



10-1-1994

Jews in LDS Thought

Arnold H. Green

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq>

 Part of the [Mormon Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Green, Arnold H. (1994) "Jews in LDS Thought," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 34 : Iss. 4 , Article 9.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol34/iss4/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *BYU Studies Quarterly* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

*A Bibliographic Essay***Jews in LDS Thought**

Chronicling the attitudes of Latter-day Saints toward the Jews and Israel illustrates a subjective use of history as well as the objective dynamics of a living theology.

Arnold H. Green

In their basic revealed texts, Latter-day Saints encounter many themes concerning the history and destiny of the Jews. Generations of Church officers and members have formed differing combinations of those themes. Their varying formulations somewhat reflect the trends and perceived needs of their eras. Thus, in effect, many Latter-day Saints have functioned as subjective revisionists or as reductionists.¹ While a few of their revisions are specific to certain eras, other revisions have endured or reappeared and now coexist. In an effort to identify the main elements that have played roles in LDS thought about the Jews, this essay will first discuss revisionism and subjectivism in history and theology. It will then examine, in the order in which they have appeared over time, certain themes relating to the Jews. Bibliographic information for this body of LDS literature is given in the endnotes.

Revisionism and Subjectivism in History and Theology

Reviewing the issues surrounding revisionism and subjectivism is helpful for understanding the various themes that have been present in Latter-day Saint attitudes toward the Jews from 1830 to the present. Revisionism is the practice of deliberately revising generally understood ideas about history or theology. Subjectivism in historical studies means perceiving past situations or events in terms of present values. Both practices are risky yet unavoidable and often salutary. Revisionism is hazardous in that such a reinterpretive

BYU Studies 34, no. 4 (1994-95)

exercise can attract dishonest zealots—some whole historical endeavors reek of unscrupulous fanaticism. Perhaps the most unsavory of these at present is the revisionism which denies the occurrence of the Holocaust.² Nevertheless, revisionism is relentless and necessary, as implied by Carl Becker's oft-quoted *mot* that every generation rewrites history from its own perspective.

This re-visioning can also be beneficial. Events, documents, and other phenomena become more fully understood after scrutiny from various angles by historians of many eras. In fact, many reputable scholars label themselves "revisionists" to promote what they deem are improved ways of comprehending certain events and texts in light of neglected sources or fresh analytical approaches.³

Debates about the pros and cons of revisionism in history often pit subjectivism (investigating the past from one perspective or one's current beliefs and values) against objectivism (reconstructing the past for its own sake).⁴ Meinecke identified these "two great tendencies" in historical studies and recommended that "neither of these tendencies . . . be pursued one-sidedly."⁵

Twentieth-century historians have typically employed some subjectivism and rejected Ranke's ideal of completely objective, "scientific history." They have urged historians to assess the past's "usefulness" in applying historical knowledge to humanity's present quandaries. As Becker argued in 1935, "The history that lies inert in unread books does no work in the world. The history that does work in the world, the history that influences the course of history, is living history."⁶ Subjectivists of course distinguish between "living history" and fiction or propaganda. For instance, in the early twentieth century, Croce affirmed, "A history without relation to the document would be an unverifiable history; and . . . the reality of history lies in this verifiability."⁷

A similar subjective-objective interaction occurs in religion.⁸ In a Latter-day Saint context, subjectivism underlies Nephi's practical advice that individuals should "liken" the scriptures unto themselves.⁹ Neal A. Maxwell counseled, "Make the living scriptures relevant to our lives and to our times as did Nephi." Russell M. Nelson, trained as a physician, used curative metaphors and urged that knowledge of history be used to uplift. He cautioned that

“some truths are best left unsaid” in preference to the practices of “self-serving historians [who] grovel for ‘truth’ that would defame the dead and the defenseless.”¹⁰ Yet, where subjectivism endorses likening, selecting, and omitting for our current or personal needs, objectivism cautions against “wresting the scriptures” (see 2 Pet. 3:16; Alma 13:20; D&C 10:63).¹¹

In both history and theology, objectivism checks the subjectivist temptation to treat the documentary record too selectively, thereby wresting the past by reducing it or by citing evidence out of context. This concern applies to the intent of a specific passage (otherwise the sixth commandment could be rendered “Thou shalt . . . kill”) and especially to the integrity of the whole context’s complexities and subtleties. For example, an objectivist might countenance on one hand the reduction of a situation that has the elements AABCCCXYZZ to AbCxYZ (where two A’s are reduced to A, three C’s to C, and so on). On the other hand, the objectivist would protest the reduction of that event to BX. Yet B and X might be precisely those aspects of the situation that some historians or theologians would subjectively find most relevant to their day, although other subjectivists might prefer element C or the formulation AYZ.

