Selected Quotes on the
The Scattering and Gathering of Israel

The Abrahamic Covenant
Proper understanding of the scattering and gathering of Israel begins with the Abrahamic covenant. In the covenant, God promises that all the nations of the world will be blessed through Abraham’s posterity. This will be accomplished through the scattering of Israel among the nations and then gathering them again. The following quotes will help in understanding this.

The Abrahamic Covenant as found in scripture:

6 But I, Abraham, and Lot, my brother’s son, prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord appeared unto me, and said unto me: Arise, and take Lot with thee; for I have purposed to take thee away out of Haran, and to make of thee a minister to bear my name in a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice.

7 For I am the Lord thy God; I dwell in heaven; the earth is my footstool; I stretch my hand over the sea, and it obeys my voice; I cause the wind and the fire to be my chariot; I say to the mountains--Depart hence--and behold, they are taken away by a whirlwind, in an instant, suddenly.

8 My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee.

9 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

10 And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;

11 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal. (Abraham 2:6-11)

Joseph Fielding Smith:
When the Lord called Abraham out of Ur, the land of his fathers, he made certain covenants with him because of his faithfulness. One promise was that through him and his seed after him all nations of the earth should be blessed. This blessing is accomplished in several ways.

1. Through Jesus Christ who came through the lineage of Abraham;

2. Through the priesthood which was conferred upon Abraham and his descendants;

3. Through the scattering of Israel among all nations by which the blood of Israel was sprinkled among the nations, and thus the nations partake of the leaven of righteousness, on condition of their repentance, and are entitled to the promises made to the children of Abraham; and

4. In the fact that the Lord covenanted with Abraham that after his time all who embraced the gospel should be called by his name, or, should be numbered among his seed, and should receive the Holy Ghost. (Doctrines of Salvation, 3:246-247)

Joseph Fielding Smith:
Let us consider the fulfillment of this great promise, and see how the nations of the earth, through Abraham’s seed have been blessed.

First, the Lord always turns punishments to the accomplishment of his purposes. The scattering of the Israelites among all nations was a punishment inflicted upon them, but a great blessing extended to the nations among whom they were scattered. The word of the Lord to Abraham in this regard, is much clearer as it has come to us in the writings of Abraham wherein he states:

“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.” (Abraham 2:11)

Again the Lord said:

“And I will bless them through thy name; for, as many as receive this gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father.” (Abraham 2:9)

We see, then, how through the scattering of Israel, especially the descendants of the ten tribes who mingled with the Gentile nations, the blood of Abraham had been mixed with the blood of the Gentiles, and in this way the Gentiles have been brought into the seed of Abraham, and are therefore entitled to receive, on conditions of their repentance, all the blessings promised to the seed of Abraham. The children of Israel, even in their greatest number, never fulfilled the promise of the Lord concerning their magnitude when dwelling in the land of Palestine. The prediction was that their number should be as countless as the stars or the sand upon the seashore. In Palestine they never reached proportions too great to be numbered nor have they reached this number in their scattered condition although they had become absorbed into the body of the Gentile nations. Moreover, they, through this scattering, planted in the hearts of the Gentiles to some degree a desire to worship the God of Abraham and to accept of his teachings and the teachings of the prophets who came through his seed. Because the Jews rejected Jesus Christ they were scattered as the Savior predicted; but the Lord has kept them, for his own purpose, as a distinct people. They have not mixed to any great extent with the Gentiles by marriage, but have maintained their racial identity. And when Christ comes, he will appear to the gathered Jews as predicted by Zechariah. (The Restoration of All Things, p.129-137)
The Scattering of Israel
The following are statements from the scriptures relative to the curse promised Israel if they broke their covenant with God:

- And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. (Leviticus 26:33)
- And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you. (Deuteronomy 4:27)
- I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: (Deuteronomy 32:26)
- And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:

And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:

In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you. (Deuteronomy 28:63-68)

- I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them. (Jeremiah 9:16)
- I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; (Ezekiel 20:23)

And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee. (Ezekiel 22:15)

And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. (Ezekiel 36:19)

- For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as [corn] is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. (Amos 9:9)

- Wherefore, the things of which I have read are things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual; for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations.

And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away.

And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded, because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all nations and shall be hated of all men. (1 Nephi 22:3-5)

- 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 5:24)

And verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel. And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them. (3 Nephi 20:12-13)

Concerning the scattering of Israel among the nations, Joseph Fielding Smith said:

The descendants of Abraham, the tribes of Israel, became the chosen people of the Lord according to the promise. The Lord honored them, nourished them, watched over them with a jealous care, until they became a great nation in the land the Lord had given to their fathers. Notwithstanding this tender care and the instructions and warnings this people received from time to time through their prophets, they failed to comprehend the goodness of the Lord and departed from him. Because of their rebellion they were driven out of their land and eventually were scattered among the nations. Their priesthood was lost and they were left in spiritual darkness. (Doctrines of Salvation, 1:164-165)

Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

There is something mysterious and fascinating about believing the Ten Tribes are behind an iceberg somewhere in the land of the north, or that they are on some distant planet that will one day join itself with the earth, or that the tribe of Dan is in Denmark the tribe of Reuben in Russia, and so forth. A common cliché asserts: “If we knew where the Lost Tribes were, they would not be lost.” True it is that they are lost from the knowledge of the world; they are not seen and recognized as the kingdom they once were; but in general terms, their whereabouts is known. They are scattered in all the nations of the earth, primarily in the nations north of the lands of their first inheritance. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, Pg.520)

Though the majority of Israel lost their identity as a result of the scattering, it appears that, like the Lehi and his family, the Lord led other groups out of Israel to try to preserve the gospel upon the earth. This is clear from the allegory found in Jacob 5, where Zenos reveals that God tried to save ancient Israel by scattering branches of them throughout the world and grafting Gentiles into the Church that Christ set up in the days of Peter:

7 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he said unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree [tribes of Israel]; wherefore, go and pluck the branches from a wild olive-tree [gentiles], and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches [tribes of Israel] which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned [destruction of
And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches [select groups of the tribes of Israel such as Lehi, Mulek, and others], and I will graft them whithersoever I will [scatter them in other parts of the world]; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may preserve the fruit thereof unto myself; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will.

