



THE
WITNESS

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*Behold I am Jesus Christ,
of whom the prophets
testified should come
into the world.*

ISSUE 170/ 2020

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Cover Photo courtesy of Faye Shaw
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Heal Their Land

Everyone knows we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has affected everyone's life and is only one of many "signs of the times" now among us. We should not be surprised, as many different signs of the latter days were prophesied by the prophets and Jesus Christ himself. Probably all of us would confess these are moments that get our attention. Hopefully, they cause us to remember and see the things of God and prompt us to ponder upon our standing before the Lord. It's a call to repentance and to go forward in service to Him.

One of the most quoted scriptures in recent times, among all Christian faiths, has been 2 Chronicles 7:14.

If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

This is true for us today! However, like many scriptures, we can better understand the context by also reading the verses around the one quoted. As an example, since we are in the middle of specific signs now, it might help to also quote 2 Chronicles 7:13 to more fully understand the context of verse 14.

If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;

Read both verses together to see how they reflect what we actually see today. Right now there are record wildfires from drought in Australia, enormous swarms of locusts in Africa devouring the land, and pestilence of every kind including COVID-19, just to name a few.

We should never be troubled or afraid but we should feel an urgency to repent and engage in the work of God. Jesus said great things are coming upon the earth. Prepare ye, prepare ye, for that which is to come. Watch, therefore, and pray always!

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS SUPPORT THE BOOK OF MORMON

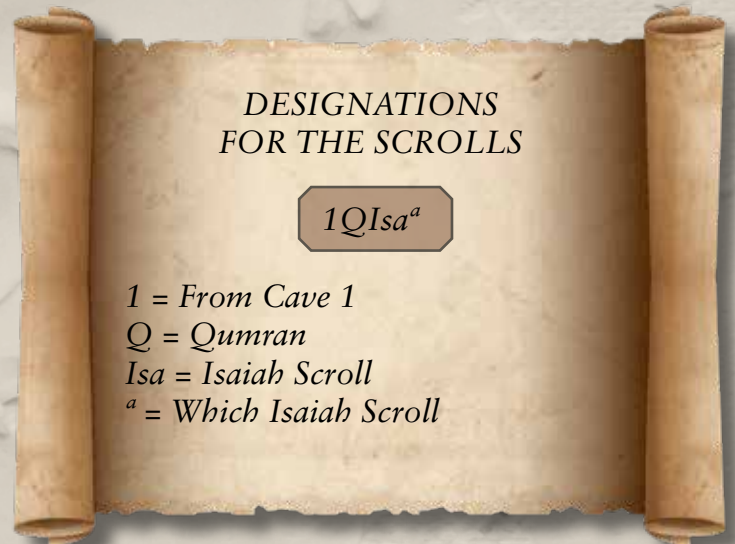
by Faye Shaw

My good friend Angela Crowell had the honor of being invited to Israel twice to work on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Later, before the scroll display came to Kansas City, she spent a month at our house creating slide shows with me. The main one was a lengthy presentation on the scrolls. A small section of the presentation came from several short essays in her *Qumran Quest Bulletin* ¹ and is the foundation for the first half of this article.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have been hailed as the greatest discovery of the 1900s. I would like to suggest the Book of Mormon coming forth in the 1800s was the greatest historical unearthing that has occurred until now. The Lord's impeccable timing is illustrated by these two sacred writings coming forth relatively close together, considering the millennia they both had been hidden. Then, on November 29, 1947 an Israeli acquired two Dead Sea Scrolls on the exact same day that the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 (The United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine) which prepared the way for the creation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948.

The illustration to the right will help in understanding the references to the scrolls mentioned in this article. The numerals and letters first indicate where a particular scroll was found, and then the source of the writing. Brackets that may appear within a quote indicate parts that were missing but which have been filled in.

Since the scrolls and the Book of Mormon were written in the same general time period, we should expect them to have preserved the same expressions and facts. The following are three correlations that show consistency between both ancient records.



The Three-Part Division of the Bible

Bible scholars were excited about finding a source 500 years earlier than any other writings they possessed that stated the three-part division of the Old Testament.

4QMMT

...the book of Moses, and the words of the prophets and David.

Or, in other words, 1) the Torah or Law, 2) the writings, and 3) the prophets.

