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**The Lord Will Not Forget Them!
Māori Seers and The Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter-day Saints
in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand**

Robert Joseph

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THE LORD WILL NOT FORGET THEM! MĀORI SEERS AND THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY NEW ZEALAND

Robert Joseph

Abstract: *This essay demonstrates that the key prophetic matakite dreams and visions of at least the nine nineteenth-century East Coast Māori seers appear to have been (and should continue to be) fulfilled surprisingly by the coming of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to New Zealand. There are lessons for current and future Latter-day Saint leaders and missionaries to reflect on this little-known history on the nineteenth-century Māori conversions to the restored Church.*

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See Robert Joseph, “The Lord Will Not Forget Them! Māori Seers and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand,” in *Remembrance and Return: Essays in Honor of Louis C. Midgley*, ed. Ted Vaggalis and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2021), 323–68. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/remembrance-and-return/>.]

Blessed is the name of my God, who has been mindful of this people, who are a branch of the tree of Israel, and has been lost from its body in a strange land; yes I say, blessed be the

name of my God who has been mindful of us, wanderers in a strange land.

Now my brethren, we see that God is mindful of every people, whatsoever land they may be in; yea, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth.

Alma 26:36–37

Introduction

Māori historically and culturally believe they are a branch of the ‘House of Israel’ but in a ‘new land’ as noted in the above Book of Mormon reference.¹ By implication, Māori believe they have a right to, as well as all of the associated responsibilities of, the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. This includes its priesthood and attendant blessings by virtue of their direct House of Israel lineage (whakapapa), by entering into gospel covenants (ngā kawenata) and by keeping the commandments of God (ngā ture o te Atua). It was no surprise then that when the first Anglican Christian service was preached by Reverend Samuel Marsden to Māori in 1814, Māori eventually flocked to the Anglican Church, one of the precursors to the restored Church of Jesus Christ, in large numbers.

The Wesleyan Methodists followed the Anglicans in 1823 and the Catholics in 1838. Māori conversions to these and other Christian churches increased rapidly when parts of the Bible were translated into Māori in 1827 and 1834, with the first full Māori Bible (Te Paipera Tapu) completed in 1868. The New Testament was very popular among Māori; many chiefs traveled long distances to obtain copies from the sectarian missionaries. Consequently, Māori became very familiar with the Bible to a point where the sectarian missionaries complained that they found it difficult to find something new in the Bible to converse with them about.²

1 For references to Māori being descendants of the house of Israel, see Judith Binney, “Ancestral Voices: Māori Prophet Leaders,” in *The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand*, ed. Keith Sinclair (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1990), 153–184; and Bronwyn Elmsore, *Mana from Heaven: A Century of Māori Prophets in New Zealand* (Otumoetai, Tauranga: Tauranga Moana Press, 1989).

2 Refer to John R. Elder, *The Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden, 1765–1838* (Dunedin: Coulls Somerville Wilke, 1932); Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899); William Williams, *Christianity among the New Zealanders* (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1867); Hugh Carleton, *The Life of Henry Williams, Archdeacon of Waimate* (Auckland: Upton, 1877); Harrison M. Wright, *New Zealand 1769–1840: Early*

When the first missionaries (elders) of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints³ arrived in New Zealand in the 1880s to live and proselytize among Māori, they discovered that many of the religious beliefs of Māori and the Latter-day Saints appeared to parallel each other in surprising and initially inexplicable ways. These included a common heritage, spiritual beliefs, in some respects culture and customary traditions, and hope for the future.

What is less well-known in New Zealand history is why Māori subsequently flocked to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints after 1880 in large numbers. For example, by August 1885, there were 16 Māori and 4 Pākehā⁴ (European) branches of the Church in New Zealand, which numbers continued to grow steadily for the next 15 years. At the close of 1887, there were 2,573 Church members with 2,055 Māori and 237 Pākehā.⁵ At the turn of the century, there were nearly 4,000 Māori in the restored Church, accounting for nearly a tenth of the total Māori population,⁶ while in 1901, there were 79 Māori branches in New Zealand.⁷

Years of Western Contact (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959); J. M. R. Owens, "Christianity among the Maoris to 1840," *New Zealand Journal of History* 2, no. 3 (1968): 18–40; and Judith Binney, "Christianity and the Maoris to 1840, A Comment," *New Zealand Journal of History* 3, no. 2 (1969): 143–165.

3 The Mormon Church or LDS Church were both commonly used to refer to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the October 2019 188th Semi-annual General Conference, the current prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, called on all church members to refer to the church by the name the Savior gave it—hence my use of the full name of the church in this article. See Russell M. Nelson, "The Correct Name of the Church," *Ensign*, (November 2018): 87.

4 Pākehā is the Māori term for non-Māori or white European. The term is used respectfully throughout this article.

5 "The Book is Translated," in *New Zealand Church History* (unpublished manuscript, produced by the New Zealand Division Seminary and Institute Department, Spencer W. Kimball, 1974); and R. Lanier Britsch, "Māori Traditions and the Mormon Church," *New Era* (June, 1981): 38.

6 Grant Underwood, "Mormonism and Shaping Māori Religious Identity," in *Explorations in Mormon Pacific History* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 133.

7 Britsch, "Māori Traditions and the Mormon Church," 38. This success has continued on into recent times. In 2010, for example, the number of restored Church members in New Zealand had increased to 103,802. More recently, Marjorie Newton noted that the restored Church claims more than 100,000 adherents of which 70% are Māori and Pacific Islanders and is the sixth largest church in New Zealand. See Marjorie Newton, *Mormon and Māori* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2014), xxi and 181.

Why did The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints appeal to an indigenous non-European people on the other side of the world? How could a perceived white, conservative, American Church penetrate into the hearts, minds, and lives of this fiercely independent, intelligent, and proud race? How could Western American missionaries infiltrate so successfully into a foreign indigenous culture at such a turbulent time in New Zealand, Māori, Church, and even world history? Such questions of the restored Church of Jesus Christ have often intrigued Māori and non-Māori scholars alike.⁸

It would be a combination of the natural similarities between these two groups, the dissatisfaction of Māori with the evangelical Church Missionary Society (CMS) section of the Anglican Church and other Protestant churches in New Zealand, and other political, social, and economic factors that played a part but are beyond the scope of this article. While this discovery was unanticipated by missionaries from the restored Church of Jesus Christ, Māori seers (matakite) ironically predicted that a fullness of religious truth and salvation would also come to Māori from Pākehā. The rest of this article will focus on the prophetic

8 See for example William A. Cole and Elwin W. Jensen, *Israel in the Pacific: A Genealogical Text for Polynesia* (Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society, 1961); Erik G. Schwimmer, "Mormonism in a Māori Village: A Study of Social Change" (master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1965); Brian W. Hunt, *Zion in New Zealand: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New Zealand, 1854–1977* (Hamilton, New Zealand: Church College of New Zealand, 1977); R. Lanier Britsch, *Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986); Peter Lineham, "The Mormon Message in the Context of Māori Culture," *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 62–93; Ian G. Barber and David Gilgen, "Between Covenant and Treaty: The LDS Future in New Zealand," *Dialogue* 29 (1996): 207–221; Louis Midgley, "A Māori View of the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 8, no. 1 (1999): 4–11; Midgley, "Māori Latter-day Saint Faith: Some Preliminary Remarks," *Interpreter* 8 (2014): 45–65; Midgley, "Remembering and Honoring Māori Latter-day Saints," *Interpreter* 21 (2016): 275–290; Marjorie Newton, *Tiki and Temple: The Mormon Mission in New Zealand, 1854–1958* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2012); and Newton, *Mormon and Māori*. For Māori perspectives, see Stuart Meha, "A Condensed History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New Zealand" (unpublished, typewritten manuscript, no date); Selwyn Kātene, ed., *Turning the Hearts of the Children: Early Mormon Leaders in the Mormon Church* (Wellington, NZ: Steele Roberts Publishers, 2014); Kātene, ed., *By Their Fruits You Will Know Them: Early Māori Leaders in the Mormon Church* (Wellington, NZ: Steele Roberts Publishers, 2017); Robert Joseph, "Intercultural Exchange, Matakite Māori and the Mormon Church," in *Mana Māori and Christianity*, ed. Hugh Morrison, Lachy Paterson, Brett Knowles, and Murray Rae (Wellington, NZ: Huia Press, 2012), 43–72; and the New Zealand periodical *Te Karere*, which operated from 1907 to 1960 and is available online at <https://archive.org/details/tekarere4100chur>.

utterances of East Coast Māori seers being a key motivation for certain Māori families converting to the restored Church of Jesus Christ in the late nineteenth century. Specific matakite predictions ultimately guided many Māori into, and could continue to keep them in, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The article will briefly discuss the prophetic utterances of nine Māori seers—Arama Toiroa, Arapata Taniwha, Horiana Tupeka, Toaroa Pakahia, Apiata Kuikainga, Paora Te Potangaroa, John Rangitakaiwaho, Piripi Te Maari, and Te Whatahoro Jury. The author will consider these insights in a respectful, balanced, and pensive way, analyzing the alleged prophesied arrival of the restored message and messengers to a number of Māori tribes where the restored Church of Jesus Christ flourished.

Matakite Māori: Tribal Seers

Kei muri i te awe kāpara,	Behind the tattooed face,
he tāngata kē.	a stranger stands.
Nōna te ao—he mā.	He will inherit the world—
	he is white. ⁹

—*Tītahi, Ngāti Whatua prophecy*

The Māori appear to have been prepared in special ways for the coming of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at least in the restored Church and some Māori tribal narratives. The Māori seer also foresaw the bittersweet arrival of the Pākehā long before they came to Aotearoa, New Zealand. According to Ngāti Whatua sources, the above prophecy was well-known and was uttered by their tribal seer, Tītahi, who foretold the coming of Europeans and, implicitly, the subsequent impact of European contact, which thrust the Māori world into a state of perilous imbalance. Land and natural resource loss through unjust wars, as well as land confiscations and other legal machinations, wreaked havoc on the relationship between people and the natural environment. Forcible individualization of land, property, worldviews, and leadership in the Native Land Court disturbed the balance between members of kin-groups. Introduced diseases decimated tribal populations and upset belief systems, and introduced addictive substances—alcohol, tobacco, coffee, tea, and sugar—undermined

9 Robert Mahuta, “Tawhiao’s Visions” (presentation, Centre for Māori Studies and Research, University of Waikato, 20 June 1990), 3; and Sir Peter Buck, *The Coming of the Māori* (Wellington, NZ: Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd, Māori Purposes Fund Board, 1962), 537.