Take thou the branches of the wild olive-tree, and graft them in [gentiles brought in to the Church in the days of Peter], in the stead thereof; and these which I have plucked off I will cast into the fire and burn them, that they may not cumber the ground of my vineyard.

And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive-tree.

And the Lord of the vineyard caused that it should be digged about, and pruned, and nourished, saying unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing.

Wherefore, go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words.

And these will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard, whithersoever I will, it mattereth not unto thee; and I do it that I may preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard went his way, and hid the natural branches of the tame olive-tree in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, some in one and some in another, according to his will and pleasure. (Jacob 5:7-14)

To the Nephites, the Savior promised to visit the all the branches of Israel whom he had broken off:

And verily, verily, I say unto you that I have other sheep, which are not of this land, neither of the land of Jerusalem, neither in any parts of that land round about whither I have been to minister.

For they of whom I speak are they who have not as yet heard my voice; neither have I at any time manifested unto them.

But I have received a commandment of the Father that I shall go unto them, and that they shall hear my voice, and shall be numbered among my sheep, that there may be one fold and one shepherd; therefore I go to show myself unto them. (3 Nephi 16:1-3). 

Peter’s Church of grafted in Gentiles, and the other tribes to whom the Lord visited flourished for a period of time:

And it came to pass that a long time passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor in the vineyard.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to labor. And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: Behold, I have planted another branch of the tree also; and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer than the first. But, behold the tree. I have nourished it this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit [Lamanites]; behold, I have nourished this tree like unto the others.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire.

But behold, the servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard. (Jacob 5:15-28)

Eventually, Peter’s Church with grafted in Gentiles, and all branches of Israel whom the Lord visited, like the Nephites, became apostate and lost the gospel and their identity.

And it came to pass that a long time had passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor again in the vineyard. For behold, the time draweth near, and the end soon cometh; wherefore, I must lay up fruit against the season, unto mine own self.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant went down into the vineyard; and they came to the tree whose natural fruit hath brought forth much strength; and because of the much strength of the root thereof the wild branches have brought forth tame fruit. Now, if we had not grafted in these branches, the tree thereof would have perished. And now, behold, I shall lay up much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Come, let us go to the nethermost part of the vineyard [where portions of the 10 tribes had been scattered], and behold if the natural branches of the tree have not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self.

And it came to pass that they went forth whither the master had hid the natural branches of the tree, and he said unto the servant: Behold these; and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much fruit; and he beheld also that it was good. And he said unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self; for behold, said he, this long time have I nourished it, and it hath brought forth much fruit.

And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard.

And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him: Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground; wherefore, I said unto thee, I have nourished it this long time, and thou beholdest that it hath brought forth much fruit.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Look hither; behold I have planted another branch of the tree also; and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer than the first. But, behold the tree. I have nourished it this long time, and it hath brought forth much fruit; therefore, gather it, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said again unto his servant: Look hither, and behold another branch also, which I have planted; behold that I have nourished it also, and it hath brought forth fruit.

And he said unto the servant: Look hither and behold the last. Behold, this have I planted in a good spot of ground [the Americas]; and I have nourished it this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit [Nephites], and the other part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit [Lamanites]; behold, I have nourished this tree like unto the others.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire.

But behold, the servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard. (Jacob 5:15-28)

Israel by gentile nations].

8 And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches [select groups of the tribes of Israel such as Lehi, Mulek, and others], and I will graft them whithersoever I will [scatter them in other parts of the world]; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may preserve the fruit thereof unto myself; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will.

9 And now, behold, I shall lay up much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self.

10 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Come, let us go to the nethermost part of the vineyard, where the natural branches of the tree have not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self.

11 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words.

12 Wherefore, go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words.

13 And these will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard, whithersoever I will, it mattereth not unto thee; and I do it that I may preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof.

14 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard went his way, and hid the natural branches of the tame olive-tree in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, some in one and some in another, according to his will and pleasure. (Jacob 5:7-14)
branches had been broken off; and the wild branches had been grafted in [Peter’s Church with grafted in gentiles]; and behold all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree.

31 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard said: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto myself against the season much fruit.

32 But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good [Church had become apostate]. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor; and now it grieveth me that I should lose this tree.

33 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self?

34 And the servant said unto his master: Behold, because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive-tree they have nourished the roots, that they are alive and they have not perished; wherefore thou beholdest that they are yet good.

35 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: The tree profiteth me nothing, and the roots thereof profit me nothing so long as it shall bring forth evil fruit.

36 Nevertheless, I know that the roots are good, and for mine own purpose I have preserved them; and because of their much strength they have hitherto brought forth, from the wild branches, good fruit.

37 But behold, the wild branches have grown and have overrun the roots thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof it hath brought forth much evil fruit; and because that it hath brought forth so much evil fruit thou beholdest that it beginneth to perish; and it will soon become ripened, that it may be cast into the fire, except we should do something for it to preserve it.