Here “David” is used as a word which also identifies the Entire Book of Psalms (many written by David) which, evidently, was meant to refer to all the other remaining books of scripture as well. This appears to be the earliest such reference scholars have identified, and it is dated to the First Century B.C. ²

The first mention of the Brass Plates’ significance was that they

1Nephi 1:159, 161-162 (5:11-13)

...did contain the five books of Moses [the Torah]...
And also a record of the Jews... [the writings]
And also the prophecies of the holy prophets [the prophets]

Alma

Mosiah 9:2 (17:2)

But there was one among them whose name was **Alma**, he also being a descendant of Nephi.

Through the years critics have ridiculed the Book of Mormon for incorrectly using a feminine name Alma (from the Latin “alma mater” “fostering” mother) for a man. However, an almost 2000-year-old papyrus land deed written in Hebrew from a Nahal Hever cave, near the Dead Sea, mentions *Alma ben Yehudah*, “**Alma son of Judah.**” “Son” definitely implies a man’s name. Finding this validates the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. ³

Land of Jerusalem

Preface of the Book of Mormon

The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the **Land of Jerusalem** because he prophesieth unto the people concerning their iniquity and they seek to destroy his life.

The term “land of Jerusalem” is used 41 times in the Book of Mormon, but is not found in the Old Testament. It has now been found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the ancient Egyptian Amarna letters from 1400 B.C.

4Q385b, Pseudo-Jeremiah, Fragment 1, Column 1

...Jeremiah the prophet before the Lord [...wh]o were taken captive from the **Land of Jerusalem.** ⁴



**Entrance of Cave of Letters, Israel.
Nahal Hever canyon where the Alma
papyrus was found.**



The Amarna, Egypt Tablets

Letter 287:25 “...behold this **land of Jerusalem...**,”

Letter 287:45 “...come up to the **land of Jerusalem...**”

Letter 290:15 “...a town of the **land of Jerusalem...**”⁵

Besides the Book of Mormon using an expression not found in the Old Testament, scoffers have mocked the words pointing to Jerusalem instead of Bethlehem as the place of Jesus’ birth. This is equivalent to my telling people unfamiliar with Missouri that I am going to the Kansas City area, when in reality, I’m headed to Independence.

Alma 5:19 (7:10)

And behold, he shall be born of Mary, **at Jerusalem**
which is the land of our forefathers...

These ancient words in Near Eastern documents confirm their use during the time period of Jeremiah and Lehi and provide powerful supporting evidence for the Book of Mormon.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHINGS

Lehi and his family departed from the Holy Land 600 years before the advent of Christ, and none of the Qumran scribes make any mention of being Christians or writing for them. So how is it that the scrolls contain New Testament terms and teachings? In accurately transmitting the same doctrine, not only do they each support earlier Christian origins, but the Scrolls then validate the content of the Gold Plates.

Son of God

4Q246

...will be called [gr]eat and by his name will be called **Son of God**
he will be called a **Son of the Most High...**
His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom.

... this text “is clearly older than the gospels, and is probably the oldest in existence that uses the title ‘Son of God’ with reference to a Messianic king. This is the first time ‘Son of God’ has been identified in a Palestinian text...Now we know they were part of Christianity’s original Jewish heritage.”⁶

Originating from early Jewish messianic writings, this phrase, Son of God, was recorded in Aramaic. There are 52 references to “Son of God” in the Book of Mormon.

1Nephi 3:25, 44 (10:17; 11:6)

And the **Son of God** was the Messiah which should come...
And blessed art thou, Nephi, because thou believest in
the **Son of the Most High God.**

The Dead Sea Scrolls back up the extremely decisive testimony of the Book of Mormon that witnesses to the divine essence of the Messiah.



It is interesting to note that these same two titles were voiced when the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she was to bear a son, and she was to name him Jesus.⁷

Luke 1:32-33, 35 NIV

He shall be great, and shall be called the **Son of the Highest...**
and of his kingdom there shall be no end....
So the holy one to be born will be called the **Son of God.**

Together, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of Mormon verify the only designation of “Son of God” that appears in the Old Testament. It emerges after Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were tossed into the fiery furnace and then Nebuchadnezzar exclaims,

Daniel 3:25, 28

Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire,
and they have no hurt;
and the form of the fourth is like the **Son of God...**
Ye servants of the **Most High God**, come forth, and come hither.

Angela Crowell states,

One scroll editor called the Son of God text a revolutionary text. “This text challenges liberal scholarship which says that Jesus was a teacher or prophet, not the divine son of god, and that these terms were later inventions added by early Christianity. We now know because of the scrolls that these terms “Son of God” and “Son of the Most High” came from Judaism.”⁸

Resurrection

4Q521

[...the hea]vens and earth will obey Him Messiah...
...he will heal the sick, **resurrect the dead**,
and to the poor announce glad tidings...

