THE CHOICE SEER
by David Whitmer

One of the Lord’s Three Chosen Witnesses to the Book of Mormon
Chapter 10, pps. 67-70, in
AN ADDRESS TO ALL BELIEVERS IN CHRIST
http://www.utlm.org/onlinebooks/address5.htm

David Whitmer was an important witness for the Book of Mormon. Like Oliver Cowdery, Orson and Parley P. Pratt, and Spencer Kimball, he addressed the coming forth of a future Indian leader. A prophecy of him is found in 2 Nephi 3 in the Book of Mormon. He is the “Choice Seer” or holy man that will come forth of the seed of Joseph through Lehi in our day. He will bring forth the word of the Lord from the sealed records of the Nephites, and convince the Lamanites en masse in a day to repent and come to the Lord, restoring them to the house of Israel. His important work may be more defined in the records that he will bring forth. We are told in 2 Nephi 2:17 and Ether 1:11 that the sealed records will not to come forth in the days of wickedness and abominations of the people—the Gentiles, and that most of them will be cut off before the sealed records come forth. It will be a time of darkness and judgment, the time when “the fulness of the Gentiles” will come in, the fulness of their wickedness. It will be a time much like just before Christ came among those at Bountiful on this continent. We are told in Ether 1:11 that the sealed records, “shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord,” by having faith in him as the brother of Jared did. Now, as the wicked will be cut off, the people being clean before the Lord, and this Choice Seer being a holy man, the people in this condition will be fitted to give heed to him, and they will not be led astray by him, because the Word of God says so. At the present time we are under the teachings of Christ in the written word, and his teachings to us, the Book of Mormon plainly tells us, are to be made known in the records of the Jews (the Bible), and the Nephite records.

“And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb [the Bible], and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed [the Book of Mormon], as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb [the Bible]; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth. And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last” (1 Ne. 13:4-43).

The rest of this paper is entirely in the words of David Whitmer, one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon chosen by God. According to David Whitmer, “As ancient Israel was in error in misinterpreting prophecy, so the Latter Day Saints are in error in misinterpreting modern prophecy. It is plain to be seen from the scriptures that it is not the Lord's purpose to reveal prophecy in as great plainness as the gospel and doctrine of Christ. Scripture prophecy refers to events that are to transpire in the Lord's work; and it is not his purpose to reveal in plainness at this time, all the mysteries and plans of his great work among the children of men in the future. Such has been the case in all ages past. The prophecies to the Jews regarding the way in which Christ was to come, were obscure, and they were only understood by those who had the spirit to understand them. They could have been written so plain that any person could understand them correctly; but it was not God's purpose to do so. The Book of Mormon tells us that the book of prophecy of John's Revelation is hard to understand, but when God's own due time comes, it is to be unfolded and made plain; but the gospel and doctrine of Christ is so plain in the New Covenant of the Book of Mormon, that a child can understand it. Christ says, "And I give you these commandments, because of the disputation which have been among you. And blessed are ye if ye have no disputations among you." Also, that you might "know of the true points of my (Christ's) doctrine." (Nephi viii:9 and ix:11).

But prophecy is another matter outside of the gospel or doctrine of Christ; it can only be interpreted correctly by the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost. Peter says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the 'day star' arise in your hearts." (2 Peter i:19). The day star means the Holy Ghost, by which prophecy can only be rightly understood.

The Latter Day Saints are in error in believing that Joseph Smith was the Choice Seer spoken of in 2 Nephi ii. I will show you that Brother Joseph could not have been this Choice Seer, because that Seer is to be of the seed of Joseph, (of Egypt) of the seed of Lehi, who is a descendant of Joseph, which Lehi came over to this land from Jerusalem 600 years B.C.; The American Indians (the Lamanites) being the remnant of that seed. To make it more plain, I will repeat the explanation given in Chapter iii. The man who is not learned (in 2 Nephi xi:18) refers to Brother Joseph; But the Choice Seer (2 Nephi ii) is another man. He is to come from the fruit of the loins of Joseph (of Egypt), that seed being the branch which was broken off at Jerusalem, to whom this land was consecrated for their inheritance forever — being Lehi and his seed; Lehi’s seed being Little Joseph, who received this blessing from his father Lehi, that his seed should not utterly be destroyed; for out of his seed which should not all be destroyed (the Indians), should come this Choice Seer. It is very plain to me. This Seer is to come from the Lamanites, and Brother Joseph is not of that seed. The name of that Seer will be Joseph, after Joseph of Egypt, and his father's name Joseph. He is to translate sealed records yet to come forth. "And not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word." Brother Joseph never convinced a
single Lamanite that I ever heard of. This Choice Seer is to convince the Lamanites in person, and do a great work among them ("his brethren") in person.

It can plainly be seen by reading the two passages referred to, that "the man that is not learned" is a different man from this Choice Seer. There is no identity between the two persons referred to in these two passages. In one passage it calls the person referred to "the man that is not learned;" while in the other; the person referred to is a Choice Seer, who shall be great and mighty like unto Moses; and the whole chapter is devoted to this Seer and to Moses. Some have confounded the men spoken of in 2 Nephi xi:17, 18, 19. A man, being the spirit of a just man made perfect, had a hand in bringing forth the words of the Book of Mormon as well as Brother Joseph; and there is also a time referred to in the nineteenth paragraph that is yet in the future. We will now analyze this chapter (2 Nephi ii) concerning the Choice Seer.

