



12b. Nephi's Discourse 1 2 Nephi 11–15

Isaiah Prophecies of Christ

“And now I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah, for my soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people, and I will send them forth unto all my children, for he verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him.” (2 Nephi 11:2)

“High On the Mountain Top” (Hymn 5)

High on the mountain top
A banner is unfurled.
Ye nations now look up;
It waves to all the world.
In Deseret's sweet, peaceful land,
On Zion's mount behold it stand!

For God remembers still
His promise made of old
That he on Zion's hill
Truth's standard would unfold!
Her light should there attract
the gaze
Of all the world in latter days.

His house shall there be reared,
His glory to display,
And people shall be heard
In distant lands to say:
We'll now go up and serve the Lord,
Obey his truth and learn his word.

For there we shall be taught
The law that will go forth,
With truth and wisdom fraught,
To govern all the earth.
Forever there his ways we'll tread,
And save ourselves with all our dead.

Nephi's Discourse

- Structure
 - Introduction: Witnesses of Christ (11:1–8)
 - Quotations from Isaiah (12–24)
 - Isaiah 2–14 (**poetic prophecy** “after the manner of the Jews”)
 - *With the Nephites well-established in the Promised land, engaged in ongoing conflict with the Lamanites, and with Nephi aware of his people's eventual apostasy and destruction, he chooses to quote from **Isaiah's Book of Judgment***
 - Nephi's Explanations, Interpretations, and Prophecies (25–30)
 - Includes phrases and short passages from previously quoted Isaiah material as well as new excerpts from Isaiah 22:13; 4:15; 28:10; **29:6–24**; 44:5; 52:3; 53:6; 55:1; 62:10; 65:2
- Compare and contrast with Jacob's Discourse
 - Jacob's was delivered as a **sermon** to the People of Nephi, which Nephi recorded on the Small Plates
 - Jacob's is relatively short (5 chapters) and quotes 2 chapters of Isaiah
 - Nephi's is written as a **treatise**, first for his people and then for the readers of the Small Plates (see 25:1–3)
 - **Treatise**, much longer than a sermon, apparently written to be read
 - Nephi's is long (20 chapters) and quotes 14 chapters of Isaiah directly and paraphrases even more in his explanation and interpretation
 - How do we *read* a longer work differently than we *hear* an oral one?

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Witnesses of Christ (11:1–8)

- “I, Nephi, write more of the words of **Isaiah**, for my soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people, and I will send them forth unto all my children, for **he verily saw my Redeemer**, even as **I have seen him**. And **my brother, Jacob, also has seen him** as I have seen him . . .” (11:2–3a)
- “. . . wherefore, **I will send their words** [Jacob and Isaiah's] **forth unto my children to prove unto them that my words are true**. Wherefore, by the words of three, God hath said, I will establish my word . . .” (11:3b)
- Nephi writes the words of Isaiah because
 - **They prove the coming of Christ (11:4)**
 - The Law of Moses and “all things” typify him
 - Without Christ, all must perish (11:6)
 - **They illustrate the covenants of the Lord with their fathers (11:5)**
 - Both blessings and responsibilities (including consequences for disobedience)

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Isaiah in 2 Nephi 12–24

Possible Overview of Contents emphasizing Isaiah 2–14

- **Part 1: Book of Judgment (Isaiah 1–39)**
 - Introduction (Isaiah 1)
 - Judgments against Israel and Judah (Isaiah 2–5)
 - Isaiah’s Call (Isaiah 6)
 - Prophecies Occasioned by Geopolitical Threats against Judah (Israel and Syria’s conspiracy against Judah and the threat of Assyria, Isaiah 7–10)
 - The Lord Will Redeem His People (Isaiah 11–12)
 - Judgments against the Nations (Isaiah 13–23)
 - The Principles of Judgment and Promise (Isaiah 24–27)
 - Six Woes (five against unfaithful Israel and one against Assyria; Isaiah 28–33)
 - Avenging and Restoring God’s People (Isaiah 34–35)
 - Transition from Assyrian Threat to the Prediction of Babylonian Exile (Isaiah 36–39)
- **Part 2: Book of Comfort (Isaiah 40–66)**
 - Deliverance and Restoration of Israel (Isaiah 40–48)
 - The Servant and Israel’s Restoration (Isaiah 49–55)
- **Part 3: Everlasting Deliverance and Judgment (chapters 56–66)**