Two leading Biblical experts confirm that, according to other scholars, this text about the resurrection

...presents “the first evidence outside the New Testament” that the Messiah is the one who will raise the dead. The common Jewish view at the birth of Christianity was that God—not the Messiah—would do the resurrecting.⁹

In this case, the Dead Sea Scrolls not only add new insight to the extent of Christ’s ministry, but continues to corroborate the enduring words of holy men in the Book of Mormon.

Mosiah 8:13-14 (13:34-35)

Have they not said that God Himself should come down...
and take upon Him the form of a man
and go forth in mighty power upon the face of the earth?
Yea, have they not said also that
He should bring to pass the resurrection of the dead...



Forgiving a Neighbor

Although this timeless concept of forgiveness is not found in the Old Testament, it clearly appears in the Book of Mormon.

3 Nephi 5:107 (13:14)

for if ye **forgive** men their trespasses,
your heavenly Father will also forgive you,
But if ye forgive not men their trespasses,
neither will your Father forgive your
trespasses.

Much earlier in the Book of Mormon,

Mosiah 11:140 (26:31)

And ye shall also **forgive** one another your trespasses,
For verily I say unto you,
he that forgiveth not his neighbor's trespasses
when he saith that he repenteth,
the same hath brought himself under condemnation.

Finally, we can see the same thought from ancient America was also embraced in *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* at Qumran, which preceded the New Testament by 200 years.¹⁰

Pseudepigrapha, Testament of Gad 6:3

Love ye one another from the heart;
and if a man sin against thee,
speak peaceable to him,
and in thy soul hold not guile,
and if he repent and confess,
forgive him.

The Messiah's "Return"

2 Nephi 5:36 (6:14)

And behold, according to the words of the prophet,
the Messiah will set Himself again the **second time**,
to recover them.

There is not even a whisper of His return in the Old Testament, but Biblical scholar James Charlesworth sees parallels between the Pseudepigrapha and the Book of Mormon on "the concept that the appearance or advent of the Messiah may be understood sometimes as his "return"¹¹. He presents two examples to support his comment.

Psalms of Solomon 18:5

May God cleanse Israel in the day of mercy and blessing,
In the day of election when He brings **back** His Messiah.



2 Baruch 30:1

And it shall happen after these things,
when the tie of the advent of the Messiah is fulfilled,
that He shall **return** in glory.

The Book of Mormon clearly affirms His reappearing.

2 Nephi 5:36 (6:14)

And behold, according to the words of the prophet,
the Messiah will set Himself again the **second time**,
to recover them.

The Lost Tribes of Israel

3 Nephi 8:4 (17:4)

But now I go unto the Father
and also to show Myself unto **the lost tribes of Israel**,
for they are not lost unto the Father,
for He knoweth whither He hath taken them.



The Old Testament does not record that the Messiah will visit the lost tribes of Israel, but the Pseudepigrapha does in two places.

In 2 Baruch 77:17-26 the author speaks of “the lost tribes.” In 4 Ezra 7:28-29, reference is made to “my Son the Messiah.” Verses 13:39-40 speaks of “my son” gathering the lost tribes of Israel. ...And as for your seeing Him gather to Himself another multitude that was peaceable, these are the **ten tribes which were led away from their own land into captivity...**¹²

Baptism

Only our Inspired Version of the Old Testament gives instances of baptism (Genesis 6:53), that, in all other versions, are only present in the New Testament. I’ve often wondered why Bible believers haven’t questioned where John the Baptist’s idea of baptism came from. So, not only the Book of Mormon, but Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible as well, benefit from the support of this Qumran revelation.

4Q414 Fragment:

“...and to atone for us..,”
“...those who are pure before you...,”
“...in the truth of your covenant...,”
“...he **enter the water...**”¹³

Alma 5:27 (7:15)

...show unto your God that ye are willing to repent of your sins
and enter into a covenant...
And witness it unto Him this day by
going into the waters of **baptism**.



Laying on of Hands

Neither rabbinic literature nor the Old Testament mention the healing of the sick and infirm by placing hands on people and then praying for them. Again, a Dead Sea Scroll validates the Book of Mormon. Interestingly, this was one of the first scrolls to come to light.

1QapGen 20.28-29 (Genesis Apocryphon)

I prayed [for him]...
and I **laid my hands on his [head]**;
and the scourge departed from him
and the evil [spirit] was expelled [from him],
and he lived.