Māori health and well-being. Sectarian Christianity, moreover, damaged in many ways the connection between the people and the gods; and the individualistic and economic assumptions underlying European capitalism and Western liberalism destroyed traditional tribal reciprocity economies, the equilibrium between kin, the physical and metaphysical world, the environment, and the fundamental reciprocal obligations to past, present, and future generations.

In a Latter-day Saint Church-Māori historical narrative, a similar vision was recorded by another matakite who prophesied:

When I depart from here to join my people who are waiting for me at home, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves; for the time is come and now is when alien white feet shall desecrate my grave.¹⁰

Yet the Anglican Reverend Samuel Marsden acknowledged as early as 1808 that Māori were prepared for the gospel of Jesus Christ when he observed from Australia:

The natives of New Zealand are far advanced in Civilization, and apparently prepared for receiving the Knowledge of Christianity more than any Savage nations I have seen....The more I see of these People, the more I am pleased with, and astonished at their moral ideas, and Characters. They appear like a superior Race of men. Was Christianity once received amongst them, New Zealand would be one of the finest parts of the Globe.¹¹

In a similar manner but in a specific Latter-day Saint context, William W. Phelps resided in the then Church center of Independence, Missouri, in 1832 and was editor of a newspaper *The Evening and Morning Star*. Phelps read a short sketch that described the physical beauty and superior intellect of Māori; this impressed him so much that he reprinted the passage in his newspaper. Phelps then added some comments about Māori and the broader missionary proselytizing endeavours of the recently established Church of Jesus Christ at the time:

It really affords consolation to think that such a people exists upon the Islands of the sea, for the Lord will not forget them.

¹⁰ Cited in Rangi Davis, "The Māori Temple or Whare Wananga," *Te Karere* (August 1953): 275–277.

¹¹ Samuel Marsden, "Letter to Revd. J. Pratt" (8 Ivy Land, dated 7 April 1808), in Newton, *Mormon and Māori*, 15.

The Isles are to wait for his law, and the gospel of the kingdom, is to be preached to every nation on the globe so that some may be gathered out of every kindred, tongue and people, and be brought to Zion.¹²

Elder John Murdock, a missionary, was assigned to preside over missionary work in the British colonies in Australia and New Zealand (the Australasian Mission) by Elder Parley P. Pratt in 1851. Elder Murdock was subsequently stationed in Sydney, Australia. Elder Murdock soon learned there was a potential missionary field in New Zealand, including among Māori who, he noted, were able to “read and write and all of them industrious and intelligent.”¹³

The first Latter-day Saint missionaries to visit New Zealand, however, were Elders Augustus Farnham and James Cooke in 1854. Elder Farnham further acknowledged that Māori were prepared for the gospel message when he wrote to the Prophet Brigham Young:

I am informed that the chiefs of the tribes say the [sectarian] missionaries do not preach them the right gospel, that they are keeping back the part they need. And they do not feel to receive their teaching. From what I can learn, the field is ready to harvest; and as soon as possible, we shall send some laborers there to weed the crop and try to gather the wheat.¹⁴

The above comments provide context into how Anglican leaders and leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ perceived Māori in the early and mid-nineteenth century and how some Māori were ready to receive the restored Church of Jesus Christ. Due to space constraints however, the rest of this article will briefly discuss the specific prophetic utterances of some well-known and not so well-known matakite that guided Māori families to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the first being Arama Te Toiroa.

Arama Te Toiroa: East Coast Seer

In 1830, the same year The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in Fayette, New York, by the young prophet Joseph Smith,

12 W. W. Phelps, “We actually came across...” *The Evening and Morning Star* 1, no. 6 (Nov. 1832): 44.

13 “Elders’ Correspondence: Extract of a Letter from Elder John Murdock (5 Feb. 1852),” *Deseret News*, 24 March 1852, 74.

14 “Extracts of a Letter from Elder Augustus Farnham to Brigham Young (14 Aug. 1853),” *Deseret News*, 8 December 1853, 96.

an aged Māori patriarch and seer named Arama Te Toiroa gathered his family (whānau) and subtribe (hapū) together in Te Mahia (Northern Hawkes Bay) to advise them about a new church.¹⁵ Toiroa was a famous East Coast seer who made other prophecies, such as predicting who would survive and how opposition foe would die in tribal battles,¹⁶ the birth of children,¹⁷ and counsel on religious matters.

To his people then, Toiroa was considered a great seer, so his family and subtribe listened very carefully to what he had to say regarding religious matters. Toiroa's key prophecy in a Latter-day Saint and Māori context was recorded by one of his grandsons, Hirini Whaanga, who subsequently converted to the restored Church on 30 November 1884 in Nuhaka. Hirini actually recorded Toiroa's prophecy in 1902 while living in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he and his family migrated to in 1894.

The author interjects and acknowledges here that although Hirini was a baby in 1830 when Toiroa uttered the prophecy—he was born in 1828—Māori oral accounts such as this were meticulously recorded by experts (tohunga) set apart specifically to record and transmit important knowledge and events orally. Māori also had sufficient checks and balances such as other expert witnesses (tohunga) being present when accounts were recorded and recited to ensure the information was correct, accurate, and protected.¹⁸

15 For a broader discussion on Te Toiroa, see Judith Binney, *Redemption Songs: A Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki* (Auckland, NZ: Auckland University Press, 1997), 11–12; Takaanui Tarakawa, “The Doings of Te Wera Hauraki and Nga-puhi on the East Coast, N.Z.” (translation by S. P. Smith), *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 8, no. 3 (1899) and 9, no. 2 (1900); and Angela Ballara, *Taua: Musket Wars, “Land Wars” or Tikanga? Warfare in Māori Society in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003).

16 See Pei Te Hurinui and A. T. Ngata, *Nga Moteatea, Part 1: The Scattered Pieces from Many Canoe Areas* (Wellington, New Zealand: A. H. Reed, Polynesian Society, 1959), 138; J. G. Wilson, *The History of Hawkes Bay* (Wellington, NZ: A. H. Reed, 1939), 100; and Angela Ballara, “Te Hapuku” in *The People of Many Peaks: The Māori Biographies from the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography 1870–1900*, vol. 1 (Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books, 1990), 159.

17 Binney, *Redemption Songs*, 12.

18 Pei Te Hurinui and A. T. Ngata, *Nga Moteatea, Part 1: The Scattered Pieces from Many Canoe Areas* (Wellington, New Zealand: A. H. Reed, Polynesian Society, 1959); *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Writing Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); and the discourse on Kaupapa Māori methodology, led by Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith, which emerged as an affirmation of indigenous (Māori) ways of knowing and worldviews making space for post-colonial transformation. See Linda Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: University of Otago Press, 1999); and Paulo Friere, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London: Penguin, 1996).

Hence, the author has no doubt regarding the accuracy of the account recited by Toiroa in 1830 but written down by Hirini in the *Juvenile Instructor*¹⁹ in 1902, 72 years later, in Salt Lake City, Utah.²⁰ The claim to accuracy is enhanced by Hirini's status as the firstborn (tuakana) in the Whaanga family and chief (rangatira) of the tribe whose responsibility it was to preserve and transmit such knowledge to future generations. Now to Hirini's written account of Toiroa's prophecy. Hirini recorded:

I desire to tell you of a prophecy of one of my forefathers, Arama Toiroa. Amongst our people this chief was regarded as a seer....In the year 1830, this Arama Toiroa gathered his children, grandchildren and relatives together. At this time, most of his descendants had joined the Church of England, and the aged chief, addressing them, said: 'My dear friends, you must leave that church, for it is not the true church of the God of heaven. The church you have joined is from the earth and not from heaven.' Upon hearing this his people asked, 'Where then can we find a church where we can worship the true God?'

Arama Toiroa answered, 'There will come to you a true form of worship; it will be brought from the east, even from beyond the heavens. It will be brought across the great ocean and you will hear of it coming to Poneke [Wellington at the south end of the North Island] and afterwards its representatives will come to Te Mahia. They will then go northward to Waiapu [Poverty Bay, Gisborne area] but will return to Te Mahia.

When this 'Karakia,' form of worship, is introduced amongst you, you will know it, for one shall stand and raise both hands to heaven.

19 The *Juvenile Instructor* was an official periodical of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that began in 1866. Its primary audience was the children of the Church with a purpose to help prepare them for future responsibilities. The magazine published editorials, poetry, essays, stories, biographical sketches, a monthly column, and discussions on moral issues and the history of other cultures. The magazine subsequently became the teachers' magazine of the Church and was renamed *The Instructor* in 1929. See Doyle L. Green, "The Church and Its Magazines," *Ensign*, January 1971, 12–15, and Ruel A. Allred, "Juvenile Instructor," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism: Twentieth-Century Mormon Publications*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1992), 481.

20 Hirini Whaanga, "A Māori Prophet," *Juvenile Instructor* 37 (1902): 152–153.

When you see this sign, enter into that church. Many of you will join the church and afterwards one will go from amongst you the same way that the ministers came even unto the land from afar off.²¹

Korongata-Bridge Pā Conversions

Fifty-four years passed before Toiroa's utterances were fulfilled. In 1884, Elders Alma Greenwood and Ira Hinckley brought the restored message to the Poneke (Wellington) area and then made their way to Hawkes Bay. There they were joined by President William Thomas Stewart, and together they all traversed the path Toiroa had predicted. It was at Korongata (now Bridge Pa,²² Hastings), however, and not at Te Mahia, that Toiroa's descendants first accepted the restored message. Hirini described the day when the gospel was first preached to some of Toiroa's people:

In journeying northward they reached...Korongata, where many of us were assembled on the Sabbath day. Amongst the people who were there was a grandson of Arama Toiroa whose name was Te Teira Marutu.

The meeting was conducted by Elder Stewart and his friends. The services were opened with singing and prayer, and a Gospel address was delivered, after which they sang again, and Brother Stewart arose to dismiss with prayer. In doing so he raised both hands and invoked God's blessing upon the people.²³

As soon as the grandson of Arama Toiroa saw this he arose and declared that this was the church of which his forefather prophesied which would surely be firmly established amongst the Māori people. He and his wife applied for baptism, and they and their children were thus initiated into the Church by Elder Stewart.²⁴

21 Whaanga, "A Māori Prophet," 152–153.

22 Korongata or Bridge Pā was settled by Māori from Nuhaka and Te Mahia in the nineteenth century; hence the people of Nuhaka and Te Mahia are Toiroa's people as are many from Korongata.