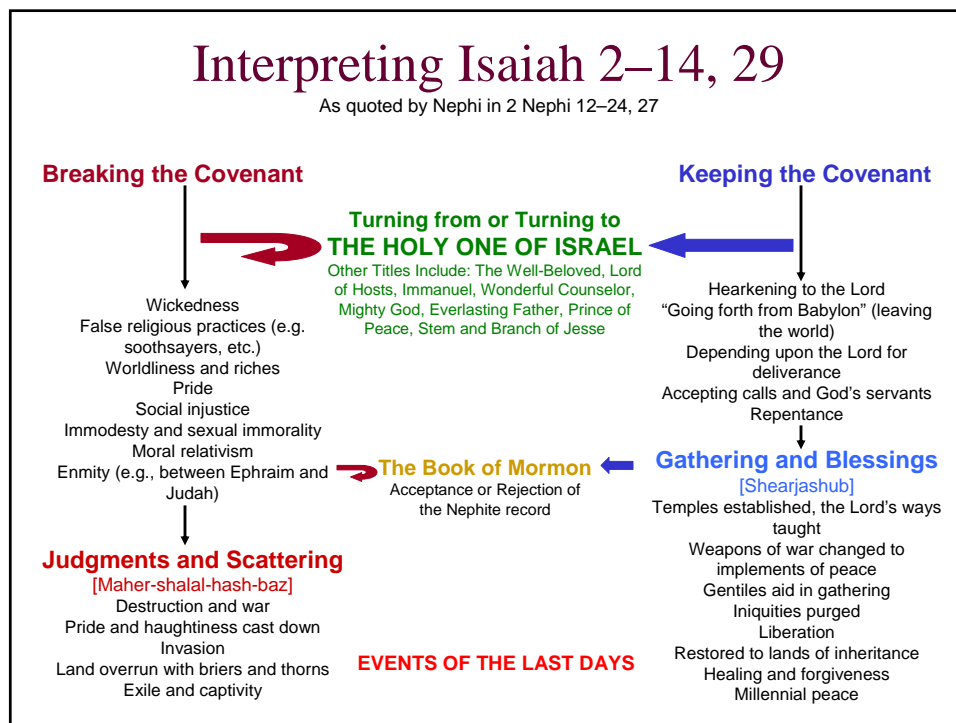
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Interpreting Isaiah 2–14, 29

As quoted by Nephi in 2 Nephi 12–24, 27



Nephi's Discourse (11:1-30:18)

- Introduction: Witnesses of Christ (11:1-8)
- Quotations from Isaiah (12-24)
 - Judgments against Israel and Judah (Isaiah 2-5)
 - **Isaiah 2:** Contrasts between Future and Present Israel (12:1-22)
 - Mountain of the Lord's House (12:1-4)
 - The Day of the Lord: Judgment to come against Jacob (Israel) (12:5-22)
 - **Isaiah 3:1-4:1:** Judgments against Judah (13:1-14:1)
 - Judgments against the Leaders of Judah (13:1-15)
 - Judgments against the Daughters of Zion (13:16-14:1)
 - **Isaiah 4:2-6:** Hope for Restoration amid Prophecies of Destruction
 - The Remnant and Jerusalem Will Be Restored (14:2-6)
 - **Isaiah 5:** Judgment and Exile (15:1-30)
 - Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard (15:1-7)
 - Woes and Judgments: Social Injustice Denounced (15:8-24)
 - Judgment Unabated: Invasion Threatened (15:25-30)
 - Isaiah's Call (Isaiah 6)
 - **Isaiah 6:** Isaiah's First Vision (16:1-13, call narrative)
 - Prophecies Occasioned by Geopolitical Threats against Judah (Israel and Syria's conspiracy against Judah and the threat of Assyria (Isaiah 7-10)
 - **Isaiah 7** (17:1-25)
 - Sign of Shearjashub (a remnant will return) (17:1-9)
 - Birth of Immanuel as a Sign (17:10-15)
 - Assyrian Invasion/Future Desolation (17:16-25)
 - **Isaiah 8** (18:1-22)
 - Sign of Maher-shalal-hashbaz (speed to the spoil, hasten to the prey; destruction is imminent) (18:1-4)
 - Trust in the Lord and not in Human Alliances (18:5-15)
 - Isaiah rejected (18:16-22)
 - **Isaiah 9:1-10:4** (19:1-20:4)
 - Promise of the Prince of Peace (19:1-7)
 - Anger of the Lord against Israel (19:8-20:4)
 - > idolatry, failing to turn to the Lord (19:13-17)
 - > hatred of his brother (Ephraim and Manasseh turning against Judah, 19:18-21)
 - > social injustice: oppression of the poor and powerless (20:1-4)
 - **Isaiah 10:5-34:** Assyria and Israel (20:5-34)
 - Judah's Enemy is the Lord's Instrument: "Assyria, the rod of my anger (20:5-11)
 - In the end Assyria, too, will be judged (20:12-19)
 - Israel, destroyed by Assyria, will return (20:20-23)
 - The Lord will chasten Judah but then destroy Assyria (20:24-34)
 - The Lord Will Redeem His People (Isaiah 11-12)
 - **Isaiah 11** (21:1-16)
 - The Rod of the Stem of Jesse (21:1-5)