An Israeli professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem states:

...it becomes clear that healing through the laying-on of hands was practiced among Jews, not only by Jesus and his first disciples, but by other circles as well....The scroll appears to have been actually composed before Jesus' time. ¹⁴

Mormon 4:87 (9:24) They shall **lay hands on the sick** and they shall recover.

Lamb of God

A reference to Jesus Christ as the “Lamb of God” was found in the following Jewish expression from around 200 B.C. In conjunction with the Book of Mormon, this text gives evidence that the phrase did not originate with New Testament Christians.

Testament of Joseph 2:77:

Do ye therefore, my children, observe the commandments of the Lord, and honour Levi and Judah;
for from them shall arise unto you the **Lamb of God**,
who taketh away the sin of the world
one who saveth all the Gentiles and Israel.

Nephi was so overwhelmed with the wonder of Jesus Christ he observed in his extensive vision that he portrayed Him as the “Lamb of God” 31 times in his writings.

1 Nephi 3:82-83, 85 (11:31)

...I beheld the **Lamb of God** going forth among the children of men.
And I beheld multitudes of people who were sick,
and who were afflicted...
And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God.



Again and again, we have seen the New Testament reflect doctrine and expressions from an earlier era. Evidence in the Dead Sea Scrolls answers stale criticisms and fulfills a prophecy in the Book of Mormon.



2 Nephi 2:20 (7:13)

And that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins [the Book of Mormon], and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah [the Bible], shall grow together,

The Dead Sea Scrolls' support of the Book of Mormon greatly assist in drawing both books into one. They also confirm the counsel and testimony of King Benjamin that rings down through the ages.



Mosiah 1:9 (1:6)

O my sons, I would that ye should remember that these sayings are true, and also that these records are true.



- ¹ Angela M. Crowell. “Ties Between the Book of Mormon and Ancient Jewish Writings”. *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Issue 2. Sept. 1994; and
 Angela M. Crowell. “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the BOM’s Ancient Jewish Heritage”. *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Vol. 3, No 2, Dec 1996, p2-3
- ² “Earlier Evidence in the Book of Mormon of a Three-Part Division of the Hebrew Bible”. *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Issue 2. Sept. 1994. p 6-7.
- ³ “‘Alma, Son of Judah’ Found at Nahal Hever”. *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Issue 2. Sept. 1994. p 1-2.
- ⁴ Robert H. Eisenman and Michael Wise. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*. Rockport: Element. 1992. p 58. Quoted in *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Issue 2. Sept. 1994. p 5,7.
- ⁵ William F. Albright, translator with George E. Mendenhall, “The Amarna Letters,” *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard. Princeton, Princeton University Press. 1955. P 483, 488. Quoted in *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Issue 2. Sept. 1994. p 5,7.
- ⁶ Collins, John. “A Pre-Christian ‘Son of God’ Among the Dead Sea Scrolls” *Bible Review*. June 1993.
- ⁷ *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Vol. 4, No 1, p 3.
- ⁸ *Qumran Quest Bulletin*. Vol. 3, No 2, Dec 1996, p 3.
- ⁹ Michael O. Wise & James D. Tabor, “The Messiah at Qumran”. *Biblical Archeology Review*. Nov-Dec 18/6 1992. P 60-63.
- ¹⁰ Angela M. Crowell. “The Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the Book of Mormon”. Undated Handout.
- ¹¹ James H. Charlesworth. *Reflections on Mormonism, Judaeo-Christian Parallels*, ed. Truman G. Madsen. Provo, BYU Religious Studies Center. 1978. P99-137.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ <http://www.gnosis.org/library/baptl.htm>
- ¹⁴ Flusser, David. “Healing Through the Laying-on of Hands in the Dead Sea Scroll”, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity, Ed., Brad Young. Jerusalem, The Magnes Press, 1988. P 22.*





Why Should I Read the Book of Mormon?

It is another witness of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

...to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations. Title page (iii)

And as I spake concerning the convincing of the Jews that Jesus is the very Christ, It must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, And that He manifesteth Himself unto all they that believe in Him by the power of the Holy Ghost; 2 Nephi 11:78

And behold, they shall go unto the unbelieving of the Jews; And for this intent shall they go: That they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; Mormon 2:41

It contains prophecies recorded centuries ago which are being fulfilled right now.

Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth; Mormon 4:38

And it shall come to pass in the last days when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow unto it. 2 Nephi 8:18

It contains more information about life after death.