23 Early in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ, both hands were often raised when a prayer was given publicly. The practice was later changed to only the right arm being uplifted when blessing the sacrament or dedicating a grave. Both practices were later discontinued except in sacred temple rituals.

24 Whaanga, "A Māori Prophet," 152–153.

Māori stalwart Stuart Meha added in his unpublished history of the restored Church:

The work of proselyting was prosecuted with vigor and begun in Hawkes Bay in 1884, and the first [Hawkes] Bay people who affiliated themselves with the Church were the people of Korongata, better known by Pākehā people [Europeans] as Bridge Pa.²⁵

Nuhaka and Te Mahia Conversions

Subsequently, the Elders visited the old home of Toiroa at Te Mahia. In August and September 1884, the three missionaries—Elders William Thomas Stewart, Ira Hinckley, and Alma Greenwood—arrived in Nuhaka and were later joined by Elder John C. Stewart. Subsequently, some 210 adults, a high proportion of the Anglican community on Mahia Peninsula, were converted to the restored Church. Mel Tuati Whaanga augmented the narrative with these remarks:

[The people] received word that a new religion had arrived at Korongata in Hastings. Hirini and Ihaka [Whaanga were] to investigate it....At the end of the meeting, Elder Stewart stood to offer the closing prayer and raised both hands above his head. This was the sign Toiroa had foretold. The two sons returned to Mahia and [shared what] they had seen and heard.²⁶

Mel Whaanga added that when the missionaries visited Te Mahia and held meetings with other descendants of Toiroa, after seeing the sign, these people said, ‘This is indeed the Church for us, for did not our revered forefather, Arama Toiroa, prophesy about it?’²⁷

Largely because of Toiroa’s 1830 prophecy, every person in Korongata and a large number of Māori in Taonoke, Omahu, Te Hauke, Nuhaka, and Te Mahia were baptized into the restored Church. For the Whaanga family, the conversion process was initially due to this prophetic utterance of Toiroa.

Also recorded in Toiroa’s prophecy was what the missionaries would do next. Toiroa stated that the missionaries would travel from Te Mahia

25 Meha, “Condensed History.”

26 Mel Tuati Whaanga, “On the Rock Our Fathers Planted” (unpublished manuscript, Auckland, 8 September 2010), 1.

27 Whaanga, “On the Rock Our Fathers Planted,” 1.

and go north to Waiapu (East Coast area around Ruatoria) and would then return to Te Mahia. Stuart Meha noted in this respect:

Encouraged by the success of their labors, President [William Thomas] Stewart established another branch at Taonoke, and then pushed on to the Wairoa, Nuhaka, Te Mahia, Te Muriwai, Te Arai and on to Gisborne.²⁸

Arapata Taniwha and Horiana Tupeka: Gisborne Matakite and Conversions

A number of Māori families were also baptized into the restored Church of Jesus Christ in the Tūranga (Gisborne) and Waiapu areas during this period. One of them was the Hamana (Hamon) family, who were converted through other prophetic experiences of their ancestor Arapata Taniwha and his daughter Horiana Tupeka.

Taniwha and his people were sympathetic to the Māori-Christian hybrid Church—Pai Mārire, whose emissaries visited Gisborne in the 1860s. Pai Mārire, meaning “goodness and peace”—was an organized expression of an independent Māori Christian Church movement led by Te Ua Haumene of Taranaki during the turbulent New Zealand Wars period. In 1862 Te Ua apparently had a vision in which the archangel Gabriel instructed him to lead his people in ‘casting off the yoke of the Pākehā.’ Te Ua called his Church Hauhau. Te Hau (the breath of God) carried the news of deliverance to the faithful. Te Ua preached that the children of Israel, or Māori, would be restored to their land of promise—Canaan, or New Zealand—following a day of deliverance where the unrighteous would perish. Pai Mārire emissaries subsequently travelled around the North Island seeking converts, but its founding principles of peace and goodness were subverted by violent elements such as the killing of Pākehā soldiers at Ahuahu and the Battle of Moutoa Gardens in Whanganui in 1864.²⁹

As a result of the Pai Mārire emissaries visiting Tūranga, on 17 November 1865 the Crown and its Māori allies attacked Waerenga-a-Hika

²⁸ Meha, “Condensed History.”

²⁹ See James Cowan, *The New Zealand Wars: A History of the Maori Campaigns and the Pioneering Period: Volume II: The Hauhau Wars, (1864–72)* (Wellington, NZ: R.E. Owen, 1856); Paul Clark, “Hauhau”: *The Pai Marire Search for Māori Identity* (Auckland: Oxford University Press; 1975); “Te Ua Horapapera: the Founder of the Pai Marire Faith,” *Daily Southern Cross*, 16 March 1866; and L. F. Head, “Te Ua and the Hau Hau Faith in Light of the Ua Rongopai Notebook” (master’s thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1984).

pā, where Arapata Taniwha, Horiaana Tupeka, and their family lived. After five days, the pā fell and many were taken prisoner and sent to prison, without trial, in the Chatham Islands in 1866.

Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki, another well-known matakite, was also imprisoned at the Chatham Islands a month after Arapata Taniwha. During his incarceration, Te Kooti studied the Bible very closely, then became ill with severe bouts of tubercular fever in 1867. During his illness, Te Kooti alleged that he had strange visions where the ‘Spirit of God’ (some say the angel Gabriel) raised him up and instructed him to teach the people. He miraculously recovered, then started his new church basing its tenets on the Old Testament and apparently converted most if not all of the other Māori inmates to his new faith.

Subsequently, on 4 July 1868, Te Kooti led a daring escape with 163 men and 135 women and children when they commandeered the *Rifleman* and sailed back to Whareongaonga just south of Gisborne. Te Kooti then told the people that they would no longer kneel at prayer. Their homage to God now would be the raising of the right hand at the end of prayer. From this gesture, the Ringatū Church of Te Kooti derives its name.

Te Kooti wanted to be left alone, but Pākehā and many Māori refused. A number of bloody battles ensued that included atrocities on both sides. A massive bounty was even placed on Te Kooti’s head of £5,000—yet miraculously, he was never apprehended.

Unfortunately many of his people and other tribes were ‘caught in the cross fire’ of the battles, including at the hilltop pā of Ngatapa on 5 December 1868, where approximately 130 of Te Kooti’s people were captured, stripped, and summarily executed at the command of Major Ropata Wahawaha of Ngāti Porou.³⁰

One of the people at Ngatapa pā was Horiaana Tupeka—she was known for her healing skills (tohunga wairakau) through herbal medicine and prayer (karakia). Before the pā fell, however, Horiaana had a dream that saved her life. She had seen a man with a spear (taiaha) standing in the doorway of the house. On hearing about her dream, Te Kooti ordered Horiaana to leave the pā, which she did. She made it safely back to Gisborne. Horiaana subsequently married a European, Joseph Hamon.³¹

30 *Poverty Bay Herald*, 11 August 1897.

31 See Robert C. Hamon, “Haere mai nga pononga o te Atua—Come ye servants of the Lord—Henare Hamon, 1873–1961,” in *By Their Fruits You Will Know Them*, ed. Selwyn Katene (Wellington, NZ: Steele Roberts Aotearoa Ltd, 2017), 143–167.

When missionaries Elder Alma Greenwood and President William Thomas Stewart visited Tūranga (Poverty Bay) in 1884, they were moved by the spirit (*wairua*) to visit Horiana Tupeka and her family. The Hamon family oral narratives recorded how just outside of Gisborne, the elders prayed and had an impression to follow a certain track that led to Horiana and her father Arapata Taniwha.

Three nights before the elders' visit, however, her son Henare was ill. Horiana, although an expert healer (*tohunga wairakau*), could not make out what was wrong. Horiana would usually experience visions and dreams to instruct her how to heal. At this time, the Hamon family narrative recorded:

[Horiana] would usually know what herb to give [Henare]. When she was stuck for information on what herb to give, she prayed and her mother appears to her and tells her what herb to get.³²

Hixon Hamon continued:

Now this story she told me not once but time and time again. This time her mother appeared with her hands raised. Poua [Horiana] couldn't make out what the sign was. So the next night she prayed again and the same thing happened, making the same sign. The same thing happened on the third night.

The following afternoon,...the two Mormon elders appeared. They had followed the track, and her little shack was the first one they had come to. They said we are missionaries. Poua called 'Haere mai,' come....

The elders came in and Poua said in Māori, *Kei te mate taku tamaiti, e manaaki ia* — my boy's sick, bless him. Of course the Elders said they would. But you see in the prayers at that time, whenever the Elders pray, they put their hands up. So as soon as that happened Poua understood then what her mother was telling her, these were the servants of the Lord.³³

Horiana then took the missionaries to her father Arapata Taniwha, who apparently had received previously a vision of the true Church having three books. Hixon Hamon continued:

32 Hamon "Haere mai nga pononga o te Atua."

33 Ibid.

It was early evening...old Taniwha had his back towards them. When he saw their shadow and heard them coming up he knew that they were ministers. He called out to them: Haere mai nga pononga o te Atua, 'Come ye servants of the Lord,' and Poua took them in.

But the old man, although he said that, he wasn't satisfied. Every minister that came into the pa he asked them in Māori, where are the three books?

Well the Elders laid out the Book of Mormon first, then the Bible and the Doctrine and Covenants. The old fella, all the years he has been telling the people, the Gospel, the right Gospel will come and the sure sign of the true Gospel will be the three books.

Of course he talked to them in Māori. The Catholic, the Church of England missionaries would come and he would tell the people: Kaua e hono...and he wouldn't join. When he came to this he told them 'This is the true church; these are the signs. They have their three books.'³⁴

As a result of this experience from the dreams of Horiana Tupeka and vision of Arapata Taniwha, the Hamana family and others in the Turanga area were baptized into the restored Church in 1884.

Te Arai Challenge: More Tūranga Conversions

Another relevant incident regarding missionary work in the Tūranga area was at Te Arai (Manutuke) in 1886. When President Stewart and his missionaries—Elders Ira Hinckley, John Ash and Edward Newby—visited Te Arai that year, the Anglican Church was holding a Diocesan Conference with over 2,000 Māori in attendance under the direction of Bishop William Williams.³⁵ The arrival of the missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ naturally created quite a disturbance. According to the Church historical narrative, Bishop Williams welcomed the visitors in his formal welcome speech (whaikōrero) as follows:

Welcome thou honoured guest. Where were you when the flesh of man singed on the stones of the oven? You have waited until I have made peace between man and man; then you

³⁴ Hamon, "Haere mai nga pononga o te Atua."

