

48. Defining the Believing Jews (Haggai; Zechariah 1–3, 7–14)

When Paul, speaking of the Jews, says that “blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in” (Roman 11:25), he is predicting an end-time event in which the Ephraimite Gentiles—also known as the “fulness of the Gentiles” (Genesis 48:19; 1 Nephi 15:13; 3 Nephi 16:4)—minister the gospel to the Jews and receive them into God’s covenant. Many people, however, are confused on this point, saying that the Jews will not believe until Jesus shows himself to them on the Mount of Olives in a time when enemies are attacking them.

Jesus himself, however, predicts that the Jews will believe in him before that time through the ministration of the Ephraimite Gentiles: “I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone, that if it so be that my people at Jerusalem, they who have seen me and been with me in my ministry, do not ask the Father in my name, that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes whom they know not of, that these sayings which ye shall write shall be kept and shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fulness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed, who shall be scattered forth upon the face of the earth because of their unbelief, may be brought in, or may be brought to a knowledge of me, their Redeemer. And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfil the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel” (3 Nephi 16:4–5).

Nephi, too, predicts these things, applying them also to his own people: “The thing which our father meaneth concerning the grafting in of the natural branches through the fulness of the Gentiles, is, that in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, yea, for the space of many years, and many generations after the Messiah shall be manifested in body unto the children of men, then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed—And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved” (1 Nephi 15:13–14; cf. 2 Nephi 25:15–17).

Jacob, quoting Isaiah, provides a third witness: “Because of priestcrafts and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified. Wherefore, because of their iniquities, destructions, famines, pestilences, and bloodshed shall come upon them; and they who shall not be destroyed shall be scattered among all nations. But behold, thus saith the Lord God: When the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth, unto the lands of their inheritance. 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, for he hath spoken it, and who can dispute?" (2 Nephi 10:5–9; cf. Isaiah 49:22–23).

Jesus, quoting Isaiah, informs us that the Jews and house of Israel will believe in him when the Ephraimite Gentiles as a whole reject the fulness of his gospel sometime after they have received it: "They [the Gentiles] shall be a scourge unto the people of this land. Nevertheless, when they shall have received the fulness of my gospel, then if they shall harden their hearts against me I will return their iniquities upon their own heads, saith the Father. 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. And it shall come to pass that the time cometh, when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them;

"And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name. Then shall their watchmen lift up their voice, and with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye. Then will the Father gather them together again, and give unto them Jerusalem for the land of their inheritance. Then shall they break forth into joy—Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Father hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Father 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 the Father; and the Father and I are one" (3 Nephi 20:28–35; cf. Isaiah 52:8–10).

Just as the Ephraimite Gentiles divide into those who serve as spiritual kings and queens to the house of Israel while most end up rejecting the gospel after having received it (cf. 1 Nephi 14:5–7; 2 Nephi 28:32; 30:7–10), so the end-time Jews divide into those who believe in Christ and are gathered in a new exodus to Zion while those who don't suffer enemy invasion. At a time when "Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem," Zechariah predicts that "the Lord shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah" (Zechariah 12:6–7).

This enigmatic verse informs us that there exist two end-time categories of Jews: (1) "the tents of Judah" or people of Judah as a whole; and (2) the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem. We can also glean from this that the second group has a tendency to aggrandize themselves over the first. The Lord compensates the first group, however, by "saving" them first—that is, in that end-time context they are received back into God's covenant before the others. The "tents" motif suggests their dwelling in tents in the wilderness in a callout situation during the time the land is invaded by enemies.

When those who remain in the land are in danger of being entirely destroyed, on the other hand, then is the time the Lord descends on the Mount of Olives to deliver them: "And then shall the Lord set his foot upon this mount, and it shall cleave in twain, and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro, and the heavens also shall shake. And the Lord shall utter his voice, and all the ends of the earth shall hear it; and the nations of the earth shall mourn, and they that have laughed shall see their folly. And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorner shall be

consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God. And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king” (Doctrine & Covenants 45:48–53; cf. Zechariah 12:7–14; 13:6; 14:2–5).