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“THEY SHALL NO MORE BE CONFOUNDED”: MORONI’S WORDPLAY ON JOSEPH IN ETHER 13:1-13 AND MORONI 10:31

Matthew L. Bowen

ABSTRACT: *In two related prophecies, Moroni employs an apparent wordplay on the name Joseph in terms of the Hebrew idiom (lōʾ) yôšîp ... ʾôd (+ verbal component), as preserved in the phrases “they shall no more be confounded” (Ether 13:8) and “that thou mayest no more be confounded” (Moroni 10:31). That phraseology enjoyed a long currency within Nephite prophecy (e.g., 1 Nephi 14:2, 15:20), ultimately having its source in Isaiah’s prophecies regarding Jerusalem/Zion (see, for example, Isaiah 51:22; 52:1–2; 54:2–4). Ether and Moroni’s prophecy in Ether 13 that the Old Jerusalem and the New Jerusalem would “no more be confounded” further affirms the gathering of Israel in general and the gathering of the seed of Joseph in particular.*

A part from the preservation of the prophecies of Joseph in 2 Nephi 3:1–4:3 where the name Joseph occurs thirteen times, the greatest concentration or clustering of the name Joseph in the Book of Mormon occurs in Ether 13, where it occurs seven times (a number of completion in Hebrew numerology).¹ This might seem an odd phenomenon, given that the book of Ether is primarily an abridgment of Jaredite records and an account of the destruction of the Jaredites. However, Moroni, our editor, like Ether and Coriantumr (cf. Ether 13:21) whose people he describes, lived to see his own nation destroyed in fulfillment of prophecy.

1. For more examples of the use of “sevens” in the Book of Mormon, see Corbin Volluz, “A Study in Seven: Hebrew Numerology in the Book of Mormon,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2014): 57–83, <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol53/iss2/7>.

Moreover, where Ether and Coriantumr also “live[d] to see the fulfilling of the prophecies which had been spoken concerning another people receiving the land for their inheritance” in place of the Jaredites (Ether 13:21), Moroni foresaw that another “Gentile” nation would be raised up to receive the land for their inheritance, dispossessing the remnant of Lehi’s seed (the descendants of the Lamanites and dissenting Nephites), who were descendants of the patriarch Joseph. Isaiah’s writings, more than those of any other biblical writer, deal with the Lord’s promises regarding Israel after its dispossession and scattering by non-Israelite nations (the “Gentiles”; see 3 Nephi 23:1–4).

Moroni’s cobbling together of elements from Isaiah 51:17, 22; 52:1–2; and 54:3–4 in Moroni 10:31 confirms the importance of Isaiah’s writings even in very late Nephite religious thought (see also Moroni’s earlier statement on Isaiah’s writings in Mormon 8:23 quoting Isaiah 29:4 and 2 Nephi 3:20).² As I will endeavor to show, Moroni’s adumbration of Ether’s prophecy concerning the restoration of the Jerusalem of old and the building of a New Jerusalem, owes much in terms of language to Nephi’s and Mormon’s prophecies concerning the gathering of Judah and Israel and to their understanding of the prophecies of Isaiah.

In particular, I will endeavor to show, on the basis of Isaiah’s prophecies, wordplay on the name of Joseph in terms of the Hebrew idiom (*lōʾ*) *yôšîp* ... ‘ôd (+ verbal component)³ apparently represented in Moroni’s Isaiah-based prophecies, especially in the phrases “they shall no more be confounded” (Ether 13:8) and “that thou mayest no more be confounded” (Moroni 10:31). This wordplay evokes the name of the one *to whom* the Lord had made promises fulfilled by Israel’s “gathering”⁴ — i.e., the patriarch Joseph⁵ — but also hints at the name of the one *through whom* the Lord would “set his hand again [Hebrew *yôšîp yādô*”⁶

2. Mormon 8:23: “Search the prophecies of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall cry, yea, even from the dust will they cry unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them.”

