The Rod of Jesse

The Rod of Jesse is a biblical term and has little to do with intellectual theory. It is also allegorical where physical things are like unto Spiritual things. Rod and Jesse are temporal things. The rod pertains to a new shoot out of the trunk or stem of a fruit-bearing tree. Jesse is a historical person or Hebrew king. Specifically he was the father of David and of the tribe of Judah. In Hebrew, David would be called “Son of Jesse” (Ben Yishai). The tradition of the Jews, held for a long time, taught of two Davidic kings. They were Messiah Ben David and Messiah Ben Joseph. The first implied a descendent of David or Jesse his father, who was of the tribe of Judah and the latter would be a descendant of the tribe of Joseph. It was not until the Dead Sea Scrolls that the Jews added a third Davidic King. He was simply called the prophet of the last days.

The following is from: <http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/David,_Prophetic_Figure_of_Last_Days>

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King David (c. 1000 B.C.) remains today one of the most renowned Old Testament figures. His personality, spiritual sensitivity, creative abilities, military victories, and leadership carried him to the pinnacle of popularity. He had the potential to become an ideal king, but his kingship deteriorated after his adultery with Bathsheba and his involvement in Uriah's death. However, prophecy states that a model ruler in the last days will be "raised up" from David's lineage.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that "the throne and kingdom of David is to be taken from him and given to another by the name of David in the last days, raised up out of his lineage" (TPJS, p. 339). Elder Orson Hyde, in his dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives, October 24, 1841, prophesied that the Jews would return to Jerusalem and that in time a leader called David, "even a descendant from the loins of ancient David, [would] be their king" (HC 4:457).

This predicted figure corresponds to a promised messianic servant. Hosea, speaking shortly before the loss of northern Israel, foretold that Israelites would return in the latter days "and seek the LORD their God, and David their king" ([Hosea 3:5](http://lds.org/scriptures/ot/hosea/3.5?lang=eng#4)). Jeremiah prophesied of Israel and Judah's future righteousness, and of "David their king, whom I [the LORD] will raise up unto them" ([Jer. 30:9](http://lds.org/scriptures/ot/jer/30.9?lang=eng#8); cf. 23:5; 33:15-22). And in Ezekiel it is written, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them" ([Ezek. 34:23-24](http://lds.org/scriptures/ot/ezek/34.23-24?lang=eng#22); cf. also 44:1-3).

I need to interrupt to illustrate an assumption. Hosea 3:5 *Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days*. Ludlow takes the verse literally as most due. David is a term used to define a servant who is a partial remnant of Jesse the father of David. The same applies to Jer. 30:9 *But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them,* and also Ezek. 34:23-24 *And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it*. The reference to David is not literal buy allegorical in revering to a servant of the Lord in the last days. Ludlow takes a literal interpretation. So to does Mormon Tradition seem to follow.

Speaking to Joseph Smith, the angel Moroni 2 cited Old Testament passages telling of significant figures who would be involved with Christ's millennial reign ([JS-H 1:40](http://lds.org/scriptures/pgp/js-h/1.40?lang=eng#39)). As prophesied in Isaiah, it appears that two persons are spoken of, a "rod" and a "root" (11:1, 10)-one a leader "on whom there is laid much power," the other a person with special priesthood keys ([D&C 113:3-6](http://lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/113.3-6?lang=eng#2)). These leaders are believed by some to be two forerunners, spoken of in rabbinic literature, one from Joseph and one from Judah (Encyclopedia Judaica, 11:1411).

Ludlow is partly correct and seems to call attention to two witnesses like the Jews, but he fails to identify the proper names of the servants. Joseph Smith is the root of Jesse. This means that Joseph Smith is partly the linage of David and partly of Joseph of Egypt.

Although noble attributes and spiritual powers characterize both of these messianic servants, Jesus Christ exemplifies these qualities perfectly ([D&C 113:1-2](http://lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/113.1-2?lang=eng#primary)). Jesus is the exemplar prophet, priest, and king. He identified himself as the prophet "like unto Moses" ([Deut. 18:15](http://lds.org/scriptures/ot/deut/18.15?lang=eng#14); [Acts 3:22-23](http://lds.org/scriptures/nt/acts/3.22-23?lang=eng#21); [3 Ne. 20:23](http://lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/20.23?lang=eng#22)) and was a high priest after the order of Melchizedek ([Heb. 5:9-10](http://lds.org/scriptures/nt/heb/5.9-10?lang=eng#8);[7:15-22](http://lds.org/scriptures/nt/heb/7.15-22?lang=eng#14)). Jesus is King of Kings ([Rev. 19:16](http://lds.org/scriptures/nt/rev/19.16?lang=eng#15)), greater than all other leaders of all time. Some see in Jesus Christ the complete fulfillment of the prophecy of a future David. Others feel that, while the titles and functions of the future Davidic king could apply to Jesus, there will also be another righteous king by the name of David in the last days, a leader from the loins of David (and thus of Judah). VICTOR L. LUDLOW