Working through the Isaiah Chapters: Some Hints

- Outline the text being studied, breaking chapters into sections (pericopes)
 - A pericope will usually describe one particular episode or contain one major image
 - (feel free to use my outline!)
- Delineate each section in your scriptures, perhaps dividing sections with a line
- Give each section a title or identifying label, perhaps writing the title in the margin
- Consider marking your scriptures in such a way that causes of scattering are in one color, gathering in another, prophecies of the Messiah in another, etc.
- On your outline (or in your scriptures) list the causes of scattering and gathering from the key

Just an example . . .

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Old Testament Israel

(see Assyria and Babylon maps in packet)



United Kingdom of Israel under David
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Divided Kingdom: Israel (Ephraim) in the north
and Judah in the south
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Isaiah 2

Contrasts between Future and Present Israel (12:1-22)

- **The Mountain of the Lord's House** (12:1-4)
 - "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. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and **he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths**; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (12:2-3)
 - **Temples established, the Lord's ways taught**
 - **Temples through the ages: Solomon's Temple, Nephite temples, the Jewish Second Temple, Kirtland Temple, Salt Lake Temple**
- **The Day of the Lord: Judgment to come against Jacob (Israel)** (12:5-22)
 - "they hearken unto **soothsayers** . . . Their land is full of silver and gold, neither is their any end to their treasures . . . Their land is also full of **idols** . . . **The mean man boweth not down, and the great man humbleth himself not . . .**"
 - **False religious practices** (e.g. soothsayers, etc.)
 - **Worldliness and riches, Pride**
 - **Pride and haughtiness cast down**
 - **Destruction and war**
 - **Jewish Babylonian captivity, Lamanite destructions of the Nephites, Roman destruction of Jerusalem, etc.**

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Isaiah 3:1–4:1

Judgments against Judah (13:1–14:1)

- **Judgments against the Leaders of Judah (13:1–15)**
 - “The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people and the princes thereof; for **ye have eaten up the vineyard and the spoil of the poor in your houses**. What mean ye? **Ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor**, saith the Lord God of Hosts.” (12:13–15)
 - Social injustice
 - Destruction and war
- **Judgments against the Daughters of Zion (13:16–14:1)**
 - “Moreover, the Lord saith: **Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet—Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion . . . Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate, and shall sit upon the ground.**” (2 Ne 13:16–26)
 - Pride, worldliness and riches, immodesty and sexual immorality
 - **Pride and haughtiness cast down**
 - Destruction and war
- **The same sins will occasion the same judgments against Israel in every age—whether in the Nephite or latter-day dispensation!**

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Isaiah 4:2–6

The Remnant and Jerusalem Will Be Restored (14:2–6)

- “**In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; the fruit of the earth excellent and comely to them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, they that are left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem shall be called holy, every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem—**When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning . . .”
- Hope for Restoration amid Prophecies of Destruction
 - **Judgments against Judah (13:1–14:1)**
 - **The Remnant and Jerusalem Will Be Restored (14:2–6)**
 - **Judgment and Exile (15:1–30)**
- The Historical Experience of Judah
 - Devastated by Assyria, taken captive by Babylon
 - Restored under Persia
 - Scattered by Rome
- Did Nephi know that this would be the experience of his people?
 - **Near History; visitation of Christ and Zion society; Far History**

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Isaiah 5

Judgment and Exile (15:1–30)

- Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard (15:1–7, **song** and **poetic allegory/parable**)
 - “And then will I sing to **my well-beloved** a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill . . . For **the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant**; and he looked for **judgment, and behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, a cry.**”
 - **Social injustice, disobedience, sin**
- Woes and Judgments: Social Injustice Denounced (15:8–24)
 - **Social injustice, sin, pride**
- Judgment Unabated: Invasion Threatened (15:25–30)
 - “Therefore, is **the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them . . . And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth**; and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly; none shall be weary nor stumble among them.”
 - **War, destruction, desolation**; also **restoration**
 - Two interpretations
 - **Isaiah’s time**: invading armies will **scatter Israel and Judah**
 - **Latter-day**: the lifted ensign **also refers to the gathering of Israel under the gospel banner**