38 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Let us go down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard [where portions of the 10 tribes had been scattered], and behold if the natural branches have also brought forth evil fruit.

39 And it came to pass that they went down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard. And it came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt also; yea, the first and the second and also the last; and they had all become corrupt [all scattered Israel had become apostate].

40 And the wild fruit of the last had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died.

41 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard wept, and said unto the servant: What could I have done more for my vineyard?

42 Behold, I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted. And now these which have once brought forth good fruit have also become corrupted; and now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

43 And behold this last, whose branch had withered away, I did plant in a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto me above all other parts of the land of my vineyard.

44 And thou beheldest that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof.

45 And thou beheldest that a part thereof brought forth good fruit, and a part thereof brought forth wild fruit; and because I plucked not the branches thereof and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good branch that it hath withered away.

46 And now, behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit; and these I had hoped to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive-tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and it grieveth me that I should lose them. (Jacob 5:29-46)

Of these events, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

But, says one, are they not in a body somewhere in the land of the north? Answer: They are not; they are scattered in all nations. The north countries of their habitation are all the countries north of their Palestinian home, north of Assyria from whence they escaped, north of the prophets who attempted to describe their habitat. And for that matter, they shall also come from the south and the east and the west and the ends of the earth. Such is the prophetic word.

But, says another, did not Jesus visit them after he ministered among the Nephites? Answer: Of course he did, in one or many places as suited his purposes. He assembled them together then in exactly the same way he gathered the Nephites in the land Bountiful so that they too could hear his voice and feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet. Of this there can be no question. And we suppose that he also called twelve apostles and established his kingdom among them even as he did in Jerusalem and in the Americas. Who should he deal any differently with one branch of Israel than with another?

Query: What happened to the Ten Tribes after the visit of the Savior to them near the end of the thirty-fourth year following his birth? Answer: The same thing that happened to the Nephites. There was righteousness for a season, and then there was apostasy and wickedness. Be it remembered that darkness was destined to cover the earth -- all of it -- before the day of the restoration, and that the restored gospel was to go to every nation and kindred and tongue and people upon the face of the whole earth, including the Ten Tribes of Israel. (The Millennial Messiah, pp.216-217)

The Gathering of Israel

The following are scriptural prophecies of the gathering of Israel:

- And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call [them] to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee;

  And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

  That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

  If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from whence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

  And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. (Deuteronomy 30:1-5)

- And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

  And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand
The gathering of Israel commenced in the following manner. In May of 1829, Peter, James and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood to Joseph Smith including the keys of the kingdom. Joseph Smith restored the Church on April 6, 1830. Then according to D&C 110, on April 3, 1836, Moses appeared to Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple and restored the keys for Israel’s gathering and restoration to the land they were driven from:

- After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north. (D&C 110:11)

- We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory. (Articles of Faith 10)

Of this, Bruce R. McConkie has said:

Moses, who mediated the cause of his erring brethren in ancient times, and to whom the Lord revealed the doctrine of the scattering and the doctrine of the gathering, is the very one who came in resurrected glory to give the needed authorization and keys to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. As the holy word attests: “Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.” (D&C 110:11.)

Two things are involved in this commission. First Israel -- all Israel, the Ten Tribes included -- is to be gathered “from the four parts of the earth,” out of every nation and from among every people. They are to be gathered into the true church and fold of the God of Israel. This gathering is primarily spiritual, but it is also temporal in that the gathered sheep are assembled into the stakes of Zion where the living waters flow. But, next, this commission directs the one who holds the keys of the gathering, meaning the President of the Church, to lead the Ten Tribes from the land of the north to their destined Palestinian homeland. They will be led to their promised inheritances after they join the Church, after they return unto the Lord, after they believe in Christ and accept his gospel, after they receive, individually and collectively, the Abrahamic covenant again. This part of the gathering of Israel is Millennial for that is the assigned period in which the Ten Tribes are to come forth; that is the day in which the kingdom will be restored to Israel in the political as well as the ecclesiastical sense. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p.529-530)

Two Gathering Places

There will be two gathering places: one for the Israel (the ten tribes) and one for the Jews. The following are statements relative to this:

Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion.
And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house. (D&C 133:12-13)

The following is from the Proclamation of the Quorum of the Keys for the Gathering of Israel Restored

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Of this, Bruce R. McConkie has said:

Moses, who mediated the cause of his erring brethren in ancient times, and to whom the Lord revealed the doctrine of the scattering and the doctrine of the gathering, is the very one who came in resurrected glory to give the needed authorization and keys to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. As the holy word attests: “Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.” (D&C 110:11.)

Two things are involved in this commission. First Israel -- all Israel, the Ten Tribes included -- is to be gathered “from the four parts of the earth,” out of every nation and from among every people. They are to be gathered into the true church and fold of the God of Israel. This gathering is primarily spiritual, but it is also temporal in that the gathered sheep are assembled into the stakes of Zion where the living waters flow. But, next, this commission directs the one who holds the keys of the gathering, meaning the President of the Church, to lead the Ten Tribes from the land of the north to their destined Palestinian homeland. They will be led to their promised inheritances after they join the Church, after they return unto the Lord, after they believe in Christ and accept his gospel, after they receive, individually and collectively, the Abrahamic covenant again. This part of the gathering of Israel is Millennial for that is the assigned period in which the Ten Tribes are to come forth; that is the day in which the kingdom will be restored to Israel in the political as well as the ecclesiastical sense. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p.529-530)

Two Gathering Places

There will be two gathering places: one for the Israel (the ten tribes) and one for the Jews. The following are statements relative to this:

Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion.
And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house. (D&C 133:12-13)

The following is from the Proclamation of the Quorum of the Priesthood to Joseph Smith including the keys of the kingdom. Joseph Smith restored the Church on April 6, 1830. Then according to D&C 110, on April 3, 1836, Moses appeared to Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple and restored the keys for Israel’s gathering and restoration to the land they were driven from:
Twelve Apostles given on 6 April 1845:

And we further testify that the Lord has appointed a holy city and temple to be built on this continent, for the endowment and ordinances pertaining to the priesthood; and for the Gentiles, and the remnant of Israel to resort unto, in order to worship the Lord, and to be taught in his ways and walk in his paths; in short, to finish their preparations for the coming of the Lord.