Here Ludlow assumes incorrectly by trying to put the two servants into one Christ and call him David. Giving two different versions simply escapes from the truth. Assumptions come from taking a literal view of prophecy and not seeing through the allegory. An ancient prophet or even the Lord may not want to give the name of the servants individually and thus uses David as an allegorical reference for both servants who are partially a remnant of Jesse, the father of David and partially a remnant of Joseph of Egypt.

The Lord gives some information about the rod and the root, but does not identify either. We are led to assume that the two were yet to come.

[D&C 113:1-6](http://lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/113.1-6?lang=eng#0)

1 Who is the Stem of Jesse spoken of in the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th verses of the 11th chapter of Isaiah?

2 Verily thus saith the Lord: It is Christ.

3 What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that should come of the Stem of Jesse?

4 Behold, thus saith the Lord: It is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power.

5 What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?

6 Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.

There are three individuals and not one. As I said in the former chapter this agrees with the three Davidic Kings of Jewish tradition: Messiah Bed David, Messiah Ben Joseph, and The Prophet of the Last Days. Even though Joseph Smith has the name of Ben Joseph, the Ben means son of or descendant of Joseph.

The root of Jesse and the rod of Jesse are said by the Lord to be partially a descendant of Jesse through David and partially of Ephraim who is a descendant of Joseph in Egypt. Despite the clarity, Mormon tradition applies the two servants to a time in the future State of Israel or a literal and physical Jerusalem. Actually the first is the Root of Jesse who has the *rights of the preisthood* and the Rod of Jesse will come with *much power*. They are two different servants at two different times. If you reject the former, you will not be able to recognize the latter.

[Isaiah 11:1](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/isa/11.1?lang=eng" \l "p1" \t "_blank)

1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

This reference was given before, but remember the rod is mentioned first and the branch out his (Christ’s) roots is last. Actually the root comes before the rod when you understand the allegory, but here we are interested in the rod, which covers almost the entire first paragraph. The *Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,* which clearly represents a servant and not Jesus Christ. He will have *wisdom and understanding* and *the spirit of knowledge.* His emphasis will be to *judge the poor.* He shall *smite the earth* (Kingdom of God) *with the rod of his mouth.* Unlike the Root of Jesse, the Rod of Jesse will declare what Joseph Smith translated and received when allegory is given. He will have the knowledge, without any emphasis to authority. This is real power—an expression used for the Rod of Jesse, the spokesman and also the one mighty and strong.

Verses 6, 7, and 8 are keys that refer to the Millennium and according to prophecy this will happen at the end of the Restored Kingdom. Traditional interpretations are literal as if actual animals and not something they represent in man. It will be the redemption of Zion as expressed to Brigham Young in Section 136:18. The Restored Church, however, does not teach to this concept, but feels the restoration is an on going process and does not realize that the restoration came to an end when Brigham Young Received the last revelation at Winter Quarters. After the Redemption of Zion *the earth (Kingdom of God) will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.* Those who reject the Mormons should come to realize that they have the prophecies, but never try to understand and will not until the knowledge of the Lord comes. If you do not like reading this, you will not accept heaven when it comes to the earth again.

We will not know who the Rod of Jesse is until prophecy pertaining to his knowledge is thwarted by one who was called and anointed and yet fell. The falling is Isaiah’s prediction of what will come after:

[Isaiah 61:1-3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/isa/61.1-3?lang=eng#p1)

1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

Isaiah like many chapters talks about the Messiah according to tradition. This is in error. If *the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings* does not sound like this is Jesus Christ. It is one of his servants in the last days. This is the Rod of Jesse, which Mormon tradition fails to recognize. This is also a problem with most of Christianity that attaches all of the good to the second coming of Jesus Christ and the abominations to the darkness of man. We are currently in darkness because the saints of the Restored Church rejected the voice of the Lord by rejecting His commandments to live the Law of Consecration. No one will live it, so complaining about the darkness of the Mormons will avail you nothing.

