

12. Defining Joseph as a Type of Savior (Genesis 42–50)

Not only was Joseph a savior of his father's family and of the entire Egyptian nation, his saving role extended far into the future, showing how one man's righteousness may impact endless generations. In many respects, Joseph foreshadowed the Savior of the world—Jesus Christ. As Joseph forgave his brothers their crimes against him and saved them from perishing, so does the Savior God of Israel. Like Jesus, Joseph recognized that God could turn the unwarranted evils foisted upon him to good if he humbly submitted to God's will and passed the test:

“Joseph said to his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh and Lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt” (Genesis 45:4–8).

God's blessing on the head of Joseph extended not only “to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills”—that is, to the new world, the Promised Land God gave his descendants—it included an everlasting posterity after the pattern of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Among Joseph's prophecies concerning his descendants—of which “there are not many greater” (2 Nephi 4:2), are those that were fulfilled, and will yet be fulfilled, in Lehi's descendants: “Surely he hath blessed the house of Jacob and hath been merciful unto the seed of Joseph. . .

“And insomuch as the children of Lehi have kept his commandments he hath blessed them and prospered them according to his word. Yea, and surely shall he again bring a remnant of the seed of Joseph to the knowledge of the Lord their God. 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 5:21–24). On the model of Joseph, the birthright tribe of Ephraim, Joseph's son, was destined to accomplish this gathering at the end of the world.

Beginning with the restoration of the gospel through the prophet Joseph Smith, Ephraimite Gentiles would gather strength in order to accomplish the house of Israel's end-time restoration: “For this cause hath the Lord God promised unto me that these things which I write shall be kept and preserved, and handed down unto my seed, from generation to generation, that the promise may be fulfilled unto Joseph, that his seed should never perish as long as the earth should stand” (2 Nephi 25:21).

“Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless, to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in

the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light—yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom. . .

“For Joseph truly testified, saying: A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins. Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers” (2 Nephi 3:5–7)—that is, through the Book of Mormon, the record the Nephites kept and handed down from generation to generation until it eventually fell into the hands of the Ephraimite Gentiles.

As the Ephraimite Gentiles’ spiritual king and queens assume their end-time role of saviors to the house of Israel in the pattern of Joseph in Egypt, they will bring many remnants of the house of Israel to Zion: “I will lift up my hand to the nations, raise my ensign to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, queens your nursing mothers” Isaiah 49:22–23); “And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion, from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; and the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance. Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers; wherefore, the promises of the Lord are great unto the Gentiles” (2 Nephi 10:8–9).

Even God’s end-time servant, who initiates the house of Israel restoration, will himself be “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” (Doctrine & Covenants 113:6). At that time shall Joseph’s prophecy concerning his descendants be fulfilled more fully: “And then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations, the house of Joseph, of the gospel of their salvation. For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Doctrine & Covenants 90:10–11).

In the end, a New Jerusalem would be built in the land of America, “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” (Ether 13:6–8).