the latter-day gathering of Israel has begun? |
| As members of the Church, what are our responsibilities in the gathering of Israel? |

1. The Savior prophesies of the scattering of the house of Israel.

A. What is the house of Israel?

The titles *house of Israel* and *Israel* refer to the descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Members of the house of Israel have been referred to in scripture as "the covenant people of the Lord" ([1 Nephi 15:14](#)) and "the children of the covenant" ([3 Nephi 20:25–26](#)). The Nephites were of the house of Israel, as descendants of Jacob's son Joseph ([1 Nephi 5:14](#)).



The Savior taught of the scattering of Israel.

B. Why was Israel scattered?

Let's read [3 Nephi 16:4](#). As we read, be looking for the answer to the question.

2. The Savior prophesies of the spiritual gathering of the house of Israel.

A. Who are the Gentiles?

In the scriptures, the term *Gentiles* is used to designate either people who were not born into the house of Israel or nations that are without the gospel. In the

chapters discussed in this lesson, the term *Gentiles* refers to nations that are without the gospel, even though some individuals in those nations may be descendants of Jacob (Bible Dictionary, "Gentile," 679).

B. What do the Gentiles have to do with the scattering and gathering of Israel?

Let's read [3 Nephi 16:7–9](#) and [3 Nephi 21:1–5](#). As we read, be looking for answers to the question.

C. What is the gathering of Israel?

Let's read [3 Nephi 16:4](#), [3 Nephi 16:12](#); [3 Nephi 20:10–13](#). As we read, be looking for answers to the question. Be sure to understand the following:

Israel is gathered as people gain a testimony of the Redeemer and His restored gospel and join His Church.

In the early days of the restored Church, part of the gathering of Israel was the Lord's command that members of His Church join the body of Saints in North America, whether in Missouri, Illinois, or the Salt Lake Valley. In the future, another temporal gathering will occur, as members of the house of Israel are gathered to the lands of their inheritance. However, the gathering now taking place is a spiritual gathering.

President Spencer W. Kimball explained: "The 'gathering of Israel' is effected when the people of the



faraway countries accept the gospel and remain in their native lands. The gathering of Israel for Mexicans is in Mexico; in Scandinavia, for those of the northern countries; the gathering place for the Germans is in Germany; and the Polynesians, in the islands; for the Brazilians, in Brazil; for the Argentines, in Argentina" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 4; or [Ensign, May 1975, 4](#)).

D. What sign has been given to show that the latter-day gathering of Israel has begun?

Let's read [3 Nephi 21:2–7](#) and [3 Nephi 29:1–2](#). As we read, be looking for answers to the question.

How have the “sayings” and “works” of the Nephites come forth to the Gentiles? What are some roles that the Book of Mormon plays in the gathering of Israel? (For some examples, compare [3 Nephi 16:4](#), [3 Nephi 16:12](#) and [3 Nephi 20:10–13](#) with [1 Nephi 6:3–4](#) and the title page of the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon was written to teach of the covenants of the Lord and to convince all people that Jesus is the Christ.)

- E. The Lord spoke of a servant who would help in the “great and ... marvelous work” of bringing forth the Book of Mormon ([3 Nephi 21:9–10](#)). Who was this servant?



Joseph Smith was a literal descendant of Jacob ([2 Nephi 3:3–8](#), [2 Nephi 3:11–12](#)), but he lived in a Gentile nation. His work in restoring the gospel and bringing forth the Book of Mormon was thus part of the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise that “the truth [would] come unto the Gentiles” ([3 Nephi 16:7](#)).

- F. Let's read [3 Nephi 16:11–12](#). What did the Lord promise to do after the fulness of the gospel was restored through the Gentiles?
- G. The covenant that the Lord promised to remember was the Abrahamic covenant ([3 Nephi 20:25](#), [3 Nephi 20:27](#), [3 Nephi 20:29](#); [3 Nephi 21:4](#); [Mormon 5:20](#)). What are the blessings and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant? (See [Genesis 17:1–8](#); [Abraham 2:6](#), [Abraham 2:9–11](#).)
- H. What will happen to Gentiles who repent and turn to God? (See [2 Nephi 30:2](#); [3 Nephi 16:13](#); [3 Nephi 21:6](#), [3 Nephi 21:22](#). All people who repent and come unto the Lord through baptism will be numbered among His covenant people.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “*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” (Doctrines of Salvation, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:246).

- I. As members of the Church, what are our responsibilities in the gathering of Israel?
- J. The mission of the Church is to invite all people to come unto Christ. We accomplish this mission by proclaiming the gospel, redeeming the dead, and perfecting the Saints. How does the mission of the Church contribute to the gathering of Israel?

3. The Savior prophesies of the temporal gathering of the house of Israel.

- A. Let’s read [3 Nephi 16:16](#) and [3 Nephi 20:14](#). According to these verses, what specific promise did the Lord extend to the Nephites? (They would be given the lands of the Americas as an inheritance. See also [2 Nephi 1:5–7](#).) What responsibilities accompany this promise? (See [Enos 1:10](#); [Ether 2:8–9](#).)
- B. Let’s read from [3 Nephi 21:22–29](#). According to these verses, what will happen in this land of inheritance in the last days? (A city called the New Jerusalem will be built.)

The original city of Jerusalem will also be restored ([3 Nephi 20:29–34](#)). The Jews will be given this land as an inheritance.

- C. The Savior said that He would gather His people and establish Zion again among them ([3 Nephi 21:1](#)). While the word *Zion* often refers to specific places, it is also a condition of heart and mind. How has Zion been described in the scriptures? (See [D&C 97:21](#) and [Moses 7:18–19](#) for some examples.) How can we begin to establish Zion in our homes, wards, and stakes today?

In the last days, the title *house of Israel* encompasses all those who repent, follow Jesus Christ, and are baptized into His Church. Live so as to be worthy to be part of the Lord’s covenant people.