



## 6. Visions of the Future: Nephi's Apocalypse Continues 1 Nephi 12–14

These last records . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth." (1 Nephi 13:40–41)

## “Israel, Israel God Is Calling” (Hymn 7, vv. 1, 2, and 4)

Israel, Israel, God is calling,  
Calling thee from lands of woe.  
Babylon the great is falling;  
God shall all her tow'rs o'er throw.  
Come to Zion, come to Zion  
Ere his floods of anger flow.  
Come to Zion, come to Zion!  
Ere his floods of anger flow.

Israel, Israel, God is speaking.  
Hear your great Deliv'rer's voice!  
Now a glorious morn is breaking  
For the people of his choice.  
Come to Zion, come to Zion,  
And within her walls rejoice.  
Come to Zion, come to Zion!  
And within her walls rejoice.

Israel! Israel! Canst thou linger  
Still in error's gloomy ways?  
Mark how judgement's pointing finger  
Justifies no vain delays.  
Come to Zion, come to Zion!  
Zion's walls shall ring with praise.  
Come to Zion, come to Zion!  
Zion's walls shall ring with praise.

# Unveiling Christ in History

## Nephi's Apocalypse Reviewed

- **The Lamb of God, the Tree of Life (11:1–36)**
  - The Coming of Christ in the Old World (11:12–33)
  - The Rejection of the Apostles of the Lamb (11:34–36)
- **History of the Children of Lehi (12:1–23)**
  - The Coming of Christ in the New World
  - Accepted then rejected
- **History of the Gentiles to the Restoration (13:1–42)**
  - The World without Christ
  - Including **the Great and Abominable Church** (*narrow*, historical; 13:1–10)
- **History of the Last Days (14:1–17)**
  - Including *the Great and Abominable Church* (*broad*, typological; 14:9–17)
  - Christ Comes Again to the New World
- **The Final Coming of Christ (14:18–30)**
  - Vision of the Second Coming of Christ to All the World
  - The Other Apocalypse: the Mission of John the Revelator

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## History of the Children of Lehi (12:1–23)

- **The “Near History” of Lehi’s Descendants** (*before* the advent of Christ, 12:1–3; cf. 2 Nephi—3 Nephi 6)
- **The Coming of Jesus Christ in the New World** (12:4–12; cf. 3 Nephi 8–4 Nephi)
  - Destructions at His Coming (12:4–5; cf. 3 Nephi 8–10)
  - Christ’s Ministry among the Nephites (12:6–10; cf. 3 Nephi 11–27)
  - Righteous Generations after Christ (12:11–12; cf. 4 Nephi)
    - **These events foreshadow the Second Coming of Christ!**
- **The “Far” History of Lehi’s Descendants** (*after* the advent of Christ, (12:13–23; cf. 4 Nephi–Moroni)
  - The result of rejecting Christ: Nephi sees disbelief and war among Lehi’s descendants (12:13–23; cf. Mormon–Moroni)
  - Cause: Back to the vision of Lehi
    - “Behold the fountain of filthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the river of which he spake; and the depths thereof are the depths of hell. And **the mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil**, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost. And **the large and spacious building, which thy father saw, is vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men.**” (12:16-17)

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## Israel, Jews, and Gentiles

*Before looking at 1 Nephi 13 and 14, which lays out the prophetic history of the Gentiles, we must review a few terms*

- **Israel**
  - Individual: the covenant name given to Jacob, son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham (heir of the Abrahamic covenant)
  - Ethnic: descendants of the 12 tribes of Israel
  - *Spiritual: the people of God*
    - This includes Gentiles adopted through the covenant (see 1 Ne 14:2; 2 Ne 30:2)
- **Jews**
  - Tribal: descendants of the tribe of Judah
  - Geographic and political: citizens of the southern Kingdom of Judah
    - Originally Judah, Benjamin, and most of Levi
      - Some of Israel, particularly Manasseh and Ephraim came to Jerusalem as refugees under King Hezekiah
    - Lehi and his family came from this kingdom, so Nephi considered them to be "Jews" (see 2 Nephi 33:8)
- **Gentiles** (*gentes*, Latin for "nations")
  - Ethnic: all other nations besides Israel
  - *Spiritual: not the people of God*

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## History of the Gentiles to the Restoration