3. On the *yāsap/yôšîp* (+ verbal component) construction and its performance of “again”/“no more”-related adverbial functions, see Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 602, 656–57.

4. See 2 Nephi 3:3–16.

5. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 3:3–16; 25:21; JST Genesis 50:24–36.

6. Isaiah 11:11 [2 Nephi 21:11]; 2 Nephi 6:14; 25:17; 29:1; Jacob 6:2.

to gather Israel, so that Israel might “no more be confounded” — a future Joseph, the son of Joseph (see 2 Nephi 3:15).

“It Should Be Built Up Again, a Holy City unto the Lord”

Moroni’s summation of Ether’s prophecy in Ether 13 constitutes something of a very long paraphrase. Moroni, however, does not just summarize or paraphrase Ether, but his language abundantly cites earlier ancient Israelite and Nephite prophecy concerning “the house of Joseph,” the house of Israel, and the “remnant of Joseph’s seed.” Clearly, Moroni understood the prophecies of the Jaredite prophet Ether to refer not only to the coming of Christ, but also concerning a New Jerusalem:

Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake concerning a New Jerusalem upon this land. And he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come — after it should be destroyed **it should be built up again** [cf. Hebrew *yôšîp*], a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore, it could not be a new Jerusalem for it had been in a time of old; but **it should be built up again** [*yôšîp*], **and become a holy city of the Lord**; and it should be built unto the house of Israel. And that **a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph** [*yôšēp*], for which things there has been a type. (Ether 13:4–6)

Although such a prophecy might seem unlikely to come from a non-Israelite prophet with no traditional knowledge of or personal experience with an Old Jerusalem, it must be remembered that the Lord, as Moroni tells us earlier, “showed” the brother of Jared “all things.”⁷ Additionally, it must be remembered that Moroni is interpreting Ether for a latter-day Israelite and Gentile audience.⁸ The exact details of what Ether “saw” and “spake” (i.e., prophesied) regarding the “house of Israel” and a “New Jerusalem” are unknowable without the text of Moroni’s original sources. But whatever Ether’s original language, terminology, etc., we can confidently conclude that Moroni is giving us the most accurate encapsulation of Ether of which he was capable.

If Moroni’s prophecy that “the Jerusalem, from whence Lehi should come” should “be built up **again**” (stated twice) alludes to Isaiah 11:11 (“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord **shall set** his hand **again** [*yôšîp*] the second time to recover the remnant of his people”), it

7. Ether 3:26; 12:21; cf. Ether 4:7.

8. See, e.g., the title page of the Book of Mormon; Moroni 1:4.

indeed reflects the Hebrew *yôšîp* (+ verbal component) idiom. Juxtaposed here with the name Joseph, we can then conclude that Moroni recognizes and emphasizes a connection between Isaiah's prophecy (and thus Nephite prophecy) and the name Joseph.

The collocation "remnant of the seed of Joseph" finds its earliest extant biblical antecedent in the phrase "remnant of Joseph [*šē'ērîṭ yôšēp*]" (Amos 5:15; but cf. Alma 46:23, 27). Amos appears to play on the name Joseph in oracles declaring that the Lord "**will not again** [*lō' 'ôšîp*] pass by them [the northern kingdom of Israel or 'Joseph'] **any more** [*'ôd*]" (Amos 7:8, 8:2). Isaiah's prophecies appear to reverse the seeming finality of the Lord's sentence as articulated through Amos. Significantly, many of the prophecies of Isaiah that offer hope incorporate variations of the *yôšîp/lō' yôšîp 'ôd* (+ verbal component) idiom.