And we further testify, that the Jews among all nations are hereby commanded, in the name of the Messiah, to prepare, to return to Jerusalem in Palestine, and to rebuild that city and temple unto the Lord.

And also to organize and establish their own political government, under their own rulers, judges, and governors, in that country.

For be it known unto them that we now hold the keys of the priesthood and kingdom which is soon to be restored unto them.

Therefore let them also repent, and prepare to obey the ordinances of God. (Messages of the First Presidency, 1:254)

In the Times and Seasons, the church newspaper in Nauvoo, Wilford Woodruff wrote the following in relation to the Proclamation of the Quorum of the Twelve of 6 April 1845:

It is set forward that the Lord has appointed a temple and holy city to be built on the continent of America, for the endowment and ordinances pertaining to the priesthood and for the Gentiles and remnants of Israel to resort unto, in order to worship the Lord, to be taught in his ways and walk in his paths, and finish their preparations for the coming of the Lord. A command is also given to the Jews among all nations, to prepare to return to Jerusalem in Palestine, and to re-build that city and temple unto the Lord. Thus, America and Jerusalem are set forth as two places of gathering for the nations, and they may escape the judgments about to overtake the world, as the prophets have testified, that in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance. (Times and Seasons, Vol.6, p.1067)

John Taylor:

It may be proper here to remark, that there will be two places of gathering, or Zion; the one in Jerusalem, the other in another place; the one is a place where the Jews will gather to, and the other a mixed multitude of all nations. (The Government of God, Ch.11)

Lorenzo Snow:

There will be a universal gathering to America and Palestine. Mormonism teaches that prior to the Millennial reign of peace, there is to be a universal gathering of scattered Israel, the lineal descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; meaning not only the Jews, but also the “lost tribes” and such of the chosen seed as have for generations been mixed with other peoples. This gathering, which includes the converted Gentiles, is preliminary to the glorious advent of the King of kings, and the resurrection of those who are Christ’s at His coming. The places of assembly are America and Palestine, the former taking chronological precedence as the gathering place of “Ephraim and his fellows,” while the “dispersed of Judah” will migrate to and rebuild Jerusalem. Here, upon the American continent, will be reared Zion, a new Jerusalem, where the Saints will eventually assemble and prepare for the coming of the Messiah. (Teachings of Lorenzo Snow, p.153)

Joseph Fielding Smith:

In the former dispensation, the gospel was first preached to the Jews and then, after they had rejected it, it was taken to the Gentiles. In the dispensation in which we live, the gospel was first taken to the Gentile nations, and scattered Israel other than the Jews were gathered out; and after being preached among the Gentile nations, it shall go to the Jews, the first being last and the last being first, as the Savior promised.

In section 45 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord calls attention to the fact that when the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, a light should break forth among those that sat in darkness, and it should be the fulness of the everlasting gospel, but they would reject it. And in that generation shall the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled. In the 133rd section of the Doctrine and Covenants, he warns all the tribes of Israel to flee to the mountains of Ephraim for safety, and for the Jews to flee to Jerusalem. (Doctrines of Salvation, 3:259)

Israel Gathered by the Book of Mormon
The Book of Mormon is the instrument designed by the Lord to gather Israel

Ezra Taft Benson:

The responsibility of the seed of Abraham, which we are, is to be missionaries to “bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations” (Abraham 2:9). Moses bestowed upon Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple the keys to gather Israel (see D&C 110:11).

Now, what is the instrument that God has designed for this gathering? It is the same instrument that is designed to convince the world that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is His prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. It is that scripture which is the keystone of our religion. (Ensign, May 1987, p. 85)

Orson Pratt:

It seems then, that Jacob was to be scattered and dispersed, and made ashamed, his face was to wax pale, and he be counted a byword among the people, until the set time should arrive, until God should arise up in his majesty and power in the latter days, and should set to his hand according to the words of the Prophets, a second time to recover his people from the four corners of the earth. And when he should commence this great work, he would bring forth the words of them that have slumbered in the dust, should whisper out of the ground, and their speech should be low out of the dust; and Israel, after that time, should no longer be made ashamed, neither should their faces wax pale. Why? Because they must be gathered from the four quarters of the earth by means of that book.
Wilford Woodruff:

I believe that God Almighty reserved a certain class of men to carry on his word. They have been born into the world in this generation. I believe this was the case with Joseph Smith. I believe he was ordained to this work before he tabernacled in the flesh. He was a literal descendant of Joseph who was sold into Egypt, and the Lord called him and ordained him. He gave unto him the keys of the kingdom. He received the record of the twelve tribes of Israel, before the coming of Shiloh, their king. (Journal of Discourses, 22:206)

The Gathering of Israel Accomplished in Phases

Bruce R. McConkie:

The gathering of Israel and establishment of Zion in the latter days is divided into three periods or phases. The first phase is past; we are now living in the second phase; and the third lies ahead. Prophecies speak of them all. If we do not rightly divide the word of God, as Paul’s expression is, we will face confusion and uncertainty. If on the other hand we correctly envision our proper role and know what should be done today, we shall then be able to use our time, talents, and means to the best advantage in building up the kingdom and preparing a people for the second coming of the Son of Man.