³⁵ See also Stuart Meha, "A Prophetic Utterance of Paora Potangaroa," *Te Karere* 43 (October 1948): 298–299.

have come trespassing on my preserves. As host I cannot but extend to you accommodation and food.³⁶

Bishop Williams issued a very strong challenge (wero) to the missionaries. President Stewart however, according to Stuart Meha, formally responded in te reo Māori:

President Stewart in arising to respond thanked the assembly for their welcome and hospitality. He told them the Māoris were a remnant of the House of Israel and that he had with him their history which told of their origin [The Book of Mormon]....

To the venerable bishop President Stewart also expressed his thankfulness for his kindly and courteous welcome. He congratulated the bishop on the great preparatory work that had been done by his Church among the Māori people — even for the cessation of bloodshed and cannibalism among the various tribes, and for the translation of the Bible into Māori. Those were great achievements, he said. He pointed out that that was the mission of the Churches who had come to this land from 1814 to the present.

President Stewart pointed out that before our Lord and Saviour entered upon this ministry in the meridian of time, he had need of a forerunner who was required to prepare the way for the Lord. John the Baptist was that forerunner who came bounding into the wilderness crying, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his path straight.'

'Bishop Williams,' President Stewart is said to have said, 'You are our forerunner. You have prepared the way for the true Church of God, and we are his ambassadors. You have in very deed prepared the way for us.'

... All this great mission of yours is a preparatory work for the gospel of Jesus Christ. It has been restored in these latter days by an angel, just as John the Revelator said it would be through the instrumentality of an angel, and to a youth, just as the prophet Zechariah said it would be.³⁷

36 Stuart Meha, 'A Challenge Met' in *New Zealand: A Short Collection of Items of History to Add to Our Memories and Appreciation*, ed. G. Rudd (Salt Lake City: privately published, 1993 with additions in 2007).

37 Meha, "Prophetic Utterance of Paora Potangaroa," 298–299.

Hamon recorded slightly different details of this event:

After the formal welcome...President Stewart then arose and addressing the congregation in Māori said: 'E te morehu o te whare o Ihairaira ...' (Oh ye children of the house of Israel.) The assembled group, many of them in native Māori dress, and about 1 in 10 of the men having tattooed faces, were astonished at hearing President Stewart speak to them in their native tongue....

Tumuaki Stewart continued, 'John the Baptist came before Christ to prepare the way for Him. So likewise did you people come to prepare the way for the true church of Jesus Christ.' By this time the big crowd was pressing in closer to hear the words of President Stewart. For several hours the speaking by various ones went on.³⁸

Although these accounts differ slightly, the response was the same. Māori were very impressed with President Stewart's response, and some asked to hear the message of these new ministers to which Bishop Williams acquiesced. Some Māori also invited the elders to visit them in their homes after the conference.

Willard Amaru provided another account in which he recorded that his ancestor, Karaitiana Amaru, attended the Te Arai hui; following his response to Bishop Williams, President Stewart then raised his hand to the square, greeted the people—Tēnā koutou te Whare o Ihairaira – Greetings to you the House of Israel. Then he began to preach the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. The Amaru narrative added that when Karaitiana returned to Tolaga Bay (Uawa), he was aware of the prophecies about the true Church for his people (assuming it was Toiroa), was baptized, and then a large number of the tribe, Te Aitanga a Hauiti, entered the waters of baptism.³⁹

Subsequently and as prophesied by Toiroa, many of the people from Tūranga to Waiapu were converted to the restored Church, including those from the various tribes of these areas.

38 Hamon, "Haere mai nga pononga o te Atua," 153.

39 Willard Amaru, "Karaitaina Tuteketenui Amaru" (unpublished manuscript in the author's possession, no date), 1-2.

Back to Te Mahia

The missionaries then frequently returned to Te Mahia, as prophesied by Toiroa, which became a Church stronghold from that point on. An official Government Report in 1886 even confirmed:

The Natives at Nuhaka and Te Mahia have been visited by several American Mormon elders, who have succeeded in making a great number of converts to their faith; in fact, nearly all the Natives of Tahaenui have given up their former creeds and joined the Mormon faith.⁴⁰

Another newspaper article in 1896 further confirmed:

Mormon proselytizing among the Māoris appears to be making considerable headway in this district. The Mahia district of this church extends from Waikare to Mahanga, including Mahia Peninsula....The number of members now totals 560. Good work has been and is still being done by the elders in charge, especially in temperance teaching.⁴¹

To complete our analysis of Toiroa's vision, we will finish with the last section of his prophecy in which Toiroa predicted that one would travel back with the ministers. We will also briefly introduce a related prophecy by another Māori seer, Toaroa Pakahia, which aligned with this last section of Toiroa's prophecy.

Toaroa Pakahia and the Whaanga Migration to Utah

The final stanza of Toiroa's prophecy stated: "Afterwards one will go from amongst you the same way that the ministers came even unto the land from afar off."⁴² Toiroa's direction was the divine injunction for Hirini and Mere Whaanga and their family mandating their emigration with the returning Church missionaries to Utah, the 'land afar off,' in 1894.

Another related prophecy was that of the Māori seer Toaroa Pakahia, who stated in 1845 that salvation for Māori would come from the East

40 Captain R. M. Preece, "Wairoa District, Napier, to the Under-Secretary, Native Department," in "Reports from Officers in Native Districts," in *Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives*, (Session 1, G-01, 1886), 16.

41 See also the newspaper article "Mormonism among the Māoris," *Bay of Plenty Times*, 10 January 1896, 3.

42 Whaanga, "A Māori Prophet," 153.

and Māori would recognize the true messengers because they would raise their arm when in prayer.⁴³

Referring to this prophecy, Te Wiringa Naera recorded at a genealogy meeting in the 1960s in which he asserted that Toaroa Pakahia further prophesied: “After my death when weeds cover my grave, then that salvation of which I have spoken will come and one of you will cross the great sea of Kiwa [the Pacific Ocean].”⁴⁴

The late Ngāti Kahungunu chief Paora Whaanga noted that Hirini Whaanga was so impressed by this utterance of Pakahia, along with that of Toiroa, that he joined the restored Church when the elders came to Te Mahia. Paora added that Hirini and his family later crossed Te Moananui-a-Kiwa—the Pacific Ocean—and carried out temple work for his ancestors in Utah from 1894 until his death in 1905, again because of these utterances of Toiroa and Pakahia.⁴⁵

Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki: East Coast Matakite and Te Hāhi Ringatū

Before we leave Toiroa, two final points must be mentioned. As with all Māori prophecies (and non-Māori prophecies for that matter), a prophecy is capable of more than one interpretation. The true seer could not err. It was left to the interpreter to make mistakes.⁴⁶ Some of Toiroa’s prophecies, including the narrative by Hirini Whaanga above, were interpreted by Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki to establish his Ringatū Church. Judith Binney asserted:

Among the seminal narratives of Toiroa and Te Kooti, there is one concerning Te Kooti’s visit to Nukutaurua when still a young man. ... Toiroa then predicted to Te Kooti that he would see him coming from Tūranga [Gisborne], weeping, and disappearing on a raupo raft beyond Papahuakina (Table Cape). But soon he would return, bearing the prayers of the

43 Cited in Brian W. Hunt, *Zion in New Zealand: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New Zealand*, 2nd ed. (private publisher, Church College of New Zealand, Temple View, 1977), 21.

44 Te Wiringa Naera, “Māori Prophecies” (unpublished manuscript given to Lewis Mously, Salt Lake City, Utah, no date) as cited in Hunt, *Zion in New Zealand*.

45 Cited in Charles Lloyd, *Our Māori Latter-day Saints*, comp. and ed. Charles Lloyd (Hamilton, 1998), 42. See also J. Christy, and Robert Joseph, “The Māori Lehi, Hirini Whaanga, 1828–1905,” in Katene, *Turning the Hearts of the Children*, 25–48; and Huia Koziol, “Imperative of Pilgrimage: Sidney Christy” in Katene, *Turning the Hearts of the Children*, 171–188.

46 Buck, *The Coming of the Māori*.

faith with his hand up-raised. Thus, in this narrative, Toiroa, it is alleged, foresaw the coming of the new faith, the Ringatū or Upraised Hand.⁴⁷

The Ringatū Church then claims that Toiroa was prophesying of their Church and not The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As noted above, after escaping from the Chatham Islands, the people returned to Tūranga from the East, the Ringatū emissaries apparently traveled in pairs, and when they prayed, they raised their right arm to the square—hence the name Ringatū.

In the restored Church narrative however, Elder John Ferris, who labored in the Urewera area in 1881 among the Tūhoe tribes, recorded that these tribes who sheltered Te Kooti during the New Zealand Wars, acknowledged:

Tekota [Te Kooti] told them that I was the same man that he had told them about two years ago that would come from a far country and give them the good church, and that Tekota [Te Kooti] said there were two more coming, and then the Māoris would have no more war, but they would have peace, and many good things would come to them, and that they would know the good way.⁴⁸

Furthermore, as noted by Hirini Whaanga in 1902, the matakite utterance of Toiroa specified the path the missionaries would travel from Poneke (Wellington) up to Tūranga and they would raise both hands, not one hand, when they prayed. There are, therefore, contested narratives on the interpretation of Toiroa's prophecies regarding the new Church for Māori.

A further interesting satirical newspaper article, however, was published in 1870 regarding the Hau Hau (Pai Mārire), Ringatū, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that stated:

If these [restored church] missionaries could disseminate their doctrines among Hau Haus, and induce a large emigration

47 Binney, *Redemption Songs*, 24–25; and Judith Binney, “Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki,” in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography: 1769–1869*, vol. 1 (Wellington, NZ: Allen & Unwin, Department of Internal Affairs, 1990), 194–201. Ross also referred to Toiroa prophesying of Te Kooti's mission in W. Hugh Ross, *Te Kooti Rikirangi General and Prophet* (Auckland: Collins, 1966), 17.