Moroni remarks that a "New Jerusalem" being built upon the land of promise (the Americas) "unto the remnant of the seed of **Joseph** [*yôšēp*]" found its "type" in the biography of Joseph in Egypt and his preservation of his father and his father's family's life after his brothers "hated him **yet the more**" (*wayyôšîpû 'ôd*, Genesis 37:5, 8). We recall that the name Joseph in Genesis 30:23–24 is explained in terms of two verbs: *'āsap* ("God hath **taken away** [**gathered in/up**, *'āsap*] my reproach") and *yāsap* ("The Lord **shall add** [**may** (he) **add**,⁹ *yôšēp*] to me another son"). This double-etymology makes clear that the name Joseph was associated with divine "taking away" or "gathering" and divine "adding" — iterative divine action taken on Israel's behalf.

"They Shall Be No More Confounded"

Moroni sees the merciful preservation of Jacob's and Joseph's posterity — Jacob's being "brought" from Canaan to Egypt and a "remnant of the seed of Joseph" later being "brought" out of Jerusalem — as a "type" or pattern for the building "again" of the "Jerusalem of old" and the building of a "New Jerusalem":

For as **Joseph** brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, the Lord brought **a remnant of the seed of Joseph** out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto **the seed of Joseph** that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto **the father of Joseph** that

9. Cf. Martin Noth, *Die israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der Gemeinsemitischen Namengebung* (BWANT 3/10; Stuttgart: W. Kolhammer, 1928), 212; Ephraim A. Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 230–33.

he should perish not. Wherefore, **the remnant of the house of Joseph** [*yôšēp*] shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and **they shall no more** [cf. *lō' yôšîpû/yôšîpû ... ôd*] **be confounded**, until the end come when the earth shall pass away. And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and they shall be like unto the old save the old have passed away, and all things have become new. And then cometh the New Jerusalem; and blessed are they who dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the Lamb; and **they are they who are numbered among the remnant of the seed of Joseph**, who were of the house of Israel. (Ether 13:7–10)

Moroni appears to juxtapose the name Joseph with the *lō' yôšîp*-idiom or its Nephite scribal equivalent. Just as “the Jerusalem of old” shall “**no more** drink ... again [*lō' tōšîpî*]” the “cup of trembling” (Isaiah 51:22) and “**henceforth there shall no more** [*lō' yôšîp*] come into [Jerusalem] the uncircumcised and the unclean” (Isaiah 52:1), the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem too “shall no more be confounded” (see further below). Or, as Nephi foretold to his brothers regarding their posterity in the latter days as descendants of Joseph, “they **should no more** be confounded, **neither should they** be scattered **again**” (1 Nephi 15:20). Nephi may have borrowed the Hebrew term *kālam* (“be hurt, humiliated”; “be ashamed,” “put to shame,” “be confounded”)¹⁰ — rendered by the KJV translators as “confound” — from Isaiah 54:4 (*tikkālēmî*).

When Moroni identifies the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem as “they who are **numbered** among the remnant of the seed of **Joseph** [*yôšēp*],” his words further echo Nephi’s words to his brothers: “**they shall be remembered numbered again** [cf. Hebrew *yôšîpû/yôšîpû*] among the house of Israel; they shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive tree, into the true olive tree” (1 Nephi 15:16). As Royal Skousen has shown, the original manuscript read “numbered” here rather than “remembered.”¹¹

Nephi’s statement, “they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again” (1 Nephi 15:20), and thus Moroni’s words

10. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001), 480. Hereafter cited as HALOT.

11. Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part One: 1 Nephi 1–2 Nephi 10* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004), 327.

in Ether 13, also represent adaptations or interpretations of the angel’s words to Nephi as preserved in 1 Nephi 14:1–2:

1 Nephi 15:16, 20	1 Nephi 14:1–2
<p>Behold, I say unto you, Yea; <u>they shall be remembered numbered again</u> [cf. <i>yôšîpû/yôšîpû</i>] among the house of Israel; they shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive tree, into the true olive tree (1 Nephi 15:16).</p> <p>And I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored <u>they should no more</u> [<i>lô' yôšîpû/yôšîpû ... 'ôd</i>] be confounded, neither should they be scattered again [cf. <i>wělô' yôšîpû/yôšîpû ... 'ôd</i>]. (1 Nephi 15:20)</p>	<p>And it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day ... and harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be blessed people upon the promised land forever; <u>they shall be no more</u> [cf. <i>lô' yôšîpû/yôšîpû ... 'ôd</i>] brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded.</p>

