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## The Tame and Wild Olive Tree

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**Abstract:** The prophet Zenos outlined the history of Israel in the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5. Author includes a graph depicting the scattering and gathering of Israel.

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THE ALLEGORY OF . . .

## THE TAME AND WILD OLIVE TREE

by Richard O. Cowan

The Patriarch Abraham lived about two thousand years before Christ. Scriptural accounts in both *Genesis* and *Abraham* recount the marvelous blessings promised to this great man.<sup>1</sup> Because of the righteous character of his seed, Abraham has come to be called "the father of the Faithful."

These great promises were renewed to Abraham's son, Isaac, and to his grandson, Jacob. The latter was renamed Israel because of his successfully obtaining a blessing from the Lord. (See *Genesis* 32: 24-28.) Jacob, or Israel, had twelve sons who became the progenitors of the twelve "Tribes of Israel." According to the law of primogeniture the eldest son received a double portion of the inheritance. Because of transgression, Reuben lost his birthright as eldest son, and Joseph, next to the youngest, took his place. (*Genesis* 35:22; 49:4.) Because Joseph was now entitled to this privilege, Jacob counted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as though they were his own. (*Genesis* 48.) In this way Ephraim and Manasseh became the

(For Course 8, lessons of November 29 and December 6, "Rehoboam the Foolish" and "Jeroboam the Deceitful"; for Course 12, lesson of November 1, "The Blessing of Joseph and Its Fulfillment in America"; for Course 16, lesson of November 1, "The Gathering of Israel"; and for Course 23, lesson of October 25, "Dispersion and Gathering of Israel"; and of general interest.)

<sup>1</sup>See "All May Share the Blessings of Abraham," article and chart by Richard O. Cowan, *The Instructor*, September, 1960, pages 319, 320, and inside back cover.

heads of tribes instead of there being a single tribe of Joseph. In addition, the descendants of Levi were given a special assignment to serve in the Lesser Priesthood among all the other tribes.

Following a four-hundred-year period of bondage in Egypt and an additional 40 years in the wilderness, the "children" or descendants of Israel entered the promised land about 1250 B.C. At first they were governed by a system of tribal "judges," but the people demanded a king who could unite them and give them prestige comparable to that of neighboring nations. Saul, David (who occupied the throne about 1000 B.C.), and Solomon successively reigned over the "United Kingdom." This unity came to an end shortly thereafter when the ten northern tribes refused to recognize Solomon's son, Rehoboam, as their king. They seceded from the union and formed their own kingdom under the leadership of Jeroboam. The so-called Northern Kingdom was also known as the Kingdom of Israel or Kingdom of Ephraim because of the dominance of the latter tribe.

The accompanying chart summarizes the important phases of the scattering and gathering of Israel. (For a good discussion of the subject, see *The Articles of Faith*, by James E. Talmage,<sup>2</sup> chapters 17-19; also *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, by LeGrand Richards,<sup>3</sup> chapters 15-16.) Notice that several of the groups will have been scattered and gathered more than once. It is interesting that those groups associated with the Northern Kingdom will have the Western Hemisphere, Zion, or the New

<sup>2</sup>James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1924.

<sup>3</sup>LeGrand Richards, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, Deseret Book Company, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1950.

## THE TAME AND THE WILD OLIVE TREE *(Concluded from preceding page.)*

Jerusalem as their latter-day gathering center; those from the Southern Kingdom will gather in the eastern hemisphere, at the old Jerusalem, which will be rebuilt. It is true that Lehi left from Jerusalem; but he and his group were descendants of Joseph, whose posterity was numbered among the tribes in the north. The chart also indicates that the prophesied gathering is now under way and its complete fulfillment is yet in the future.