The three phases of this great latter-day work are as follows:

Phase I - From the First Vision, the setting up of the kingdom on April 6, 1830, and the coming of Moses on April 3, 1836, to the secure establishment of the Church in the United States and Canada, a period of about 125 years.

Phase II - From the creation of stakes of Zion in overseas areas, beginning in the 1950’s, to the second coming of the Son of Man, a period of unknown duration.

Phase III - From the Lord’s second coming until the kingdom is perfected and the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea, and from then until the end of the Millennium, a period of 1,000 years. (“Come: Let Israel Build Zion,” Ensign, May 1977, pp. 115-118)

President Harold B. Lee:

“For Zion must increase in beauty, and in holiness, her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened, yea, verily I say unto you, Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments.” (D&C 82:14.)

Zion, as used here, undoubtedly had reference to the Church. At that time there was but a small body of Church members just beginning to emerge as an organization, after having experienced harsh treatment from enemies outside the Church, who had then been directed to gather together in Jackson County, Missouri, which the Lord had designated as the “land of Zion.” . . .

The borders of Zion, where the righteous and pure in heart may dwell, must now begin to be enlarged. The stakes of Zion must be strengthened. All this so that Zion may arise and shine before a thousand years. And Israel will not be gathered all at one time. The gathering commenced with the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830; it was formalized and took on a divine impetus with the restoration of the keys by Moses in 1836; and it has grown in scope and intensity ever since. Once it was centered in Kirtland, Ohio, then in Missouri, and then in Illinois. For nearly a hundred years the new converts flowed to the tops of the Rocky Mountains, and now they are counseled to remain in the stakes of Zion in the nations of their inheritance. It will thus continue on a worldwide basis until the Second Coming and then go on into the Millennium for as long as is necessary to perfect the work and convert the world. We see no reason why this Millennial phase should take longer than a single generation. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, pp. 545-546)

We are presently living in the second phase of the gathering of Israel. Concerning this phase the following has been said:

Bruce R. McConkie:

Stakes of Zion are also being organized at the ends of the earth. In this connection, let us ponder these truths: A stake of Zion is part of Zion. You cannot create a stake of Zion without creating a part of Zion. Zion is the pure in heart; we gain purity of heart by baptism and by obedience. A stake has geographical boundaries. To create a stake is like founding a City of Holiness. Every stake on earth is the gathering place for the lost sheep of Israel who live in its area.

The gathering place for Peruvians is in the stakes of Zion in Peru, or in the places which soon will become stakes. The gathering place for Chileans is in Chile; for Bolivians it is in Bolivia; for Koreans it is in Korea; and so it goes through all the length and breadth of the earth. Scattered Israel in every nation is called to gather to the fold of Christ, to the stakes of Zion, as such are established in their nations. (“Come: Let Israel Build Zion,” Ensign, May 1977, pp. 115-118)
Spencer W. Kimball:

The gathering of Israel now involves conversion. Now, we are concerned with the gathering of Israel. This gathering shall continue until the righteous are assembled in the congregations of the Saints in the nations of the world. This reminds us of the tenth article of faith wherein the Prophet Joseph Smith said to his inquirer, “We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the new Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.”

Now, the gathering of Israel consists of joining the true church and their coming to a knowledge of the true God. Any person, therefore, who has accepted the restored gospel, and who now seeks to worship the Lord in his own tongue and with the Saints in the nations where he lives, has complied with the law of the gathering of Israel and is heir to all of the blessings promised the Saints in these last days.

The Saints are no longer to come to a single place. In 1955, Sister Kimball and I went to Europe. We spent six months touring all of the missions in Europe. The people were still laboring under the impression that they should come to America for the gathering process. The burden of our sermons to them was, “Stay where you are. You have received the gospel. The blessings will be brought to you. It will not be long until you have stakes, and the Brethren will come across the ocean to visit you. Eventually temples will come, and you will have all the blessings of Zion.”

Now you folks of South America are in a different category: you have always lived in Zion. One of the Brethren said that Zion was all of America and that it is like a great bird with two wide wings: North America and South America.

Many people have been holding their breath waiting to see the gathering of Israel. We are in Israel and are being gathered. Now, in the early days of the Church we used to preach for the people to come to Utah as the gathering process, largely because that was the only place in the whole world where there was a temple. Now we have sixteen temples, and two more that have been approved, scattered throughout the world. So it is no longer necessary that we bring the people all to Salt Lake City. Our missionaries preach baptism and confirmation. And then we come to you with conferences and to organize stakes. So we say again, stay in Korea. This is a beautiful land. In this land you can teach your children just as well as you could in Salt Lake City. Stay in Korea where you can teach the gospel to millions of people.

And so the gathering is taking place. Korea is the gathering place for Koreans, Australia for Australians, Brazil for Brazilians, England for the English. And so we move forward toward the confirmation of this great program the Lord has established for us.

The First Presidency and the Twelve see great wisdom in the multiple Zions, many gathering places where the Saints within their own culture and nation can act as a leaven in the building of the kingdom -- a kingdom which seeks no earthly rewards or treasures.

Sometimes, inadvertently, we have given artificial encouragement to individuals to leave their native land and culture and, too often, this has meant the loss of the leaven that is so badly needed, and the individuals involved have sometimes regretted their migrations.