Clearly, Nephi’s words to his brothers in 1 Nephi 15:16, 20 represent a reiteration of the information relayed to him as recorded in 1 Nephi 14:2. Ether 13:8–10 exhibits a remarkable degree of textual dependence on (and wordplay involving) all three of the above passages. Moroni will use Nephi’s collocation “blessed people” in his refrain “blessed are they” (Ether 13:10–11).¹² Nephi’s statement, “And I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah,” confirms that his repeated use and Moroni’s use of the adverbial auxiliary expression “no more” in the phrase “shall no more be confounded” has its source in Isaiah. These words are themselves an adaptation of the language of Isaiah.

In fact, Nephi’s use of “no more” here reflects several texts from the book of Isaiah that describe the blessings the “remnant” of latter-day Israel will enjoy after being gathered again. Note the use of the *lô' yôšîp 'ôd* (+ verbal component) in each instance:

12. Both collocations “blessed people” and “blessed are they” probably also have some reference to the Abrahamic covenant (see, e.g., Genesis 12:3; 22:18).

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, **shall no more again** [*lō' yôšîp 'ôd*] stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. (Isaiah 10:20; 2 Nephi 20:20)

Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; **thou shalt no more** [*lō' tōšîpî*] **drink it again** [*'ôd*]. (Isaiah 51:22)

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth **there shall no more** [*lō' yôšîp ... 'ôd*] come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. (Isaiah 52:1)

These passages strongly suggest that the phrase “shall no more” (+ verb) in Nephi’s text represents the Hebrew *lō' yôšîp 'ôd* (+ verb) idiom with which Nephi would have been familiar as a Hebrew-speaking Israelite. Since Moroni himself states that he and other Nephites of his time continued to use Hebrew,¹³ and since Moroni was heir of the whole of the Nephite scripture- and record-keeping tradition, it is more than reasonable to suppose his familiarity with the *lō' yôšîp 'ôd* (+ verbal component) idiom as well. Nephi’s use of Isaiah 11:11 and 29:14 with *yâsap/yôšîp* in 2 Nephi 25:17 (cf. 25:21) and 2 Nephi 29:1 constitutes a wordplay on the name Joseph (in *Gezera Shawa*), as I have suggested elsewhere.¹⁴ I further submit that Nephi’s deployment of *lō' yôšîp 'ôd* should be similarly understood.

In addition to the foregoing, the “be confounded” element appears to have been quoted from or constitutes an allusion to Isaiah 54:4: “Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: **neither be thou confounded** [*wē'al tikkālēmî*] for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood **any more** [*'ôd*” (Isaiah 54:4). The relationship between Isaiah 52:1–2 and Isaiah 54:3–4 in Nephite thought (or at least in

13. Mormon 9:33.

14. Matthew L. Bowen, “‘He Shall Add’: Wordplay on the Name Joseph and an Early Instance of *Gezera Shawa* in the Book of Mormon,” *Insights* 30, no. 2 (2010): 2–4; Bowen, “Onomastic Wordplay on *Joseph* and *Benjamin* and *Gezera Shawa* in the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 18 (2016): 255–73.

Moroni's thought) becomes clear once the evidence of Moroni 10:31 is considered (see further below).

“Gathered in From the Four Quarters of the Earth and From the North Countries”

As noted earlier, the text of Genesis 30:23 etiologizes Joseph with the verb *’āsap*, which can mean to “take away,” but more commonly means to “gather up” or “gather in.” Hence, not only does the name Joseph midrashically connote “God hath **taken away** [*’āsap*] my reproach” but also “God has **gathered in** my reproach” or “God has **gathered together** my reproach.”