48 John S. Ferris to the editor, 11 September 1881, *Deseret Evening News*, 10 November 1881. See also “The Diary of John S. Ferris from Marys Vale [Marysvale] Utah, Mormon Elder” (12 June 1881, Church Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah).

of those undesirable individuals, they would be doing good service, and might reasonably expect a subsidy from the Government. [Te] Kooti, with his strangely perverted knowledge of the Old Testament, and his belief reduced to practice in the plurality of wives, would make an excellent Mormon.⁴⁹

The last note here on Toiroa is on Hamiora Mangakahia who, with Te Kooti, was a student of Toiroa. Mangakahia considered that he too had been chosen to fulfil Toiroa's quest for peace which Toiroa had called for in 1858.⁵⁰ Hamiora even cited a prediction of Toiroa that it would be 'the distant descendant—te Miha'—who would one day bring about this peace.⁵¹ Mangakahia was later the first Premier of the Kotahitanga Māori Parliament (Paremata Māori) in 1892 at Pāpāwai, Wairarapa. In this manner, the lines of authority descending from Toiroa's authority (mana) were similarly alleged to have been woven into the Ringatū Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Kotahitanga Māori Parliament. Incidentally, Mangakahia was subsequently baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as were many rangatira in the Wairarapa area. It is to the Wairarapa where we will now discuss another well-known prophecy of the great Māori seer Paora Te Potangaroa.

Paora Te Potangaroa: Wairarapa Moana Matakite and Conversions

Paora Te Potangaroa was a great Ngāti Kahungunu and Rangitāne chief and matakite of the Wairarapa region. In 1878 Potangaroa inspired the many tribes of the upper Wairarapa to construct a large carved meeting house at Te Ore Ore near Masterton. During the construction of the marae, animosity developed between Potangaroa and Te Kere, an expert carver (tohunga whakairo) and rival matakite from Whanganui. Te Kere apparently resented Potangaroa's growing influence; he disagreed with the size of the proposed house and prophesied: "E kore e taea te

49 *Evening Post*, 19 April 1870.

50 Angela Ballara, "Hamiora Mangakahia," in *The Turbulent Years: The Māori Biographies from the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography 1870–1900* (Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books, 1994), 53.

51 Hamiora Mangakahia, in *Te Puke ki Hikurangi* (7 June 1898). At this time, Mangakahia stated that he was the person to whom Toiroa had told his predictions for peace. See also Binney, *Redemption Songs*, 13.

whakamutu te whare i mua atu i ngā tau e waru – It is not possible to complete this [house] in less than eight years.”⁵²

Te Kere then departed to build a rival meeting house at Tahoraiti, Dannevirke. Potangaroa however, completed construction between 1878 and 1879, but the house was not officially opened until 1881. In derision to Te Kere, Potangaroa named the new house ‘Nga Tau e Waru – The Eight Years.’

During this period, Potangaroa was preaching Christianity expressed in Māori concepts and when he appeared in public, people gathered around him at Nga Tau E Waru for instruction. One such famous meeting (hui) was held on 16 March 1881. The Te Ore Ore meeting was to celebrate 40 years of peace in the region from three covenants (kawenata) which had deep political implications, hence the 3,000 or so people in attendance that included many Pākehā.⁵³

It was during this meeting that Potangaroa uttered a number of visions including admonishing Māori to no longer alienate their land because they were dispossessing themselves.⁵⁴ Apparently, Potangaroa also dealt with some vexing questions of the people over religion.⁵⁵

Maunsell, the Native Agent for Wairarapa, adversely recorded his observations of the 1881 hui:

A number of Natives of the southern end of the district joined a new faith started by Paora Potangaroa of Wairarapa. Nearly 300 Natives from Hawkes Bay attended the late meeting...for the purpose of promulgating his views on religion....A large section of the Natives here profess to believe in prophets, or in men said to possess supernatural powers. Kere of the West and Paora Potangaroa of the East Coasts, both now at Te Oreore, have each taken the role of prophet; in such capacity they are, each for their separate districts, religious and secular guardians, though many do not believe in them, and the influence gained appears to be only temporary and at their assemblies. Large invitations were sent throughout this island to various tribes to assemble at Te Oreore near Masterton, to

52 “Te Ore Ore Marae” (unpublished manuscript, in author’s possession, no date), 43.

53 Rāwiri Smith, “Between Two Worlds: Whatahoro Jury, 1841–1923,” in Katene, *Turning the Hearts of the Children*, 73.

54 Smith, “Between Two Worlds,” 73.

55 See E. S. Maunsell, “Wairarapa Report,” in *Appendix to the House of Representatives* (Native Agent, Wairarapa, to the Under-Secretary, Native Department, Greytown, 17 May 1881, G-8), 14–15.

hear some important revelations from Paora....Paora did not make a favourable impression as to his pretended prophecies. The greater part dispersed in disappointment, beyond having feasted well for about three weeks. The only conclusion come to was that Paora and Kere were to control their individual affairs.⁵⁶

Ballara and Cairns, however, recorded that Potangaroa made a number of prophecies at the same hui. One key prophecy of relevance to the restored Church was uttered here by Potangaroa, which Ballara and Cairns briefly recorded:

A new and great power was to come to the people from the direction of the rising sun. Various interpretations were made: it was believed to herald the arrival of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as interpreted by the Mormons; and it was believed that missionaries would come from the east and set in place a new church.⁵⁷

Bronwyn Elsmore added that Potangaroa prophesied that in two and a half years a prophet would appear after him, would speak of matters concerning a new house, and would make them known to the people.⁵⁸ Elsmore noted that while the churches at that time were found lacking, there was no rejection of the Christian message or hopes. There was further instruction that the different churches 'should be welcomed in the area because one would be influential in the future.'⁵⁹ Rimene recorded his understanding of the prophecy:

There is a religious denomination coming for us; perhaps it will come from the sea, perhaps it will emerge from here. Secondly, let the churches into the house—there will be a time when a religion will emerge for you and I and the Māori people.⁶⁰

56 Maunsell, "Wairarapa Report," 14–15.

57 Angela Ballara and Keith Cairns, "Paora Potangaroa," in *The People of Many Peaks*, 226–228.

58 Elsmore, *Mana from Heaven*, 248–249. Elsmore noted that the Te Ore Ore hui lasted for approximately three weeks.

59 "The Prophecies of Paora Potangaroa, 4 April 1881," trans. Jim Rimene (unpublished manuscript, no date), 3. Refer also to Meha, "Prophetic Utterance of Paora Potangaroa," 298–299.

60 Rimene, "Prophecies of Paora Potangaroa," 4.

Part of the 1881 Te Ore Ore hui was actually covered in some detail in a local newspaper at the time. The reporter provided some interesting, although somewhat adverse, comments on the authority of Potangaroa and the issue, questions, and views of the people on religion. The reporter noted:

The great Te Ore Ore meeting came off yesterday, and was to a certain extent a disappointment to both Māoris and Europeans. Many of the former expected a revelation, some of them a miracle; but neither one nor the other transpired.... The meeting had its origin in a mysterious dream. Paora Potangaroa, a little old infirm native, the Moses of Te Ore Ore, saw a mystic flag in a dream, and assembled the tribes apparently to interpret it.... Apparently to the disappointment of one and all, no one, whether Protestant, Catholic, or Hauhau could throw the necessary light on the marvel.

...There were no great fruits of all this great meeting, and it is the same today....There were many more speeches made to the same effect, at the conclusion of which had their usual services, and then the meeting broke up....For several days past the natives have been discussing religious questions with very little result, as far as settling the merits of different religions go.⁶¹

The reporter then cynically concluded:

We presume that as soon as the food begins to run short the camp will disperse, and the great meeting end in nothing but a great feed and a great talk.⁶²

The narrative provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, however, includes much more context. A detailed account by Elder Matthew Cowley referred to the 1881 convention at Te Ore Ore. The established Churches were well represented, but like the young Prophet, Joseph Smith, the chiefs shared a feeling of discontent about the lack of unity among them. Why were there so many different Churches within the bounds of Christianity? Which one should the Māori join so that unity could again be restored among them?⁶³

61 See "The Te Ore Ore Meeting," *Wairarapa Daily Times*, 17 March 1881, 2.

62 "The Te Ore Ore Meeting." Given this report was day 2 and the hui lasted for over three weeks, patience was indeed a virtue.

63 Matthew Cowley, "Māori Chief Predicts Coming of L.D.S. Missionaries," *Improvement Era*, September 1950, 697.

After considerable debate and discussion, the chiefs decided to place the questions—specifically ‘Which of the Churches is the Church for the Māori people? Which of them should we join?’—before the most respected rangatira among them. Potangaroa was asked the poignant questions to which he responded: ‘Taihoa’—‘Wait.’ He retired to his home and meditated, fasted, and prayed about the problem for three days. When he returned to the convention, he addressed his people, stating in part:

My friends, the church for the Māori people has not yet come among us. You will recognize it when it comes. Its missionaries will travel in pairs. They will come from the rising sun. They will visit with us in our homes. They will learn our language and teach us the gospel in our own tongue. When they pray they will raise their right hands.⁶⁴

Stuart Meha added:

Paora [Potangaroa] was widely known to possess supernatural powers, [and] was asked the question: ‘Tell us which of these Churches is the right one, for there can only be one Church of God?’ Paora replied—and it is the reply which must be regarded in the light of prophecy—“The true Church is not here yet, but soon will be, for it is already on the ocean, and you will readily recognise it when you see its ministers raise their hands to the square.”⁶⁵

Elsmore alleged that Potangaroa then referred to a number of key points in time:

First, this day of fullness 1881, second, the year 1882 would be a year of the sealing; third, the year 1883 was a year of the honouring of great faith as it is written. Render therefore to all dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.⁶⁶

A lot more was uttered by Potangaroa. Apparently, Potangaroa then asked Ranginui Kingi to be his scribe and write his words as he continued to answer the questions which had been put to him. He called the transcription of his words: ‘A covenant (kawenata) for remembering

64 Cowley, “Māori Chief Predicts Coming,” 697. See also A. Bennion, *Matthew Cowley Speaks* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954), 200–205.