(13:1–42, framed by the Abominable Church and the Lamb of God)

- **The Great and Abominable Church** (narrow or historical; 13:1–10)
- **The Gentiles Come to the Promised Land** (13:10–19)
- **The Word of the Lord Comes to the Gentiles** (13:20–41)
  - The Record of the Jews (13:20–29)
  - Gentiles and the Seed of Israel, esp. Descendants of Lehi (13:30–34)
  - Record of Nephi's People to Come unto the Gentiles (13:35–38)
    - Additional Records (13:39–41)
- **Lamb of God Shall Manifest Himself to All Nations** (13:42)
  - "And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last." (13:42)

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## The Great and Abominable Church —General Characterization

- Characteristics (13:5-9; Rev. 7-18 ; cf. Robinson, packet 53-59)
  - Persecutes and slays the saints
  - Seeks wealth and luxury
  - **Characterized by sexual immorality**
    - Remember that in the OT and NT the use of “**adultery**” was **applied to both sexual and spiritual unfaithfulness**—their was a covenant relationship between Jehovah and Israel, and Christ was the Bridegroom and the Church the Bride
  - **Has changed the scriptures** (see plain and precious parts below)
  - Has dominion over ALL the earth (not just portion, even large portions of it)
  - Its fate is to be consumed by world war
- “Great and Abominable” is an umbrella term used in two different ways in 1 Ne 13-14
  - In **chapter 13** its use is **narrow**, used **historically and exclusively** to refer to the early postapostolic Church
  - In **chapter 14** its use is **broad**, used **typologically and inclusively** to refer to all Satanic counterfeits in the latter-days

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## What the Great and Abominable Was and What It Was Not . . .

- **Do not rush to identify the Great and Abominable Church described in 1 Nephi 13**
  - “Actually, no single known historical church, denomination, or set of believers meets all the requirements for the great and abominable church . . . Rather the role of Babylon has been played by many different agencies, ideologies, and churches, in many different times.” (Robinson, 159)
- The Old Testament part of the “Record of the Jews” had already suffered tampering, loss, and deletions before the Christian period
  - **Explicit prophecies regarding Jesus lost or obscured, much of the Brass Plates material not in the current Old Testament**
- Much of the subsequent damage would have been done during the time between the apostles (c. AD 100) and the emperor Constantine (c. AD 325)
  - *The NT texts found in the oldest manuscripts reached more-or-less their current form by the mid to late second century A.D. in between these dates*
  - **Hellenized Christianity, synthesizing post apostolic Christianity and Greek philosophy, is a good candidate**
  - The Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches did not reach their current form until after pivotal events of A.D. 325, 395, and even later when they split from each other

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## The Gentiles Come to the Promised Land (13:10–19, review)

- The role of man “wrought upon” by the spirit of the Lord: Columbus? (13:12)
  - “From my first youth onward, I was a seaman and have so continued until this day . . . the Lord was well-disposed to my desire, and He bestowed upon me courage and understanding; knowledge of seafaring he gave me in abundance . . . For which our Lord unlocked my mind, sent me upon the sea, and gave me fire for the deed.” in Wasserman, *Columbus, Don Quixote of the Seas*, 19-20; see packet, 43)
- Gentiles “go forth out of captivity upon the many waters” (13:13)
  - What was the captivity that gripped the European and other colonists before they came to this land?
- Scattering of the descendants of Lehi (13:14)
  - “. . . **whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them.**” (Ether 2:8)
  - Nevertheless, **promises remain for the “Lamanites” and the Gentiles will be held accountable for their treatment of them**
- Deliverance of the Gentiles and the prospect of their liberty (13:18-19)
  - “**this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ.**” (Ether 2:12)

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## The Gentiles and the Record of the Jews (13:20–29)

The most important part of the Gentiles’ role in the New World is the *book* that they brought (13:20)

- The **Old Testament authors** and **most of the New Testament authors** (except for Luke) were of Jewish background
- “The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains **the covenants of the Lord**, which he hath made unto the house of Israel . . .”
  - **[Adam]**
  - **Noah**
  - **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**
    - promised land, priesthood, and posterity (the 3 P’s)
    - The blessings of eternal life
  - **Moses**
    - Sinai covenant a replacement or “halfway” system
  - **David**
    - always a righteous king in his line > ultimate fulfillment in *the* Messiah
  - **Covenants of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ**
- “and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass, save there are not so many”
  - Originally more encompassing and correct than we have the Bible today