Accordingly, we find the later biography of Joseph mentioning that Joseph “gathered” his brothers, the patriarchs of the twelve tribes (minus himself and Benjamin), into “ward” or “keeping”: “And he **put them all together** [*wayye’ēsōp*, literally, “**gathered them together**”] into ward three days. And **Joseph** [*yōsēp*] said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God” (Genesis 42:17-18). A paronomasia on the name “Joseph” and *wayye’ēsōp*, establishes another clear lexical link between the name “Joseph” and the verb *’āsap*, to “gather”: Joseph is “gathering” the family to Egypt, an important aspect of the “type” or typological deliverance that Moroni cites.

Importantly, Moroni himself appears to employ the wordplay on Joseph’s name in terms of the verb *’āsap*:

And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and they shall be like unto the old save the old have passed away, and all things have become new. And then cometh the New Jerusalem; and **blessed are they** who dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the Lamb; and **they are they who are numbered among the remnant of the seed of Joseph** [*yōsēp*] who were of the house of Israel. And then also cometh the Jerusalem of old; and the inhabitants thereof, **blessed are they**, for they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who were scattered **and gathered in** [cf. Hebrew *wayyē’āsēpû*] **from the four quarters of the earth**, and from the north countries, and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham. (Ether 13:9-11)

The wordplay serves to link the name “Joseph” and the “remnant of the seed of Joseph” who will inhabit “the New Jerusalem” with those who are “gathered in” to inhabit the Jerusalem of old. Unstated but

perhaps implied in the wordplay is that the same “remnant of the seed of Joseph” will serve an important role in the “gather[ing] in” of Judah¹⁵ (“then also cometh the Jerusalem of old”) and the other tribes from the “four quarters of the earth.” The “Joseph” tribes are responsible for “gathering” the family of Israel (cf. again Genesis 42:17).¹⁶

Moroni’s apparent wordplay on the name Joseph owes a literary debt to that of his father Mormon. In an autobiographic interlude in 3 Nephi 5, Mormon acknowledges the Lord’s beneficence to “the house of Jacob” and in particular to the “seed of Joseph”:

I am Mormon, and a pure descendant of Lehi. I have reason to bless my God and my Savior Jesus Christ, that he brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem ... Surely he hath blessed the house of Jacob, and hath been merciful unto **the seed of Joseph** [*yôšēp*] And insomuch as the children of Lehi have kept his commandments **he hath blessed them** and prospered them according to his word. Yea, and surely **shall he again** [cf. Hebrew *yôšip*] bring **a remnant of the seed of Joseph** to the knowledge of the Lord their God. And as surely as the Lord liveth, will he **gather in** [cf. Hebrew *’āsap/qibbēš*] **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. And as he hath covenanted with all the house of Jacob, even so shall the covenant wherewith he hath covenanted with the house of Jacob be fulfilled in his own due time, unto the restoring all the house of Jacob unto the knowledge of the covenant that he hath covenanted with them. And then shall they know their Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and then shall they be **gathered in from the four quarters of the earth unto their own lands**, from whence

15. Orson Hyde’s dedication of the Holy Land for the gathering and return of the Jews — the tribe of Judah on October 24, 1841 can be seen as evidence of this. See “Interesting News From Alexandria and Jerusalem. Letter from Elder Hyde”, *Times and Seasons*, April 1, 1842, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/times-and-seasons-1-april-1842/5>.