The Book of Mormon quotes the writings of Zenos, an Old World prophet, who told the history of Israel in allegory. (See *Jacob* 5.) In verses 3-14 Zenos compared Israel to a tame olive tree which grew old and began to decay (apostatize?). Under the care of the lord of the vineyard (or of the world) the tree put forth some tender shoots or natural branches which were taken and transplanted throughout the vineyard (scattering of Israel?). All these brought forth good fruit except for the branch planted in the choicest place which brought forth part good and part evil fruit. (Nephites and Lamanites? See verses 15-28.)

Verses 29-48 describe how subsequently the wild branches (Gentile influence?) overcame the roots of the tame tree so that it brought forth evil fruit. Even the scattered branches came to bear corrupt fruit (universal apostasy?). Verses 49-74 indicate that the lord and his servants, who were few, went forth for the last time (latter days?) to work in the vineyard. They brought shoots from the natural branches which had been transplanted throughout

the vineyard and regrafted them into the mother tree (gathering of Israel?). At the same time they took branches from the mother tree to graft them onto the trees throughout the vineyard (establishment of church branches throughout the world?). By these efforts the natural fruit, which was choice above all other fruits, was again produced (restoration of the Gospel?).

According to verses 75 and 76 the corruptible branches were cast into the fire (premillennial cleansing of the earth?), and the lord and his faithful servants for a long time (millennium?) enjoyed the fruits of their labors. When, in the end, as described in verse 77, evil fruit again appeared in the vineyard (loosing of Satan?), the lord gathered the good and the evil respectively into their own places (judgment?) and caused the vineyard (the earth itself) to be burned by fire.

Thus the Prophet Zenos outlined in allegory the history of Israel from the beginning to the time when the earth will be consumed by fire and become a celestialized world. As has been shown, the Lord desired to preserve the various branches of His covenant people, Israel. Thus the gathering is one of the most important works to be accomplished during the present dispensation. Let us who have been gathered prove worthy of the great blessings promised to Abraham and his seed. Let us remember that the faithful members of Christ's Church will be accounted as the true Israel of the last days.

Library File Reference: Israel.

## ORDERLY PRESERVATION OF RESEARCH NOTES *(Concluded from page 413.)*

in their sequence of search. The searcher does not attempt to separate the data obtained, either by surname or locality, but simply lists his extracts, abstracts, copy work, and even his comments. These notes will show the "extract number" (cross reference) from the index or list of search and at a moment's notice the researcher can refer from the index of search to the actual notes taken, or can refer from the notes taken to his bibliographical information on the index of search. (See Figure 3.)

A work folder is initiated for each family group on the pedigree. This will hold a "status family group sheet" which shows the known genealogical facts on that family, a "status pedigree chart," and all certificates, clippings, and related documents of the children. There must be a point of dividing material on the family group, and we arrived at this by placing data of the children in the folder of their parents. The husband and wife's genealogical information will be found on the "status family group sheet" in the folder of their name, but documents

relating to them will be found in the folder of their parents.

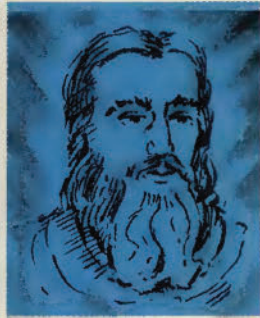
It is very often advisable to copy information directly onto family group sheets or special pre-printed forms, such as census forms. These, in essence, become part of the manuscript note file. However, the researcher may want to file these in the work folder. If that is the case, the manuscript note file must have an entry indicating where the sheets will be found. We do not suggest that the manuscript notes be broken up and placed in the work folders; but facts from the notes may be copied and placed therein, if desired.

With this index of search and correspondence, the manuscript note file, and the work folder concept, it is possible to provide an orderly listing of sources searched, information located, and a file showing certificates, clippings, documents, and a status family group sheet for each family unit.

Library File Reference: Genealogy.