I am hopeful that each of you will ponder carefully what it is the Lord would have you do with your lives, with the special
skills, training, and testimonies you have. (The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, pp. 438-440)

**New Jerusalem Built**

*Before Christ comes, and while Israel is gathering, modern Israel will build New Jerusalem in Jackson County with the help of Gentiles who have gathered to the gospel with the remnants of Israel. The following discuss this:*

- 22 But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;
- 23 And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.
- 24 And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. (3 Nephi 21:22-24)

Commenting on these verses, Joseph Fielding Smith said:

Here is another part of this discourse which, in my judgment, is misinterpreted: “For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance; And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.”

I think this is the stumbling block. This has been interpreted to mean that the remnant of Jacob are those of the descendants of Lehi, but there is nothing in the passage as I read it which should convey this thought. Remember that all through the Lord has been speaking of the remnant of Jacob or Israel, and of the great promises made to the gentiles who are on this land and in all other lands, if they will only come into the Church and be numbered with the house of Israel. Their privileges would be to assist in building the New Jerusalem, and if they refuse, then shall the punishments come upon them. (Doctrines of Salvation, 2:250)

**The Return of the Ten Tribes**

*After many who are of the tribes of Israel have been gathered from among the nations, and the Jews have returned to Israel and built their city and temple, the Savior will return to the earth. Upon his return, the Jews will be converted to the gospel. Then the Lord will call for the rest of Israel (ten tribes), who have already been converted to the gospel, to return from the lands where they have been scattered back to the land promised them in the Abrahamic Covenant. The following quotes reflect this scenario:*

After the Savior told the Nephites that gathered Israel would build New Jerusalem, he then said that the Lord would open the way for them to return back to the land of promise given to Abraham:

- 25 And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.
- 26 And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.
- 27 Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.
- 28 Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.
- 29 And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

- 12 Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles [the ten tribes] flee unto Zion [presently, stakes of Zion throughout the world but eventually the New Jerusalem].
- 13 And let them who are of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord's house.
- 14 Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon.
- 15 But verily, thus saith the Lord, let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you; and he that goeth, let him not look back lest sudden destruction shall come upon him.
- 16 Hearken and hear, O ye inhabitants of the earth. Listen, ye elders of my church together, and hear the voice of the Lord; for he calleth upon all men, and he commandeth all men everywhere to repent.
- 17 For behold, the Lord God hath sent forth the angel crying through the midst of heaven, saying: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for the hour of his coming is nigh--
- 18 When the Lamb shall stand upon Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads.
- 19 Wherefore, prepare ye for the coming of the Bridegroom; go ye, go ye out to meet him.
- 20 For behold, he shall stand upon the mount of Olivet, and upon the mighty ocean, even the great deep, and upon the islands of the sea, and upon the land of Zion.
- 21 And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people; and it shall be a voice as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, which shall break down the mountains, and the valleys shall not be found.
- 22 He shall command the great deep, and it shall be driven back into the north countries, and the islands shall become one land;
- 23 And the land of Jerusalem and the land of Zion shall be turned back into their own place, and the earth shall be like as
it was in the days before it was divided.
25 And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh.
26 And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.
27 And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.
28 Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,
29 And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.
30 And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.
31 And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.
32 And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.
33 And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.
34 Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the children of Ephraim and his fellows. (D&C 133:12-34)

- 21 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:
   22 And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:
   23 Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.
   24 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. (Ezekiel 37:21-24)

- 31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:
   32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:
   33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.
   34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Joseph Fielding Smith:
Before the second coming of Jesus Christ the remnant of the Jews will be gathered to Palestine. This prophecy is now being rapidly fulfilled. The Saints who are dead will come forth. Christ will appear to the Jews as they shall flee from their enemies. Part of the city of Jerusalem shall fall when a great earthquake shall take place and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in twain and into the valley thus formed the persecuted Jews shall flee for safety. At this time Christ will appear to them and show them his hands and his feet and the predictions of Zacharias will be fulfilled. Then the Jews who have only partly believed in Christ and who have not been willing to accept him as their Redeemer, will be converted and forgiven on their repentance and a nation will be born in a day. (Church History and Modern Revelation, Vol 1, p.180)

Bruce R. McConkie:
“We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes.” (A of F 10.) This inspired language leaves the clear impression that the gathering of Israel is one thing and the restoration of the Ten Tribes is another. Why this distinction? Are not the Ten Tribes a part of Israel? And if Israel is to be gathered, surely in the very nature of things this would include the gathering of the major portion of that ancient and favored people.

An immortal Moses, appearing in resurrected glory on the 3rd day of April, 1830, in the Kirtland Temple, committed unto his mortal fellow servants, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.” (D&C 110:11.) Again there is a distinction between Israel as a whole and the Ten Tribes who are the dominant portion of Jacob's seed. All scripture comes by the power of the Holy Ghost and is verily true. When special and unusual language is used, there is a reason. Holy writ is not idle chatter; it is the mind and will of the Lord; it says what he wants said. And so it now behooves us to learn why it is one thing to gather Israel from the four parts of the earth and yet another to lead the Ten Tribes from the land of the north.

We have already seen that all Israel, including specifically and pointedly the Ten Tribes, is scattered in all the nations of the earth, upon all the islands of the sea, and among every people who dwell on this planet. It is absolutely basic and fundamental to know this. We cannot understand the gathering of Israel, we cannot envision what is meant by the restoration of the Ten Tribes, and we cannot properly relate these two things to the Second Coming of our Lord unless we know where Israel and the Ten Tribes now are.