Behold, it hath been made known unto me by an angel that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, Yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life. Now this is the state of the souls of the wicked, yea, in darkness, And a state of awful, fearful, looking for, of the fiery indignation of the wrath of God upon them; Thus they remain in this state, as well as the righteous in paradise, until the time of their resurrection.

Alma 19:43 & 47

But behold, it was not so, but it was appointed unto man that they must die; And after death they must come to judgment, even that same judgment of which we have spoken, which is the end. Alma 9:46

It contains more information on the teachings of Jesus Christ. For behold, the covenants which I have made with My people is not all fulfilled, But the law which was given unto Moses hath an end in Me. Behold, I Am the law and the light; Look unto Me and endure to the end and ye shall live, For unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life. 3 Nephi 7:9-10

Therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of Mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day. 3 Nephi 7:2

And again I say unto you, Ye must repent, and be baptized in My name, and become as a little child, Or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God! 3 Nephi 5:40

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill; For verily I say unto you, one jot nor one tittle hath not passed away from the law, but in Me it hath all been fulfilled. And behold, I have given unto you the law and the commandments of My Father, that ye shall believe in Me, and that ye shall repent of your sins and come unto Me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit; Behold, ye have the commandments before you and the law is fulfilled, Therefore, come unto Me and be ye saved; For verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep My commandments which I have commanded you at this time, Ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. 3 Nephi 5:64-68

And behold, it is written also that, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy'; But behold, I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you; And pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good. Therefore, those things which were of old time which were under the law in Me are all fulfilled; 3 Nephi 5:89-91



PROPHECY WATCH

OUT OF SMALL THINGS PROCEEDETH THAT WHICH IS GREAT

One of the truly exciting things about living in the latter days is seeing the fulfilment of covenants made between God and man, thousands of years ago. Of all the covenants God has made with men, few are greater than the covenants regarding Abraham and his descendants. Among those covenants concerning the seed of Abraham, one of the greatest is found in 1 Nephi 7:20 which says: **...In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.**

As often happens in the Book of Mormon, the writers not only articulate the covenant or prophecy but they also go further and explain what it means. Such is the case with the covenant stated above. After Nephi had read this covenant, which was found on the plates of brass, his brethren came to him mystified and seeking an explanation for that which he had read. In response, Nephi elaborated on the covenant:

And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth can not be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations. Wherefore, **the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations**, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel, unto those who are of the house of Israel. Wherefore, **he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance**; And they shall be brought out of obscurity, and out of darkness; And they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the mighty one of Israel. 1 Nephi 7:21-25 (emphasis added)

An apparent reference to the same covenant is found in Genesis 22 and Isaiah 52:

And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and **in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed**; because thou hast obeyed my voice. Genesis 22:22 (emphasis added)
The Lord hath **made bare his holy arm in**

the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Isaiah 52:10 (emphasis added)

A short explanation of this covenant might be helpful at this point. First of all, why is the Lord going to make bare His arm to the eyes of all the nations and why is it so important? By making His arm bare He is demonstrating to all nations, in a fashion which they cannot ignore or discount, He is in charge of what is occurring. And exactly what will be occurring? The House of Israel has been scattered throughout the nations of the earth for roughly the last 2000 years. Most of the descendants of Israel have lost their identity and do not even realize they are his descendants. Because of their ignorance, they do not realize they are potential beneficiaries of the covenants God made with Abraham and his seed.

So, what is it exactly the nations of the world will be seeing as they witness God making bare His arm? They will be seeing God bring the House of Israel out of the physical and spiritual bondage they were in during their scattered condition among all the nations. He will be bringing them out of the obscurity from not knowing who they are to a knowledge that they are a part of the chosen people of God. It will be one huge family reunion as the various tribes of Israel are returned to the lands the Lord has promised them as their inheritance.

But it's more than simply restoring to them an understanding of their identity. He is also bringing them out of spiritual darkness to an understanding and acceptance of Jesus Christ as the long-awaited Messiah. The return of these millions of people to their covenant lands and their conversion to Jesus Christ and the attendant promise of salvation shall bear witness and testimony to the entire world that there is a God, that He is the only God, and that He is faithful to the fulfilling of the covenants He makes with mankind. The witness of these mighty acts will be a blessing to the entire world and will be a source of hope for salvation unto all who will turn

to Christ, and by adoption become a beneficiary of the gospel, and the divine covenants with the house of Israel. (1 Nephi 3:201; 2 Nephi 7:29-30) Now let's return to the explanation of the progress being made today in fulfilling this great covenant.