65 Meha, “Prophetic Utterance of Paora Potangaroa,” 298–299.

66 Elsmore, *Mana from Heaven*, 251–253.

the hidden words which were revealed by the Spirit of Jehovah to Paora Potangaroa.’ Cowley offered his interpretation:

First, this is the day of the fullness (1881). Brother Cowley points out that later that year the fullness of the gospel was taken to the Māori. Actually, President [William] Bromley and his colleagues first visited a Māori village, Orakei, on March 6, 1881, ten days before the “covenant” was given to the Māori at Te Ore Ore. “Second, the year 1882 would be the year of the ‘sealing’ (or the year they would learn the sealing ordinances). Third, the year 1883 will be the year of ‘the honoring’ — of ‘great faith’ — as it is written: ‘render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.’ (Romans 13:7). In that year, Māori began to honor the true God by rendering their dues to him and entering the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Members of Ngāti Kahungunu, especially, began to enter the Church in large numbers. The Te Ore Ore Branch was organized on December 16, 1883.⁶⁷

Paora Potangaroa’s covenant (kawenata) concludes with these words:

This covenant is to be remembered by the generations which follow after us. And the fruits of that which is set forth above [in the covenants] are — we are the lost sheep of the House of Israel. [We will learn of] the scepter of Judah; of Shilo; of the king of peace; of the day of judgment; of the kingdom of heaven; of the sacred church with a large wall surrounding; of the increase of the race; of faith, love, peace, patience, judgment, unity. All this plan will be fulfilled by the people of the Ngati Kahungunu Tribe during the next forty years.

*March 16, 1881 Ranginui Kingi*⁶⁸

Three months after the hui in June 1881, Potangaroa died.⁶⁹ The covenant, however, was sealed in a cement monument inside Nga Tau E Waru Marae at Te Ore Ore that same year.

A photographer from Masterton obtained permission beforehand to photograph the covenant and a copy subsequently made its way into President Matthew Cowley’s hands at a Church District Conference in

67 Cowley, “Māori Chief Predicts Coming,” 697.

68 Cowley, “Māori Chief Predicts Coming,” 697.

69 Ballara and Cairns, “Paora Potangaroa,” 226–228.

Masterton in 1944. President Cowley was visiting with the Māori High Priests—Hohepa Heperi, Stuart Meha, and Rahiri Harris. Another local Māori stalwart, Eriata Nopera, also spoke at the Masterton Conference and stated that he was present as a young man at Potangaroa's Te Ore Ore hui in 1881 and he was aware of the prophecy of the coming of the true church to Māori. At the conclusion of the Masterton Conference, a local woman, Hinerangi Ranura, asked her husband to retrieve a document wrapped in brown paper at the bottom of a trunk in her home and then handed the package to Hohepa Heperi, Eriata Nopera, and then President Cowley in a private room, given the sacred nature of the document.⁷⁰ At the conference, Eriata Nopera confirmed that the document was the photograph of Potangaroa's 1881 Kawenata that he witnessed years before.⁷¹

Elder Cowley further identified the 'sacred church with a large wall surrounding it' with the Salt Lake City Temple in Utah. He also pointed out that the only Māori to participate in all of the ordinances of the restored gospel, including the temple rites, during the next 40 years (1881 until 1921) were members of the Ngāti Kahungunu tribe. Later many members of other tribes participated in all blessings of the restored Church of Jesus Christ.⁷²

Tahupotiki Wiremu Rātana: Whangaeahu Matakite and Te Hāhi Rātana

As noted above with Toiroa, a prophecy is capable of more than one interpretation. Accordingly, Ballara and Cairns were adamant that Potangaroa's prophecy was not to herald The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but the Rātana Church when they opined:

In 1928, when the religious leader T. W. Rātana visited Te Ore Ore at the request of the people, he removed the stone set up by Paora inside Nga Tau e Waru, repositioning it outside. The move silenced the medium. The coming of the Rātana faith is now widely believed to be the fulfilment of Paora's prophecy.⁷³

70 Tangi Haeta, "Remembering Hiona Pa" (unpublished manuscript in author's possession, 2011–2012), 26.

71 Cowley, "Māori Chief Predicts Coming," 697; and Naera, "Māori Prophecies."

72 Cowley, "Māori Chief Predicts Coming," 697.

73 Ballara and Cairns, "Paora Potangaroa," 226–228. See also the newspaper coverage of the event in "Tohungas' Twilight. Rātana goes on Tour. Not interested in politics," *Auckland Star*, 5 May 1928, 10.

Tahupotiki Wiremu Rātana alleged that he received his spiritual guidance from the prophetess Mere Rikiriki of the Te Kawau area in the late nineteenth century. Rikiriki prophesied that Rātana and his two sons Ārepa (Alpha) and Ōmeka (Omega) would one day play important roles in the future of New Zealand. One day while fishing at Whangāehu, two whales stranded, which Rātana perceived as a sign (tohu) that he was to be like Christ, a ‘fisher of men.’ Later, Ōmeka became critically ill after a needle pierced his leg so Rātana began to fast and pray. Rātana claimed that he received a divine visitation on 8 November 1918 where he had a series of visions urging him to unite Māori under ‘Ihoa o ngā Mano—Jehovah of the thousands,’ to heal the people, and turn them from old Māori superstitions and fear of Māori priests (tohunga) and the old Māori Gods (ngā Atua).⁷⁴

After miraculously healing Ōmeka, Rātana became a world renowned healer. By the 1920s, Rātana Pā sprung up on the Rātana farm south of Whanganui, which attracted thousands eager to witness Rātana’s miraculous healing power that included many Māori and Pākehā. His teachings and healings provided ordinary people a renewed sense of hope, spiritual and even political direction.

In April 1924, Rātana and some of his supporters travelled to London to seek an audience with King George V to discuss Māori grievances concerning land alienation and alleged breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840. Rātana planned to present a petition signed by 45,000 Māori calling for the British Crown to honor the Treaty of Waitangi covenant. But the New Zealand government intervened and prevented the meeting.

Rātana often spoke, however, of having the Bible in his right hand and the Treaty of Waitangi in his left hand. He also stated that if the spiritual side was attended to, the physical side would follow. Subsequently, on 31 May 1925, Rātana drew up his creed of faith and on 21 July 1925, he declared the existence of, and formally registered, a separate church, the Rātana Church (Te Hāhi Rātana), declaring himself as the mouthpiece of God (te māngai). Rātana also established the political side of the Rātana

74 Refer to J. McLeod Henderson, *Rātana the Man, The Church and the Political Movement* (Wellington, New Zealand: Reed, 1972); Keith Newman, *Rātana the Prophet* (Auckland, New Zealand: Raupo-Penguin, 2009); Newman, *Rātana Revisited* (Auckland, New Zealand: Reed, 2006); and *Te Whetu Marama* (Rātana Church Official News Magazine, 1924–present).

movement, often capturing the four Māori seats in Parliament even up to the present day.⁷⁵

Rangitakaiwaho and Piripi Te Maari: Other Wairarapa Matakite

Of course the historic narrative of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints contests the above interpretations that Potangaroa's great prophecy referred to the Rātana Church with respect to our Rātana relations. At the close of 1883, for example, President William Thomas Stewart reported to his presiding leader, John Taylor, in Utah:

Two or three years ago [the Māori] had a man here among them [Potangaroa] whom they regarded as a prophet, they say. He told them in 1883 that the true Gospel would be brought [to] them....Some of them firmly believe the Book of Mormon, being presented them in this year, to be the exact fulfillment of the predictions of their prophecy.⁷⁶

In addition, Elder Alma Greenwood recorded in his journal on 6 April 1883 about another prophetic dream reported to him that John Rangitakaiwaho had two days before in the Wairarapa area. John said he saw in his dream a rope, one end of which was not finished. Elders Greenwood and Farr were standing by a group of natives and the natives began trying to join the ends of the rope together. The Elders said that the ends were not joined right but that they would show them how to fix it. They properly placed a piece that had been left out and then rolled the rope together, finding the piece to be a perfect fit. To him, and many others who heard this account, this was reason enough to join the restored Church.⁷⁷

Greenwood added that while in the company of Brother and Sister Ihaia at Waihirere near Masterton, he met Samuel Potangaroa:

75 Interestingly, Rātana and his followers visited the Salt Lake City Temple in Utah during their tour of North America in 1925 specifically because of the prophecy of Paora Potangaroa, apparently regarding the “sacred church with a large wall surrounding it.” Information given to the author by Kereama Pene, Rātana Apotoro (apostle), during an official visit of Rātana Church leaders to Temple View, Hamilton, in 2018.

76 William Thomas Stewart to John Taylor, 31 January 1884, as reproduced in *History of William Thomas Stewart*, ed. Mary Stewart Lee and Marion Stewart Peterson (Provo, UT: Grant Stevenson, 1972), 25.

77 Alma Greenwood, “Mission Journal for 1883” (unpublished manuscript, 1883, original holograph in BYU Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections).

This chief asked my opinion regarding the ancestors of the Māoris, their origin and where they came from etc.... Sometime ago a Māori prophet said that all the Sectarian Denominations were wrong and ere long another prayer would come which would be the truth. Many of the natives believe that Mormonism is the religion which was to come.⁷⁸

Furthermore, shortly after leaving New Zealand in 1884, Elder Greenwood recorded his thoughts on Potangaroa's influence:

Many of the natives were led to investigate the new and somewhat strange religion, which had come in their midst. This, too, was in accordance with some predictions previously made by a Māori prophet: that in 1883, a new religion would come....The prophecy and its literal fulfillment gave the gospel prestige and influence [mana] among that people.⁷⁹

Consequently, the first permanent branch of the restored Church was established at Pāpāwai, Wairarapa in 1883.

One other brief but relevant prophetic utterance in the Wairarapa area was that of Piripi Te Maari who recalled a prophetic dream (moemoeā) he shared with Elder Alma Greenwood about the restored Church. Te Maari recorded:

I saw a big meeting and lots of people in it. I was in the meeting and preached how bad things come to New Zealand to destroy the land and people. Three times a man was standing close to me who was very mild and sorry. When I looked at him he came to me and shook hands with me.⁸⁰

Elder Alma Greenwood stated that Piripi Te Maari saw the timely visit to him by the two elders as the fulfillment of this dream.⁸¹

Having discussed the influence of Potangaroa's prophetic utterance in the Wairarapa region, we will now briefly explore the effect of his

78 Greenwood, "Mission Journal for 1883."

79 Alma Greenwood, "My New Zealand Mission," *Juvenile Instructor* 20, 1885, 222. In 2018, the author met with Robin Potangaroa, a descendant of Paora Potangaroa, devout Catholic, and current Kahungunu leader in the Wairarapa area. The author asked Robin who the Potangaroa family believe their ancestor Paora Potangaroa was referring to in his 1881 Kawenata. Robin unhesitatingly responded that it is definitely The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that Paora Potangaroa was referring to.