We are also aware that the Ten Tribes were first taken as a body into Assyria; that they went out from Assyria, northward, in a body, under prophetic guidance; and that they were then splintered and driven and scattered into all places and among all peoples. These Ten Tribes, no matter where they are located,
are in nations and places known in the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah and the ancient prophets as the north countries. Hence, their return to Palestine at least will be from the land of the north.

The tribe of Ephraim is one of the Ten Tribes; and her people became wanderers in the nations, where they now reside and where they are now being found and gathered, one of a city and two of a family, into the stakes of Zion in those nations. This gathering of Israel is not to an American Zion; it is not to Palestine and the ancient holy land; it is not to any central place or location. Rather, it is to the holy places of safety that are now being set up in all nations as rapidly as our strength and means permit. As we have seen, this gathering of Ephraim falls in the category of the gathering of Israel and not of the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north. This gathering of Ephraim is into the stakes of Zion in all the nations of the earth. There are, of course, isolated and unusual instances of people from the other lost tribes gathering with Ephraim, but these are few and far between. The gathering of these other tribes is not yet, but by and by.

What, then, is meant by the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north? Our answer is: Just what the words say. We are gathering Israel now in all nations and counseling them to stay where they are, there to enlarge the borders of Zion, there to build up stakes of Zion in their own lands and among their own people. But with the Ten Tribes, in part at least, it will be another thing. They are destined to return (at least in large and representative numbers) to the same soil where the feet of their forebears walked during the days of their mortal pilgrimage. They are to return to Palestine. At least a constituent assembly will congregate there in the very land given of God to Abraham their father. Others will, of course, be in America and in all lands, but the formal return, the return from the north countries, will be to the land of their ancient inheritance.

It is clear; it is plain; it is certain: God gave ancient Canaan to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve tribes of Israel, of whom the Ten Tribes are the dominant part. It is their land, in time and in eternity. It is their land now whenever they are worthy to tread its blessed surface. And it shall be theirs again in that everlasting eternity that lies ahead. “It is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it,” in that celestial day when it shall be crowned with the presence of God, even the Father. (D&C 88:17-19.) Where else, then, would we expect to see the Ten Tribes return? Where else would we expect them to assemble to worship the God of their fathers and to be inheritors of the promises made to the ancient ones whose seed they are?

Thus it is that we see why the revelations speak of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth into the Church and kingdom of God on earth, and also of the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north back again to their promised Canaan. The gathering of Israel is one thing, the return of the Ten Tribes to a specified place is another; and Moses gave to men in our day the keys and power to perform both labors. This means that Israel is gathered at the direction and pursuant to the power and authority vested in the legal administrators who preside over The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And it also means that the Ten Tribes -- scattered, lost, unknown, and now in all the nations of the earth -- these Ten Tribes, with their prophets, with their scriptures, in faith and desiring righteousness, shall return to blessed Canaan at the direction of these same legal administrators. The President of the Church is the only person on earth at any given time who does or can exercise these or any other priesthood keys in their eternal fulness. He will direct the return of the Ten Tribes. It will not come to pass in any other way.

We do not say that occasional blood descendants of Reuben or Naphtali or others of the other tribal heads shall not return to their Palestinian Zion, or assemble in an American Zion, or find their way into the stakes of Zion in all nations, all before the Second Coming of Christ. Some shall no doubt return to Canaan as true believers and members of the true Church, with the intent and purpose of fulfilling the scriptures and building up the ancient cities of Israel. This may well happen in some small measure, and to it there can be no objection. Great movements have small beginnings, and floods that sweep forth from bursting dams are first forecast when small rivulets trickle from the pent-up reservoirs. But we do say that the great day of the return of the Ten Tribes, the day when the assembling hosts shall fulfill the prophetic promises, shall come after our Lord’s return.

In that day, “They who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord.” The lost tribes of Israel, the Ten Tribes whose members are scattered among the northern nations, shall be remembered. The set time to favor them will have dawned. The work of the Father will then commence among them; converts will be made; they will believe the everlasting gospel and live to the elders of Ephraim; and they will be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. They will become again the Lord’s people. “And their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves.”

Their prophets! Who are they? Are they to be holy men called from some unknown place and people? Are they prophets unbeknown to the presiding officers of “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth”? (D&C 1:30.) Perish the thought! The President of the Church, who holds the keys to lead the Ten Tribes from the nations of the north wherein they now reside, holds also the keys of salvation for all men. There are not two true churches on earth, only one; there are not two gospels or two plans of salvation, only one; there are not two competing organizations, both having divine approval, only one. “Is Christ divided?” (1 Cor. 1:13.) God forbid. Their prophets are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They are stake presidents and bishops and quorum presidents who are appointed to guide and direct the destinies of their stakes and wards and quorums. (Bruce R. McConkie, The Millennial Messiah, pp. 319-326)

Further statements regarding the gathering of Israel

Joseph Fielding Smith:

In the past the descendants of Abraham, through Israel,
have suffered greatly for their transgressions, and the blessings which were theirs by inheritance, based upon their faithfulness, have been withheld. They have been “scattered and peeled” as Isaiah said of them, and hated by all nations. Nevertheless the Lord has not forgotten them nor the covenant he made with their fathers. The nations that oppressed them have passed away, or are doomed to such a fate; but Israel is now being gathered and the Lord is renewing his covenants with them. Eventually they shall possess the land of their inheritance and the Lord will set his sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore. Much of the ordinance work now being done in the temples is in fulfillment of the covenant the Lord made with Abraham and his children. (The Way to Perfection, p.90)

Brigham Young:

Recollect that we are now calling upon the Elders to go and gather up Israel; this is the mission that is given to us. It was the first mission given to the Elders in the days of Joseph. The set time is come for God to gather Israel, and for His work to commence upon the face of the whole earth, and the Elders who have arisen in this Church and Kingdom are actually of Israel. Take the Elders who are now in this house, and you can scarcely find one out of a hundred but what is of the house of Israel. It has been remarked that the Gentiles have been cut off, and I doubt whether another Gentile ever comes into this Church.