A number of us alive today have seen many of the events transpire leading to the eventual fulfillment of this covenant. I will enumerate but a few of those events, as there are too many to list individually in this short article. They include:

- Publishing of the Book of Mormon in 1830
- Dedication of the Holy Land by Orson Hyde in 1841
- The Holocaust in World War II, 1939-1945
- The creation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948
- The miraculous protection of Israel from her attacking Arab neighbors during the wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, as well as the repeated terrorist attacks against Israel and her citizens since 1948
- The restoration of Jerusalem to Israeli control in 1967
- The return of Jewish Ethiopian refugees from the Ethiopian Civil War in the mid-1970s as well as the return of other groups, such as the Jews from Russia (1989-2006), who have felt the desire to make Aliyah¹
- The U.S. Embassy moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2018
- The COVID_19 pandemic of 2020

Yes, the pandemic we are currently experiencing is being turned into an instrument of blessing upon the nations of the earth. Allow me to explain. Many world events have provided impetus for the return of the Jews to their promised homeland, including such things as downturns in national economies, wars, civil unrest and hostility toward persons of Jewish heritage, which is rampant in many parts of the world.

Prophecy News Watch has recently published an article entitled, *Speeding Up Prophecy: Pandemic May Bring Wave of Immigrants To Israel*. The article states:

“Jewish Agency Chairman Yitzhak

Herzog told Hebrew-language news site Makor Rishon on Thursday that he anticipated ‘a great wave of immigration to Israel when the coronavirus crisis ends, as has happened historically in Jewish communities around the world after many crises since the establishment of the state.’ Herzog, the former head of the left-wing Labor party, had data to back up his optimism. Ministry of Absorption officials reported that in the past few weeks, at least 60,000 Israelis currently living abroad expressed an interest in returning home to Israel. ‘There is an awakening among Israelis living abroad,’ they said to the media.”

The article goes on to explain that approximately 700 Jews make Aliyah annually but in the last month, over 500 people inquired about immigrating to Israel and that another thousand families are waiting to move from France to Israel. The article continues: “In 2019, about 35,000 people made Aliyah and that number is expected to increase to 40,000 this year, not including returning Israelis. The Ministry of Absorption estimates 100,000 new arrivals will come to the Holy Land next year.”

Zev Gershinsky, executive vice-president of Nefesh B’Nefesh, an organization that helps Jews make Aliyah from US, Canada, and England, stated: “In April alone, about 300 Aliyah forms were submitted to the Nefesh B’Nefesh offices, and more than 400 people have begun the Aliyah process,” Gershinsky said. “We are prepared for all possible scenarios and are able to accompany everyone who is interested: tens, hundreds, and thousands.”²

1 Nephi 5:36 assures us: **And thus we see, that by small means, the Lord can bring about great things.** While the impact of the virus upon the world is no small thing and many people are losing their lives or the lives of their friends and loved ones, the actual virus is indeed a “small thing.” So small it can’t be seen by the unaided human eye.



PROPHECY WATCH

While much death and difficulty is being caused by the current pandemic, we may take comfort at the same time that great opportunities are being presented to us and great things may be being accomplished in the gathering of Israel and fulfillment of the promised blessings upon the nations of the earth.

While we may sorrow at the hardship which is occurring, we must also rejoice as we see the fulfillment of prophesy in these latter days. As you think upon the pandemic and its ramifications, consider these two scriptures:

And as surely as the Lord liveth will he gather in from the four quarters of the earth, all the remnant of the seed of Jacob, who are scattered abroad upon all the face of the earth; 3 Nephi 2:107

But all things must come to pass in their time; wherefore be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days; D&C 64:6c-7a

1 (Aliyah is defined in the Merriam Webster dictionary as: “the immigration of Jews to Israel”; some other sources define it as “the act of proceeding to the reading table in a synagogue for the reading of a portion of the Torah, the immigration of Jews to Israel, either as individuals or in groups, and any of the major waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine or Israel.)

2 https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent_news_id=4006

The purpose of Prophecy Watch is to assist in looking for and knowing the signs of the times and the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. The perspectives it contains are not presented as the “only, best or final answer” to their meaning, but rather “to the intent that ye might believe on His name” and more fully participate in their fulfillment. We hope Prophecy Watch will provide a brief glimpse into specific prophetic subjects that will encourage each person to diligently pray, study fast and seek the will of God concerning