It is plain to be seen that the whole chapter refers to this one Choice Seer and to Moses. I see some of the Latter Day Saints have lately interpreted "one mighty" to arise from the Lamanites; this is a recent interpretation they have put upon this chapter. A clause in the last part of the chapter makes it very plain that the Choice Seer spoken of all through the chapter, is to come from the Lamanites. It is very plain that the last part of the chapter (Par. 4) refers to this same Choice Seer. Lehi is making his conclusion and closing remarks concerning his son's (little Joseph's) blessing; which blessing can be seen in the first part of the chapter, the blessing being this; that little Joseph's seed should not all be destroyed, for out of his seed should arise one mighty, who should be a Choice Seer. "And now, behold, my son Joseph, after this manner did my father of old (Joseph of Egypt) prophesy. Wherefore, because of this covenant thou are blessed (a blessing); for thy seed shall not be destroyed ... And there shall raise up one mighty among them (this same Choice Seer — this same blessing), who shall do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith, to work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God." Before this it says he shall be great in mine eyes. Why is it that any one cannot see this? The closing of this chapter is only a rehearsal and conclusion about this same Choice Seer.

This whole chapter treats of the one matter; a blessing is pronounced upon little Joseph, because a Great Seer is to be of his seed, that should not all be destroyed. That seed being "a branch which was to be broken off" at Jerusalem, to whom this land was consecrated for their inheritance. He tells them that this Great Seer was not the Messiah, but that he was to come from a branch of the house of Israel that was to be broken off, "nevertheless to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord, that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light; yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom."

Can you not see from this that the Choice Seer is come to the Lamanites? They are the people here referred to. The next words are as follows: "For Joseph (of Egypt) truly testified, saying, a Seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a Choice Seer unto the fruit of my loins." This is the testimony or prophecy of Joseph (of Egypt) which Lehi refers to in his closing remarks in paragraph four, where he says: "And now, behold, my son Joseph, after this manner did my father of old prophesy. Wherefore because of this covenant thou are blessed; for thy seed shall not be destroyed, for they shall hearken unto the words of the book; and there shall raise up one mighty among them. "They shall hearken unto the words of the book which the Choice Seer shall bring forth, which Seer is to convince them. This passage means the same as if the word for instead of the word and, was there, as follows: "Wherefore, because of this covenant thou art blessed; for thy seed shall not be destroyed, for they shall hearken unto the words of the book; for' there shall raise up one mighty among them, who shall do much good, ... and do that thing which is great in the sight of God."

Again, it says this Choice Seer will do only according to the commands of God. He will be faithful and break none of God's commandments. This alone proves that Brother Joseph was not the Choice Seer. In a revelation given to Brother Joseph while he was translating, (Sec. 2) the Lord said, "Behold, how oft have you transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men ... if thou art not aware thou wilt fall." Does this agree with the description of the Choice Seer? Nay verily. This alone should satisfy any one, and will satisfy any one who is not trusting in an arm of flesh, that Brother Joseph was not this Great Seer. Again, it can be seen from this point that Brother Joseph was not this Great Seer. He is to come from the seed that shall write the word of the Lord; and this is the Nephite seed. It says, "But a Seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; ... wherefore, the fruit of thy loins (from which this Seer is to be raised up) shall write; (the Nephite records), and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write." So we see again that the Choice Seer is to come from the Nephite or Lamanite seed. Again, the same can be seen from a clause which follows in this connection: "and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days." Again, the same can be seen from this clause which says, "He shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, HIS BRETHREN, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers." From this we see that his brethren are to be the Lamanites. Then he is to be of the Lamanite seed. Again, it says, they who seek to destroy this Choice Seer shall be confounded. Those who sought to destroy Brother Joseph were not confounded, but they destroyed him.

Brethren, you have no conception of how great and mighty this Seer will be, and the great work he is to do in restoring the house of Israel, or you would never claim that Brother Joseph was this man. I believe this man to be the same man referred to in Genesis xliv:24, and by Paul in Romans xi:26. The passage in Genesis is Joseph's blessing: "From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel." From the seed of Joseph will come a man who shall be the Shepherd to gather scattered Israel in the last days. This does not mean Christ, for he came from the seed of Judah. The other passage in Romans says, "There shall come out of Sion (this land) the Deliverer, and shall turn
away ungodliness from Jacob." This does not mean Christ, as you can see by reading the context. I am satisfied these two passages refer to this same Choice Seer.

To conclude, we see that Brother Joseph was not this Choice Seer for the following reasons:

First: He is to come from the seed of Lehi, and Joseph Smith is not of that seed.
Second: He is to convince the Lamanites in person; Joseph Smith did not convince them.
Third: His tongue will not be loosed that he can speak much, and the Lord is to raise up a spokesman for him; Joseph Smith's tongue was loosed to speak, he being a good speaker.
Fourth: Those who seek to destroy this Seer will be confounded, this does not agree as being Brother Joseph, because he was destroyed.
Fifth: The Choice Seer will be faithful and do strictly according to the command of God; Brother Joseph broke the commands of God from the beginning.

So we see that Brother Joseph was not this Choice Seer" (David Whitmer [1887], An Address to All Believers in Christ, chapter 10, The Choice Seer, http://www.utlm.org/onlinebooks/address1.html).