Will we go to the Gentile nations to preach the Gospel? Yes, and gather out the Israelites, wherever they are mixed among the nations of the earth. What part or portion of them? The same part or portion that redeemed the house of Jacob, and saved them from perishing with famine in Egypt. When Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, “guiding his hands wittingly,” he placed his right hand upon Ephraim, “and he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads,” etc. Joseph was about to remove the old man’s hands, and bringing his right hand upon the head of the oldest boy, saying—“Not so, my father; for this is the first born; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.” Ephraim has become mixed with all the nations of the earth, and it is Ephraim that is gathering together.

It is Ephraim that I have been searching for all the days of my preaching, and that is the blood which ran in my veins when I embraced the Gospel. If there are any of the other tribes of Israel mixed with the Gentiles we are also searching for them. Though the Gentiles are cut off, do not suppose that we are not going to preach the Gospel among the Gentile nations, for they are mingled with the house of Israel, and when we send to the nations we do not seek for the Gentiles, because they are disobedient and rebellious. We want the blood of Jacob, and that of his father Isaac and Abraham, which runs in the veins of the people. There is a particle of it here, and another there, blessing the nations as predicted.

Take a family of ten children, for instance, and you may find nine of them purely of the Gentile stock, and one son or one daughter in that family who is purely of the Blood of Ephraim. It was in the veins of the father or mother, and was reproduced in the son or daughter, while all the rest of the family are Gentiles. You may think that is singular, but it is true. It is the house of Israel we are after, and we care not whether they come from the east, the west, the north, or the south; from China, Russia, England, California, North or South America, or some other locality; and it is the very lad on whom father Jacob laid his hands, that will save the house of Israel. The Book of Mormon came to Ephraim, for Joseph Smith was a pure Ephraimite, and the Book of Mormon was revealed to him, and while he lived he made it his business to search for those who believed the Gospel.

Again, if a pure Gentile firmly believes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and yields obedience to it, in such a case I will give you the words of the Prophet Joseph-- “When the Lord pours out the Holy Ghost upon that individual he will have spasms, and you would think that he was going into fits.”

Joseph said that the Gentile blood was actually cleansed out of their veins, and the blood of Jacob made to circulate in them; and the revolution and change in the system were so great that it caused the beholder to think they were going into fits.

If any of the Gentiles will believe, we will lay our hands upon them that they may receive the Holy Ghost, and the Lord will make them of the house of Israel. They will be broken off from the wild olive tree, and be grafted into the good and tame olive tree, and will partake of its sap and fatness. If you take a bud and inoculate it into another tree it ceases to receive nourishment from its original stock; it must, however, receive nourishment, or it will die. Where must it receive its nourishment from? From the tree into which it has been introduced; it is supported by it, and becomes incorporated with it.

It is so with the House of Israel and the Gentile nations; if the Gentiles are grafted into the good olive tree they will partake of its root and fatness.

You understand who we are; we are of the House of Israel, of the royal seed, of the royal blood. (Journal of Discourses, 2:266-271)

George Q. Cannon:

God has chosen us from the various nations for this purpose. There are men in this Church from almost every race of men, and if representatives from all the races are not now, they will be in. God scattered the seed of Israel through all of the nations of the earth, so that in the great gathering of the last days He might be able to get representatives of all the families of men. And we are chosen for this purpose. The seed has been scattered among the nations; and when the descendants of Israel here, heard the sound of the Gospel, it was indeed the glad tidings of salvation to them. They knew the voice of the shepherd, it was like telling them something they had forgotten but always knew; they felt that it was something they had been
waiting for, the sound thereof was most delightful to the soul. It is true we have been scattered among Gentile nations, and are called Gentiles, but nevertheless we are of the pure seed, having come through Gentile lineage that we may be the means of saving them, and through our faithfulness we shall stand at their head. This is the blessing which rests upon us as descendants of Abraham. (Journal of Discourses, 22:128-130)

Concerning Patriarchal blessings and the declaration of lineage, President James E. Faust stated:

The Church is expanding at a tremendous rate. We now have stakes of Zion in a great many countries of the world, and most stakes have at least one patriarch. This growth permits many people across the earth the privilege of receiving patriarchal blessings. As President Joseph Fielding Smith stated, “The great majority of those who become members of the Church are literal descendants of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph” (Doctrines of Salvation, 3:246). However, Manasseh, the other son of Joseph, as well as the other sons of Jacob, has many descendants in the Church. There may be some come into the Church in our day who are not of Jacob’s blood lineage. No one need assume that he or she will be denied any blessing by reason of not being of the blood lineage of Israel. The Lord told Abraham, “And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father.” (Abraham 2:10)

Nephi tells us that “as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord.” (2 Nephi 30:2) Therefore it makes no difference if the blessings of the house of Israel come by lineage or by adoption.

Some might be disturbed because members of the same family have blessings declaring them to be of a different lineage. A few families are of a mixed lineage. We believe that the house of Israel today constitutes a large measure of the human family. Because the tribes have intermixed one with another, one child may be declared to be from the tribe of Ephraim and another of the same family from Manasseh or one of the other tribes. The blessing of one tribe, therefore, may be dominant in one child, and the blessing of another tribe dominant in yet another child. So children from the same parents could receive the blessings of different tribes. (Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 83; or Ensign, Nov. 1995, 64)