80 Alma Greenwood, "Journal" (1 September 1883); cited in Peter Lineham, "The Mormon Message in the Context of Māori Culture," *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 86.

81 Greenwood, "Journal."

utterance further north in the Tāmakinui-a-rua area known today as Dannevirke.

Tahoraiti Conversions

Another Māori stronghold for the restored Church was Tahoraiti, just south of Tāmakinui-a-rua, which was also influenced by Potangaroa's prophecy. Polly Kingi Marsh wrote a short piece titled 'Church History in the Tamaki Branch' where she noted:

In March 1881, a Māori chief, Paora Potangaroa, prophesied.... Later in the year, the fullness of the gospel did come to our people, and everything that Paora Potangaroa prophesied did happen.⁸²

Marsh thus underscored the influence of Potangaroa beyond the Wairarapa into southern Hawkes Bay, although both groups share common genealogical links.

As noted earlier, when Potangaroa and his people were building his meeting house, Nga Tau e Waru, at Te Ore Ore in 1878–1879,⁸³ the rival priest Te Kere disagreed with the size of the proposed house, became upset, and departed. Ngāti Mutuahi of Tahoraiti wanted their own meeting house so Te Kere took over that project. This rival meeting house with 'Nga Tau E Waru' at Te Ore Ore was 'Aotea' Marae at Tahoraiti, which was completed in 1883. Tahoraiti was also where many of these people were converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, interestingly, because of Potangaroa's prophecy.

Returning back to Potangaroa's prophecy, the final stanza stated:

...the sacred church with a large wall surrounding it; of the increase of the race; of faith, love, peace, patience, judgment, unity. All this plan will be fulfilled by the people of the Ngati Kahungunu Tribe during the next forty years.⁸⁴

As noted above, Elder Matthew Cowley identified the "sacred church with a large wall surrounding it" with the Salt Lake Temple in

82 Polly K. Marsh, "Church History in the Tamaki Branch" (Church College of New Zealand Manuscript Archives, Hamilton, no date), 1.

83 "Te Ore Ore Marae," 43. The original meeting house burned down on 22 September 1939 and was replaced by a smaller one on 16 March 1941. As for Aotea, by the 1960s, it was apparent that the old meeting house was in a state of disrepair due to neglect by the local Māori community. Mr Lui Paewai organized the demolition of the meeting house and its re-erection at Mākirikiri. See "Aotea Tua-Toru Opened at Mākirikiri," *Te Ao Hou*, 1 September 1967, 31.

84 Cowley, "Māori Chief Predicts Coming," 697.

Utah which has a large wall around it. Cowley also pointed out that the only Māori to participate in all of the ordinances of the restored gospel, including the sacred temple rites, during the next 40 years (until 1921), were members of this Ngāti Kahungunu tribe.⁸⁵

The first Māori converts to visit the Salt Lake Temple in Utah were Hirini and Mere Whaanga in 1894, as noted earlier. The second group were Tamihana Peeti Te Awe Awe of Tahoraiti, his wife, Waitokorau Tamihana, and two daughters, Adelaide and Nora, who also migrated up to Utah in June 1910.⁸⁶ The third group of Māori converts to visit the Salt Lake Temple were also from Tahoraiti and Waipawa. These people were all from Ngāti Kahungunu as prophesied by Potangaroa and another Māori seer, Apiata Kuikainga.

Apiata Kuikainga: Waipawa Seer

Stuart Meha added valuable context by providing a very personal sacred experience regarding Apiata Kuikainga. Meha stated that a Church of England clergyman married his parents, Arapata Meha and Mere Te Hau (from Nuhaka), in 1877. Months later when Mere was pregnant, she was called to appear before the Māori village council. Apiata Kuikainga, Stuart Meha's paternal great-grandfather, patriarch, and seer, then said to Mere:

E Mere,...you are with a male child and the day is coming when that child will cross the mighty waters of Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean) to do the work for the salvation of his people who had died.⁸⁷

Stuart Meha then noted that those present scoffed at what Kuikainga had said and alluded to his being crazy. But Mere, being a devout woman, simply said: 'We will wait and see.'⁸⁸

Meha then analyzed the situation and stated:

85 Cowley, "Māori Chief Predicts Coming," 697.

86 In Salt Lake City, Tamihana and Waitokorau made their home in Forest Dale where the Whaanga family also lived. See W. Wallace Woolley, "A Letter from Zion," *The Messenger* 7, no. 1 (1 January 1913): 2.

87 Stuart Meha, "A Request to Talk: The 1877 Prophecy of Apiata Kuikainga, Village Patriarch (about 1877 to 1885)" (unpublished manuscript in author's possession, 15 April 1962), 1. A shortened copy of this manuscript is available in Rudd, *New Zealand: A Short Collection of Items*, unpaginated but midway through the document. See also Arapata Meha, "Saviour on Mount Zion, 1878–1963," in Katene, *Turning the Hearts of the Children*, 137–154.

88 Meha, "Request to Talk," 1.

Here are two things which must be borne in mind in connection with this child. First, he must be born a male, otherwise the whole affair must collapse and fall to the ground and further notice of it must cease. On the other hand, if the predicted child were born a boy, then we must look forward to the second requirement, viz., his ability and willingness to go to a Temple of the Lord to do the work for the salvation of his people.⁸⁹

Meha confirmed that the child was a boy, and then she rejoiced. In 1885, Elders George S. Taylor and Edward Newby visited the Meha home in Waipawa, Central Hawkes Bay, and they taught the Meha family the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Meha family at this time were devout Anglicans, and after a substantial meal, the living room was cleared and a round-table discussion of the principles of the gospel was held. Arapata and Mere knew their Bible well, so the missionaries needed to teach from the scriptures the doctrine they were preaching. The elders were prevailed upon to stay several days as the Mehas loved to hear the principles of the primitive church explained again and again. The missionaries stressed the fact that the gospel they preached was the same as that which the Lord Jesus had established on the earth in the meridian of time, with apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers and that the church they represented was similarly constituted and that they had the history of Māori, even the Book of Mormon. Meha added that after a while, the missionaries proved every tenet of the restored Church, and the family knew that the message they shared was the truth.⁹⁰

Meha then noted an interesting experience the family had while the missionaries continued to teach the restored truths of the gospel:

One night towards the end of their stay the Elders brought up the work for the dead, emphasising its great importance and that it was a major work of their Church. The Elders said that this work had been done in the days of Paul as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:29, which reads, ‘Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?’ Why then are they baptised for the dead?’ Here Paul was referring to work...among the saints of his day to prove his point in his argument with those who did not believe in the resurrection.

89 Meha, “Request to Talk,” 1.

90 Ibid., 2.

The Elders were very painstaking in their treatment of this principle.⁹¹

Stuart Meha then shared what happened next, which was a very sacred experience of his family that the author respectfully acknowledges:

Then when the missionaries spoke on vicarious work for the dead, their interest in what was being said mounted high, for this was something definitely new—something they had never heard from their ministers. Then immediately the prediction made by the patriarch Apiata Kuikainga flashed across their minds. It was at this very moment, while Elder Taylor was speaking on work for the dead that a great disturbance came from Apiata's room. Mother then arose and went to Apiata's room, and told him to desist knocking on the floor with his stick and that there were missionaries there. The old man, now well over 100 years, refused to be silenced. Said he: 'Where comes this great light, which is illuminating my room brighter than noonday?' (This vision of illumination could only be to Apiata alone, for mother said she saw no light, testifying to the truthfulness of the prophecy he made in 1877, eight years before, regarding work for the salvation of the dead and that I would be instrumental in said work.) We do not speak of this manifestation but only to a select few. We hold it sacred.⁹²

The Meha family were subsequently baptized in the Waipawa River on 15 July 1885. A few days later, Apiata died. Meha subsequently noted that in 1912, he 'became animated with an urge to go to the Temple' to have his recently deceased wife sealed to him and to work for his deceased ancestors so he visited with mission president Orson Romney for a temple recommend to go to the Salt Lake Temple in Utah.

Meha recorded:

There were six of us who went to the Temple in 1913. We were given a great reception and we were there a little over three months. With the help of many returned missionaries and their wives, our party put through some 7,000 names [deceased ancestors' sacred ordinances in the temple]. This was a new experience for us and a very satisfying one.⁹³

91 Meha, "Request to Talk," 3.

92 *Ibid.*, 3.

93 *Ibid.*, 5.

Meha added that his family patriarch, Apiata Kuikainga, was one of the very first for whom he did this vicarious work in the Salt Lake Temple, and he concluded: “I feel that the very first missionaries who came to our home in 1885 were led there so that the prediction and prophecy uttered by my great-grandfather might be realized.”⁹⁴

Te Whatahoro Jury: Pāpāwai and Gisborne

One other fascinating conversion story during this period was that of the well-known Ngāti Kahungunu chief Te Whatahoro Jury who was living in Gisborne in the late nineteenth century. In 1919 Te Whatahoro sent a letter to the mission president Lewis G. Hoagland recalling his conversion into the restored Church through a number of dreams (moemoeā):

My first dream showed me a house, standing with the side walls only—no top, just the walls. People were entering it, and I joined the concourse and entered the house. I saw that the people were worshipping and praying. I also joined and prayed and just before I awoke [what] came to me: ‘perhaps I will join the Hauhau [Pai Mārire] church.

...Following this dream I met a Mormon elder. It was at Papawai, Wairarapa....I first heard the Gospel, of the Latter Day Saints, in Papawai, Wairarapa. Hyrum Groesbeck came and lodged at the home of Brother Manihera Rangī Taka-i-waho....He baptised the first Wairarapa Māoris, Ihaia Manihera being the first one with other natives of his tribe. This elder spent two nights teaching me the doctrines of the Church.

...Following this and after my return to Gisborne, there arrived in New Zealand another elder in the person of William Thomas Stewart. In the course of time Tuati (Wm Thomas Stewart) came to my home in Gisborne. He taught me and mine the Gospel, remaining with us for two days. During this visit of Elder Tuati I had my second dream; it was this:

I beheld the heaven and it was very clear, transparent; then myriads of stars; then another and more bright star in the East, appeared and wended its way thru the other stars until

94 Ibid. See also the biography of Stuart Meha by his grandson: Meha, “Saviour on Mount Zion, 1878–1963,” 137–154.

it was right above me and then it paused. And then it took on it the shape of a person; the head, the body, the feet, all in perfect likeness of a human; then I beheld this personage held a saw in his hand, and that said to me, ‘why this must be the carpenter Joseph’s son.’