16. See also D&C 133:30–34. D&C 113:5–6: “What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter? Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.” This likely refers to the Melchizedek priesthood, and not to the priesthood of Aaron.

they have been dispersed; yea, as the Lord liveth so shall it be.
Amen. (3 Nephi 5:20-26)

Mormon mentions “the seed of Joseph” and the “remnant of the seed of Joseph” twice in connection with the promise that “surely shall he again bring,” which may represent the *yôšîp* (+ verbal component) idiom, creating a wordplay on the name “Joseph.” Moreover, Mormon uses a verb rendered “gather in” twice — once active, once passive — which conceivably represents the verb *’āsap* (“to gather in,” “gather up”). If so, we have Mormon employing a double-play on the name “Joseph” in terms of the verbs *’āsap* and *yāsap*, much as we find in Genesis 30:23–24. Intriguingly, this double wordplay on *’āsap* and *yāsap* occurs in Isaiah 11:11–12, the very text to which Mormon appears to have referenced:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the Lord shall set his hand again** [*yôšîp*] the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and **shall assemble** [**gather in**, *wē’āsap*] **the outcasts of Israel, and gather together** [*yēqabbēš*] **the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.** (Isaiah 11:11–12)

On one level, Isaiah’s text plays on the name “Joseph” as the name of the patriarch of the dominant northern half-tribe of Ephraim (cf. the mention of Ephraim in Isaiah 11:13). Nephi, however, detects an additional level of wordplay (compare 2 Nephi 25:17, 21; 29:1 with 2 Nephi 3), alluding to the “Joseph” that would be the Lord’s instrument in the latter-day gathering of the entire house of Israel.

In the context of the Lord’s “**proceed**[ing] [*yôšîp/yôšēp*] to do a marvelous work and a wonder” (2 Nephi 29:1; citing Isaiah 29:14) and “**set**[ting] his hand **again** [*yôšēp*]” (2 Nephi 29:1, citing Isaiah 11:11), Nephi explicitly links the coming forth of and “gathering” of additional scripture with the “gathering home” of Israel:

And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be **gathered home** unto the lands of their possessions; and my word also shall be **gathered in one**. And I will show unto them that fight against my word and against my people, who are of the house of Israel, that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham that I would remember his seed forever. (2 Nephi 29:14)

The appearance and “gathering” of this additional scripture will constitute the signal or sign that the Lord is “gathering” Israel again (see, especially, 3 Nephi 21:7, 26–28; see also 2 Nephi 30:5–7; Mormon 3:17; Ether 4:16; cf. 8:24). As the Lord himself foretold to the Lamanites and Nephites at the temple in Bountiful: “And then **will I gather them in** [cf. *wě’āsaptī*] from **the four quarters of the earth**; and then will I fulfil the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel” (3 Nephi 16:5).

This language may ultimately have its source in the prophecies of Zenos: “Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet, that they **no more** [cf. Hebrew *lō’ yôšîpû*]¹⁷ turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers. Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the people who are of the house of Israel, **will I gather in**, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, **from the four quarters of the earth**” (1 Nephi 19:15–16). By far, the two most common verbs for “gathering” in the Hebrew Bible are *’āsap* (“gather in,” “assemble”; “take away”) and *qibbēš* (“gather together”). In three instances in the KJV in which the idiom “gather in”¹⁸ occurs, the underlying verb is always *’āsap*. The use of the idioms “no more” (+ verb) and “will I gather in” appear to constitute a wordplay on *yāsap* (*lō’ yôšîp*) and *’āsap* that looks something like the wordplay in Isaiah 11:11–12: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall **set** his hand **again** [*yôšîp*] the second time to recover the remnant of his people ... And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall **assemble** [**gather in**, *wě’āsap*] the outcasts of Israel, and **gather together** [*yēqabbēš*] the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”

17. Cf. also Isaiah 10:22.

18. Exodus 23:10 (“And six years thou shalt sow thy land, **and shalt gather in** [*wě’āsaptā*] the fruits thereof”); Leviticus 25:3 (“Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, **and gather in** [*wě’āsaptā*] the fruit thereof”), 20 (“And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, **nor gather in** [*wēlō’ ne’ēsōp*] our increase”); and Deuteronomy 11:14 (“...**that thou mayest gather in** [*wě’āsaptā*] thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil”). cf. Genesis 6:21.