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## Plain and Precious Parts Removed (13:26–29)

- Matthews on changes to the Bible (Millet compilation, packet, 60-61)
  - Unplanned variants: **mistakes** in copying occurred for centuries
    - Biblical scholars can usually find and correct these errors
  - Planned variants: **purposeful deletions, changes, or additions**
    - Took place in the first two or three “generations” of a text
- Old Testament
  - Lost books
  - Septuagint (Greek translation) *changed or rendered expressions of God inaccurately*
  - Masoretic (last Hebrew text except for DSS) compilation allowed for changes *after the time of Christ*
- New Testament
  - We have no autographs (original copies) of any of the Greek texts, most surviving manuscripts are a century or more older (although we have some fragments of very early copies)
  - Setting of the canon (which texts were accepted and which ones were rejected) happened well into the post apostolic period

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## The Lehi Covenant

Gentiles and the Seed of Israel, esp. Descendants of Lehi (13:30–34)

- “. . . the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that **his seed should have for the land of their inheritance**; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren.” (13:30b)
- “. . . **the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever, and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord.**” (2 Nephi 1:5–6)
- “Wherefore, I, Lehi, have obtained a promise, that **inasmuch as those whom the Lord God shall bring out of the land of Jerusalem shall keep his commandments, they shall prosper upon the face of this land**; and they shall be kept from all other nations, that they may possess this land unto themselves. And if it so be that they shall keep his commandments they shall be blessed upon the face of this land . . .” (2 Nephi 1:9)

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## History of the Last Days (14:1–17)

- **The Gentiles and God's Great and Marvelous Work** (14:1–8; cf. 2 Nephi 25:17 = Isaiah 29:14)
  - **Gentiles Can Be Adopted into Israel** (14:1–2)
    - “And it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them . . . they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel . . .” (1 Nephi 14:1–2)
  - **Gentiles Must Repent** (14:3–6)
  - **The Choice: Peace and Life Eternal –or– Captivity of the Devil** (14:7)
  - **The Father's Covenant with Israel** (14:8)
- **The Great and Abominable Church** (broad, typological; 14:9–17)

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## The Great and Abominable Church (broad, typological; 14:9–17)

- **Only Two Churches** (14:10)
  - “And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.” (1 Ne 14:10)
  - “Every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil.” (Moroni 7:16-17)
- **The Church of the Devil** Fights Against the **Church of the Lamb** (14:11–14)
- **The Great and Abominable Church Destroyed** (14:15–17)

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## The Broad or “Typological” Great and Abominable

- “The titles church of the devil and great and abominable church are used to identify **all churches or organizations of whatever name or nature—whether political, philosophical, educational, economic social, fraternal, civic, or religious—which are designed to take men on a course that leads away from God and his laws and thus from salvation in the kingdom of God . . .** Any church or organization of any kind whatever which satisfies the innate religious longings of man and keeps him from coming to the saving truths of Christ and his gospel is therefore not of God.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *MD*, 137-38)
- “What is the church of the devil in our day, and where is the seat of her power? If we accept the angelic word, if we believe as Nephi believed...**the church of the devil is every evil and worldly organization on earth.** It is all of the systems, both Christian and non-Christian, that have perverted the pure and perfect gospel; it is all of the *governments* and powers that run counter to the divine will . . . its headquarters are everywhere—in Rome and Moscow, in Paris and London, in Teheran and Washington—everywhere that evil forces, either of the church or state or society, can be influenced.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah*, 54-55)

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## A Closed Vision

### The Final Coming of Christ (14:18–30)

- “And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Behold, **he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been. And he shall also write concerning the end of the world.**” (14:19–22)
- “But **the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them. And also others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them; and they are sealed up** to come forth in their purity, according to the truth which is in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.” (14:25–26)
  - **Enoch, Brother of Jared, Nephi . . .**
- “And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that **the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John . . .**” (14:27)
- “**And now I make an end of speaking concerning the things which I saw while I was carried away in the spirit;** and if all the things which I saw are not written, the things which I have written are true. And thus it is. Amen.” (14:30)

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