I then awoke, and my whole soul was thrilled, and I said to myself, now I know that the Mormon Church is the true one; this doctrine taught by Thomas Stewart to me is the right one. Then I gathered my native people to me at one place, that he might preach to them also. He taught us and at the conclusion of his speech we all were truly converted and were baptised in to the Church. This was in the year 1883.⁹⁵

Te Whatahoro then affirmed to President Hoagland:

Dear friend, Ruihi (Louis) I here say that this dream converted me — or rather confirmed — that the preaching of Tuati was true and the Church of our Master, Jesus Christ, was with us; and this is my reason for entering the Church....I testify that I did have the dream; it is true.⁹⁶

Some Formative Conclusions

The devastating impacts of European colonization disempowering Māori certainly left them struggling to maintain their culture, language, lands, livelihoods, even their very lives and well-being, yet these impacts were prophesied by Māori seers such as Tīahi, Potangaroa, Te Maari, and others. It was, moreover, ironically prophesied that the salvation of Māori as a people would also come from Europeans in the form of a new faith or church—hence to some extent, the amazing mass conversions of Māori into the sectarian churches in the early and mid-nineteenth century, and to a lesser extent, the mass conversions into the millennial Christianized Māori churches during and following the turbulent New Zealand Wars period. Nevertheless, the early sectarian and the Māori millennial churches and missionaries did not appear to comply with all

95 English translation of a letter by Te Whatahoro (John Jury) to Louis G. Hoagland (Mangapeehi P.O, Tiroa, New Zealand, 12 February 1919). Te Whatahoro’s interesting letter is available online on the official website of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints https://dems.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE1912292&page=223.

96 Letter by Te Whatahoro to Hoagland.

of the prophesied utterances of the Māori seers, so some Māori began to question the legitimacy and efficacy of these churches.

Nevertheless, Māori were still prepared in a number of special ways for the restoration of the true gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation as articulated by, *inter alia*, the Anglican Samuel Marsden in 1808, Latter-day Saint William W. Phelps in 1832, and two other Church missionaries—Augustus Farnham in 1854 and William Bromley in 1881. The true gospel was not there yet. By 1880, Māori society was in a state of perilous imbalance and the leader of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Joseph F. Smith, was inspired to direct missionary work in New Zealand from that point on to focus on Māori.

Unexpectedly, the missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ commenced a concentrated proselytizing process among Māori, and surprisingly, the message and messengers appealed to certain Māori tribes for a number of key reasons, especially specific prophetic utterances.

The prophetic utterances of local Māori seers with specific and significant signs (*tohu*) and religious actions (*karakia*) were very important factors, in the author's opinion, that contributed to these Māori conversions to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints after 1880. Some of these key *matakite* signs included the missionaries proselytizing in pairs, and the missionaries would come from the East (America). This is significant given that most of the earlier sectarian missionaries were from the West—Great Britain and Europe. Other prophetic signs were that the missionaries would traverse a certain path such as from Poneke to Waiapu then returning to Te Mahia for Toiroa and visiting the Salt Lake Temple, for Potangaroa; or specific events would occur at certain times such as 'when weeds cover my grave' for Pakahia; 1881 being the year of fullness, 1882 the year of sealing, and 1883 the year of 'honouring' for Potangaroa; and, while in the midst of destruction of the land and people, a person would visit Piripi Te Maari three times and would shake his hand.

Further prophetic signs were evocative particularly as tangible signs of the true Church. For example, for Toiroa, Pakahia, and Tupeka raising of either both hands or the right hand to the square in certain religious rituals was critical. For Toiroa, Pakahia, and Kuikainga another significant sign was crossing Te Moananui-a-Kiwa—the Pacific Ocean—from whence the messengers originated. Other metaphorical signs included for Rangitakaiwaho fixing the ends of a rope not tied together and the Church elders placing the missing piece on the end, thus securing

the rope together; and for Kuikainga a light illuminating the room when discussing redemption for the dead. Additionally, while investigating the restored gospel with the elders, Te Whatahoro dreamed of praying in a house with no top and beholding the myriad of stars in heaven, then observing a bright star rising in the East wending its way through the other stars, then transforming into Jesus Christ directly above him. Carrying out specific work across the Pacific Ocean for the salvation of deceased ancestors was another important sign for Kuikainga, while for others, the signs of the true Church were new books such as Arapata Taniwha's three books—the Bible, Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants.

Whatever one's views then of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, it appears that the key prophetic matakite dreams and visions of at least the nine East Coast Māori seers referred to in this article—Arama Te Toiroa, Arapata Taniwha, Horianana Tupeka, Toaroa Pakahia, Apiata Kuikainga, Paora Te Potangaroa, John Rangitakaiwaho, Piripi Te Maari and Te Whatahoro Jury—appear to have been (and should continue to be) fulfilled surprisingly by this conservative church originating in America. God appears then to have been mindful of Māori, who are a branch of the house of Israel in this strange land. Yet, as the earlier Book of Mormon scripture declared, he has been “mindful of them, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth”: and the Lord did not and will not forget them!

It is also important, and there may be lessons for current and future Latter-day Saint leaders and missionaries, to reflect on this little-known history on the nineteenth-century Māori conversions to the restored Church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints missionaries fulfilled the prophecies of these Māori seers where the missionaries were prepared to be influenced by Māori to influence Māori, and both were transformed in the process.

Louis Midgley, Brigham Young University emeritus professor, was one such great Utah American missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who served in New Zealand after World War II. Professor Midgley was significantly influenced by serving among the Māori to influence them to live the restored gospel. His and our lives were and continue to be richly transformed from these and other experiences.

Nō reira, e te rangatira, a kaumātua Ruihi Mihiri, kanui te mihi atu ki a koe mo tōu mahi a te Hāhi a Ihu Karaiti o te Hunga Tapu o ngā rā, o muri nei, me tōu mahi aroha a te iwi Māori, tēnā koe, tēnā koe, tēnā koe e te rangatira!

Mehemea karekau ana he whakakitenga, kia mate te iwi.	Where there is no vision, the people perish.
	Proverbs 29:18

Robert Joseph is a direct descendant of some of the early Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Māori pioneers in New Zealand and was brought up in the Church in Hastings and Hamilton. He graduated from the Church College of New Zealand in 1986 and from Seminary and Institute. He served a mission in Adelaide, Australia, from 1989–1991, after which he studied Law at the University of Waikato. Dr Joseph is currently a Senior Lecturer at Te Piringa-Faculty of Law at the University of Waikato, he was admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand in 1998, and he completed his PhD in Law and Māori and Indigenous governance at the University of Waikato in 2006. In 2007, Dr Joseph was awarded a Building Research Capability in Social Science (BRCSS) Post-Doctoral Fellowship, and the ‘Best PhD Thesis Internationally on Canadian Studies Award’ in 2009 by the International Council for Canadian Studies in Quebec, Canada.

Dr Joseph is a former Fulbright Scholar to Harvard University and the University of Arizona; he is an expert witness, licenced researcher, and legal historian in the Waitangi Tribunal; the New Zealand representative on a number of international organizations including the Association for Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand (ACSANZ), the International Indigenous Governance Consortium (IIGC), and the International Indigenous Trade and Investment Organisation (IITIO); and he is a member of the New Zealand Government Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)-Māori Taumata grappling with Māori and international free trade agreements.

Dr Joseph has served in numerous Church callings. Dr Joseph married his sweetheart Amelia Turangi in the New Zealand Temple in 1996, and they are the parents of 5 children.

Glossary

<i>aroha</i>	to love, sympathize, true charity
<i>haka</i>	fierce dance with chant, war dance performed before battle
<i>hakari</i>	great feast, ceremonial feast, gift, ceremonial gifting
<i>hapū</i>	descent group with local base on a marae, section of a tribe, sub-tribe
<i>hui</i>	formal meeting, ceremonial gathering.
<i>iwi</i>	tribe or people
<i>kāinga</i>	home, village
<i>karakia</i>	prayers, incantations, prayer-chant, service
<i>kaumātua</i>	respected elder, old man, can be both sexes
<i>kaupapa</i>	rule, basic idea, topic, plan, foundation
<i>kawa</i>	protocol of the marae, varies among the tribes, ceremonial, dedication
<i>koroua</i>	male elders
<i>kuia</i>	elderly woman
<i>mana</i>	ascribed and achieved power, authority and prestige, spiritually endowed and maintained
<i>manaakitanga</i>	hospitality
<i>marae</i>	place of ceremonial greeting and gathering, meeting place, village courtyard, spiritual and symbolic centre of Māori community affairs
<i>Māori</i>	ordinary person, native or Indigenous to Aotearoa New Zealand
<i>Māoritanga</i>	Māori culture and identity
<i>Pākehā</i>	New Zealander of non-Māori descent, non-Māori
<i>pepeha</i>	tribal sayings, proverbs, tribal mottoes
<i>poroporoaki</i>	farewell
<i>powhiri</i>	to wave, welcoming ceremony
<i>rangatira</i>	chief, both male and female leaders
<i>rangatiratanga</i>	chieftainship, authority, kingdom, principality
<i>rohe</i>	tribal territory, boundary, district, area
<i>tangata whenua</i>	people of the land, Indigenous People of a given place
<i>tangi</i>	lament, to cry, weep, mourn

<i>taurahere</i>	rope, cord that binds, urban kin recognised by home peoples
<i>te reo Māori</i>	Māori language
<i>tika</i>	correct, straight, right ways
<i>tikanga</i>	‘right ways’, custom, from tika (adj.) straight, right, correct, fair, just, rules, principles
<i>tino rangatiratanga</i>	traditional authority, self-determination
<i>tohunga</i>	expert, specialist, priest
<i>tupuna</i>	ancestor
<i>tūrangawaewae</i>	a place to stand, basis of rights of the tangata whenua
<i>utu</i>	reciprocity, compensation, involved the initiation and maintenance of relationships both hostile and friendly
<i>waiata</i>	song, to sing, psalm
<i>wairua</i>	spirit, metaphysical world
<i>whānau</i>	extended family
<i>whaikorero</i>	formal speech in powhiri ceremony
<i>whakapapa</i>	genealogy
<i>whakatauki</i>	proverbs
<i>wharehenui</i>	large ceremonial house, located on the marae complex
<i>whenua</i>	land