# The Tame and Wild Olive Tree

## (SCATTERING AND GATHERING OF ISRAEL)



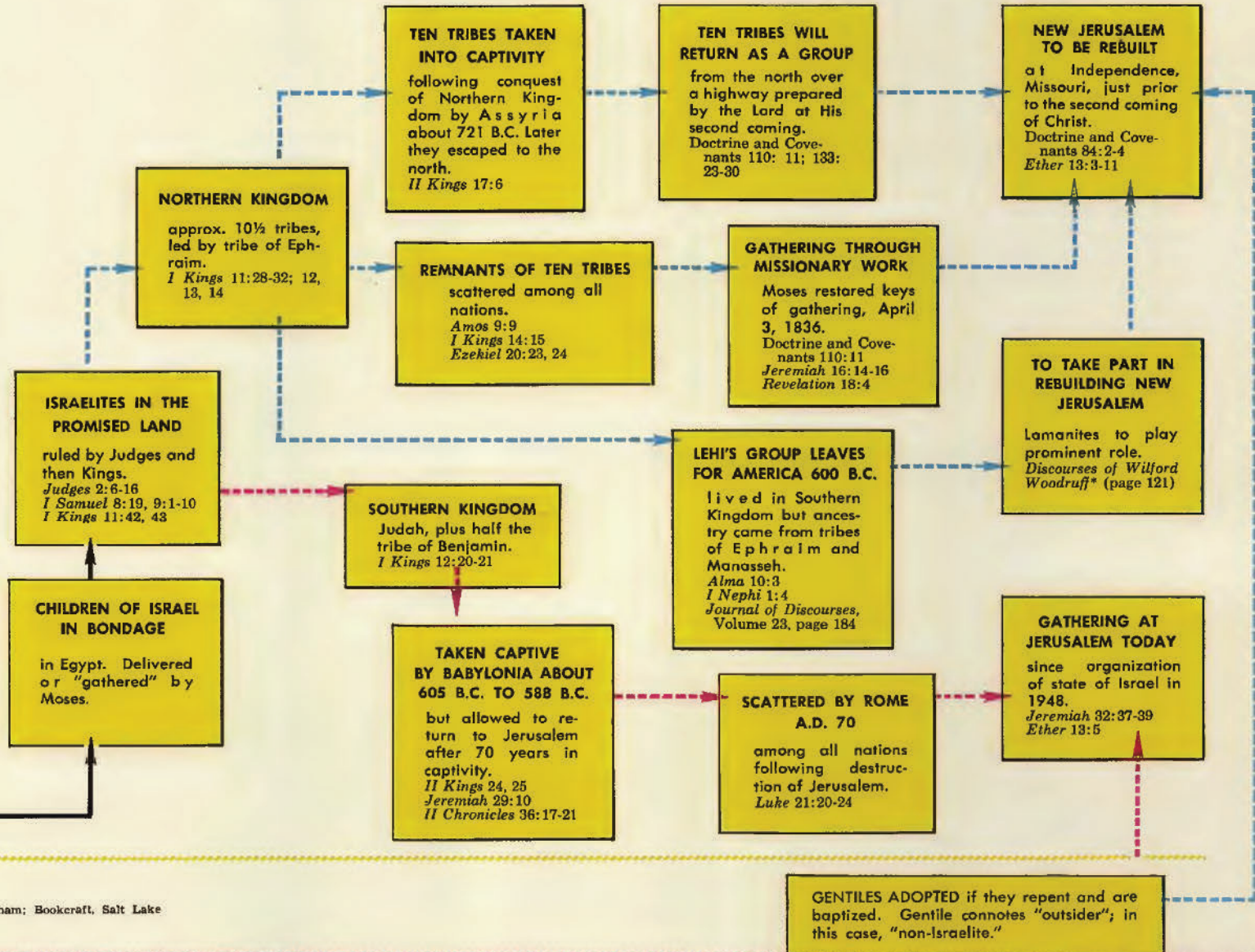
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\*Edited by G. Homer Durham; Bookcraft, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1946.