[Isaiah 64:1-8](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/isa/64.1-8?lang=eng#p1)

1 Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

2 As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!

3 When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

4 For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7 And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

8 But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

Here Isaiah talks about the period of darkness that has occupied most of the time since the beginning. Tradition tries to call this a prophecy of the second coming. All it does is call attention to any time of darkness when those who seek the Lord and remember when righteousness prevailed. *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and has consumed us, because of our iniquities.* This applies to every Christian that thinks they are of the Lord. All those who claim righteousness do not have the Sprit of the Lord. If you are a sinner and admit it, you are honestly seeking the Lord, but will not find him until you are able to receive condemnation from those who are week in your eyes. Currently, all we have is hope in Christ. If you have no animosity towards the Mormons, you will do much better. You cannot change them, but you can call upon the Lord to forgive those who oppress you. Lean to identify the Redemption of Zion so that you are prepared, otherwise your lamp will go out.

If you are only looking for someone to agree with you, darkness rules your intent. Keep in mind that tradition is not the possession of understanding. Even if you go against tradition, you fail to see. The Rod of Jesse gives us the ultimate in understanding. There are many references, however to a greater understanding, but those below are only a few:

* spirit of understanding shall rest upon rod from the stem of Jesse, [2 Ne. 21:1–2](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/2-ne/21.1-2?lang=eng#p1) ([Isa. 11:1–2](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/isa/11.1-2?lang=eng#p1)).
* in last days men will understand words of prophets, [2 Ne. 25:8](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/2-ne/25.8?lang=eng#p7).
* the Lord gives light unto understanding, [2 Ne. 31:3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/2-ne/31.3?lang=eng#p2).
* if ye cannot understand words, it is because ye ask not, [2 Ne. 32:4](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/2-ne/32.4?lang=eng#p3) ([3 Ne. 17:3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/17.3?lang=eng#p2)).
* he who prophesies should prophesy to men’s understanding, [Jacob 4:13](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/jacob/4.13?lang=eng#p12).
* Mormon2 makes record according to understanding given by God, [W of M 1:9](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/w-of-m/1.9?lang=eng#p8).
* records preserved by God that men might read and understand prophecies, commandments, mysteries, [Mosiah 1:2–5](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/mosiah/1.2-5?lang=eng#p1).
* ye have not applied hearts to understanding, [Mosiah 12:27](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/mosiah/12.27?lang=eng#p26).
* because of unbelief men cannot understand word of God, [Mosiah 26:3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/mosiah/26.3?lang=eng#p2) ([3 Ne. 15:18](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/15.18?lang=eng#p17)).
* God has all understanding, [Alma 26:35](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/alma/26.35?lang=eng#p34).
* Moroni1 is man of perfect understanding, [Alma 48:11](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/alma/48.11?lang=eng#p10).
* whoso readeth, let him understand, [3 Ne. 10:14](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/10.14?lang=eng#p13).
* Nephites do not understand voice from heaven, [3 Ne. 11:3–4](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/11.3-4?lang=eng#p2).
* Nephites are weak that they cannot understand all of Jesus’ words, [3 Ne. 17:2](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/17.2?lang=eng#p1).
* ask the Father that ye may understand, [3 Ne. 17:3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/17.3?lang=eng#p2).
* he who denies revelation does not understand scriptures, [Morm. 9:8](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/morm/9.8?lang=eng#p7).
* the Lord is able to show forth great power, which looks small to understanding of men, [Ether 3:5](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/ether/3.5?lang=eng#p4).
* you have not understood, [D&C 9:7](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/9.7?lang=eng#p6).
* people wrest scriptures and do not understand, [D&C 10:63](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/10.63?lang=eng#p62).
* the Lord speaks that man may understand naturally, [D&C 29:33](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/29.33?lang=eng#p32).
* the Lord reasons with men that they may understand, [D&C 50:12](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/50.12?lang=eng#p11).
* he who reads, let him understand, [D&C 71:5](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/71.5?lang=eng#p4) ([91:4](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/91.4?lang=eng#p3)).
* their understanding shall reach to heaven, [D&C 76:9](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/76.9?lang=eng#p8).
* mysteries of kingdom surpass all understanding, [D&C 76:114](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/76.114?lang=eng#p113).
* things that can be understood only by the Holy Spirit, [D&C 76:116](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/76.116?lang=eng#p115).
* Satan turns hearts so men understand not things prepared for them, [D&C 78:10](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/78.10?lang=eng#p9).
* light of Christ quickens understandings, [D&C 88:11](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/88.11?lang=eng#p10) ([138:29](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/138.29?lang=eng#p28)).
* I give these sayings that you may understand, [D&C 93:19](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/93.19?lang=eng#p18).