

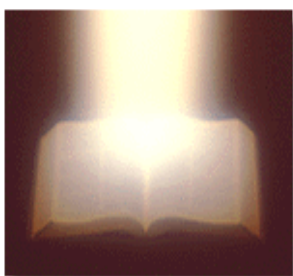
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# Question Time — Does the Bible point to the Book of Mormon?

*Yes. The Old Testament prophets saw our day, the end times, and they prophesied about it frequently. Let's examine these prophecies.*

God promised through Abraham to bless all the nations of the earth. He then promised him a land, which eventually Joshua led the Israelites to. Soon they divided. 1 Kings 12 tells of the division of the Israelite nation into two kingdoms, one ruled by Jeroboam in Mount Ephraim in the north with 10 tribes and the southern kingdom, the tribe of Judah, ruled from Jerusalem. In 720 B.C. Assyria conquered Samaria and took those 10 tribes captive according to 2 Kings 18. In 600 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and destroyed it and took Judah captive (2 Kings 25). Roughly 70 years later, Cyrus allowed the Jews to go and rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 1, Nehemiah 7) and they remained there until the Romans came and destroyed the city and also caused the remaining Jews to be spread out among all the nations at about 70 A.D.

Isaiah 11:12 refers to these two different parts of Israel as the "outcasts of Israel" and the "dispersed of Judah." Because the 10 tribes had become lost to the knowledge of Judah and then Judah had become "dispersed" itself, these two groups were held in distinction. This was not how they were to remain. God promised that He would re-gather them into their promised land. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and many other prophets speak of this re-gathering.



How would God re-gather Israel? Jeremiah (Ch. 31) states that Ephraim would be the firstborn of the gathering. God promised an "ensign for all the nations" at the time of this gathering (Isaiah 11:12). Isaiah 49:22 speaks of the Gentiles lifting up a standard (which means a banner or a signal). Then Isaiah 66:19 indicates that a sign will go forth FROM the house of Israel to the Gentiles. As a culmination to all of these events, God will make a new heaven and a new earth (Isaiah 66:22). According to Peter (2 Peter 3:13), this was the hope of the gospel of Christ! Genesis 49:10 and Ephesians 1:10 both indicate this grand gathering will be unto Christ and because of this, we conclude that this ensign will be the GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

In Jesus' day He sought to gather the people (Matthew 23:37). He also prophesied that the preaching of "this gospel" would be a sign of the end of the world. Jesus and Jeremiah describe this event in Luke 14 and Jeremiah 16. Both are discussing the final gathering of Christ. Both know that to gather those out of the highways and byways and the mountains and holes a standard has to be lifted up at the last day.

Let us return to Ephraim, who had the firstborn's blessing. Ezekiel 37:16-20 describes two sticks that would be joined into one during this re-gathering. These two sticks refer to scrolls or records. The stick of Judah is God's dealings with the house of Judah, hence the Bible. The stick of Joseph (v. 19) was to be in Ephraim's possession (hand) before the gathering. Putting them together would usher in the dawning of the reuniting of the house of Israel and their chosen land. This is not the sole witness to this. Hosea 8:11-12 indicates that Ephraim had separate writings given to them because they were separated from their brethren. So then, where is the book of Joseph, and where is Ephraim's land?

Hosea 11:10 tells us to look west from Palestine for the children of Ephraim. Genesis 48-49 and Deuteronomy 33 tell us three things. First there was a special blessing upon Ephraim. He was to grow into a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth. Second, Joseph's blessing prevailed above those of his father's. Joseph's blessing was to the "utmost bound of the everlasting hills" and his "bough" was to go over the wall (sea). Third, Joseph's land was to be noted by its abundance in mineral wealth and its ability to produce from the soil. His "horns" were to push people to the ends of the world. Isaiah 18 leaves us little doubt as to where the land is. It is a land "shadowing with wings," past Ethiopia, and across the sea. Our continent fulfills this description perfectly. Looking westward from Jerusalem, past Ethiopia, across the sea to a land rich in minerals and an abundance of produce lands you right here. This is not all however. A careful study of Jeremiah 48:32, Numbers 32:23, 37-8 and 1 Chronicles 5:1 reveal to us that Joseph's seed would also go over the sea.

**"For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever..."**

**- Isaiah 29:25**

Having determined this land as Joseph's land how was this book to make its entry into the world? Isaiah 29 talks of a powerful nation that has been brought down (Israel) and later would speak from the dust. A book would come forth when the people of the world were "drunken" with their own doctrines and creeds and the prophets and the seers had all gone to sleep. It would contain doctrine. It was to help inaugurate the gathering of Israel. The deaf were to hear and the blind were to see (the Braille system was developed in 1830). It would come forth when Palestine was barren but in a "little while" it would again turn into "a fruitful field."

The Book of Mormon fulfills these requirements. It has told us of Joseph's seed (Manasseh) and is to be found in the land of Ephraim (America). It came forth before Lebanon received her second yearly rain (1853-4) and before the gathering of Israel back to her land of promise (1948). In fact, there is NO OTHER BOOK that has ever claimed to fulfill the above scriptures. This is just a summation of the scriptures. A more in-depth study of the restoration of "this gospel" to the earth should also include the book of Daniel and Revelations. For a more in-depth examination please contact Aaron Smith at OGRB.

- by Elder Aaron Smith