Isaiah 51:17, 22; 52:1–2 & Isaiah 54:2–4	Moroni 10:31
<p>Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out. ... Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; <u>thou shalt no more drink it again</u> [lō' tōsîpî ... 'ôd]: (Isaiah 51: 17, 22)</p> <p>Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth <u>there shall no more</u> [lō' yôsip ... 'ôd] come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. (Isaiah 52:1–2)</p> <p>Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. (Isaiah 54:2–4)</p>	<p>And awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, <u>that thou mayest no more be confounded</u>, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled. (Moroni 10:31)</p>

“That Thou Mayest No More Be Confounded” (Moroni 10:31)

The importance of the writings of Isaiah in Moroni’s understanding of the Lord’s covenants with Israel emerges in one of his earliest statements: “Search the prophecies of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall cry, yea, **even from the dust will they cry** unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them” (Mormon 8:23). Moroni’s statement, “those saints . . . shall cry, yea, even from the dust” seemingly alludes to Isaiah 29:4 and subsequent Nephite midrash on that passage.

Moroni concludes his personal writings as well as the entire Book of Mormon with an exhortation combining the language of Isaiah 51:17, 22; 52:1–2; and Isaiah 54:4:

This concluding exhortation alone recommends Isaiah 52:1–2 and 54:2–4 as two of the most important texts in the book of Isaiah, quite apart from any other evidence. The purpose clause “that thou mayest no more be confounded,” in a real sense, offers a purpose clause for the entire Book of Mormon. Those words apply to Israel/Zion and the saints, collectively and individually.

Conclusion and Pragmatics

In his summation of Ether 13:1–13, Moroni uses the language of Isaiah and earlier Isaiah-inspired Nephite prophecy, including language from passages that employ forms of the *lō’ yāsap/yōsīp* (+ verbal component) construction (“and they shall **no more** be confounded,” Ether 13:8; “that thou mayest **no more** be confounded,” Moroni 10:31), in conjunction with his sevenfold-mention of the name Joseph. This suggests the strong possibility of deliberate wordplay on the name Joseph (“May he [God] add” *yāsap*, “add,” “increase,” “do more”).¹⁹ This wordplay emphasizes the traditional etiological association of the name Joseph with “gather[ing] in” and “add[ing],” especially iterative divine action (Genesis 30:23–24).

Moroni’s (and Ether’s) prophecies look forward to the latter-day restoration of the “Jerusalem of old” and the coming of the New Jerusalem. As the Lord has promised his people in this dispensation: “And Israel shall be saved in mine own due time; and by the keys which I have given shall they be led, and **no more be confounded** at all” (D&C 35:25). On an individual level, the key to our “no more be[ing] confounded” is to have a correct understanding of the principles taught

19. Noth, *Die israelitischen Personennamen*, 212. See also HALOT, 403.

in the Book of Mormon and to apply them. Regarding this, Joseph Smith was recorded to have said: “I told the brethren that the book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the key stone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book”²⁰ As we get nearer to God, we are “gathered in” and are “no more confounded.”

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20. Joseph Smith, “History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 (2 November 1838–31 July 1842),” *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/427>. For an excellent study on the context of Joseph Smith’s statement regarding the Book of Mormon, see Scott C. Esplin, “Getting ‘Nearer to God’: A History of Joseph Smith’s Statement,” in *Living the Book of Mormon: Abiding by Its Precepts*, ed. Gaye Strathearn and Charles Swift (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2007), 41–54. Regarding the history of Joseph Smith’s statement, Esplin observes, “Without the aid of Joseph Smith himself or a personal journal to fill in missing details, Willard Richards was forced to rely on other records to craft the history. ... In fact, Wilford Woodruff’s journal itself may be the statement’s source, since it nearly identically matches the statement found in *History of the Church*. The authors of *History of the Church* likely changed Wilford Woodruff’s third-person account to sound like Joseph’s first-person record.” Such was common practice at that time.