The ongoing revisionism present in the exercise of history and the tensions between subjectivism and objectivism in both history and theology are among the issues one encounters when surveying the complex topic of LDS attitudes toward the Jewish people and the modern state of Israel.

The Jews in LDS Thought

Impressively, the whole tapestry of the Book of Mormon consists of a myriad of complex and subtle threads. Through the decades, sermonizers and scholars have treated individual strands either in isolation or in reweavings of their own design, sometimes with apparently contradictory results.

Scriptural Foundations. One may select from the tapestry a few main strands, for example:

1. judgment
2. lineage

3. Judeophilia
4. partnership
5. return
6. conversion to Christ
7. universality

On the basis of the manifestations of factors such as these, one may hazard to infer the Jews' status according to LDS scripture.

When considered in isolation, one of these strands—judgment—focuses on transgressions by the Jews and their resulting condemnation.¹² For example, 1 Nephi 19:13–14 includes such phrases as “those who are at Jerusalem . . . shall be scourged by all people, because they crucify the God of Israel” and “they shall wander in the flesh, and perish, and become a hiss and a by-word, and be hated among all nations.”¹³ Although milder than the sermonized abuse by the Greek and Latin Church Fathers, such language compares in accusation and tone to New Testament passages that Jewish writers have found offensive.¹⁴

In contrast, the thread of the Abrahamic lineage evokes themes of divine respect and prophetic expectations, leading to the strands of Judeophilia (esteeming the Jews) and an anticipated religious partnership. We find references to “the Jews, the covenant people of the Lord,” and explicit cautions against hatred of the Jews: “Ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them” (3 Ne. 29:8).¹⁵ Indeed, as Latter-day Saints have identified *themselves* either as literal or adopted descendants of scattered Israel, they imply a future Jewish-Mormon partnership. Assuming a “tribes of Israel” framework—featuring “Judah” and “Joseph”¹⁶—scriptures predict cooperation between these tribes in such areas as promulgating scriptures¹⁷ and building millennial capitals.¹⁸ Prophetic expectations for the tribe of Judah also include the concept of a return to the Holy Land: “And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people . . . that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the promised land of Jerusalem” (3 Ne. 20:29).¹⁹

Yet this thread of the Jews' return to Israel frequently appears interwoven with Christ's divine and messianic roles, the latter-day restoration of the New Testament church, and its progress defined in "tribes of Israel" terms. Many passages in Latter-day Saint scripture mentioning the Jews' return thus also mention the Jews' Christianization—"when they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance" (2 Ne. 6:11).²⁰ Ambiguities exist, however, regarding sequence, amount, and timing. Verses like 2 Nephi 6:11 and 25:16-17 imply that the Jews' conversion not only precedes their return, but also serves as its precondition, whereas those like 3 Nephi 20:29-30 imply a sequence of return followed by a delayed conversion and final inheritance. Suggesting the former order, 2 Nephi 30:7-8 hints at still a third sequence—return triggered by the Jews "begin[ning] to believe in Christ."²¹

Moreover, a prominent related strand conveys a sense of universality—"he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile" (2 Ne. 26:33).²² Although Joseph Smith characterized the LDS Church's missionary-driven growth as "the literal gathering of Israel" (A of F 10), provision is made for those not counted among the innumerable sand-grains of Abraham's descendants: "If the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God, . . . they shall be numbered among the house of Israel" (1 Ne. 14:1-2). In other words, faith and faithfulness can "Israelize" Gentiles, and unfaithfulness can "gentilize" Israel (2 Ne. 30:2).

The threads of judgment, lineage, Judeophilia, partnership, conversion, return, and universality have appeared, ebbed, reemerged, and continue to entwine in various configurations through Latter-day Saint thought on the past and future of Jews and Israel.

1840–1880. By the mid-nineteenth century, Reform Judaism had arisen in Germany and spread to America. (Reform Judaism discarded or modified some traditional beliefs and observances and instituted others, such as a belief in progressive theology.) Secular Jewish nationalism (the advocacy of a Jewish nation and homeland divorced from traditional Judaism) was emerging. Christianity's long tradition of trying to convert Jews had new expressions;

“Christian Zionism” (Christian denominations encouraging the Jews’ return, largely because it validates their own theology) was flourishing, now mainly among evangelical Protestants. De Gobineau, a French aristocrat, was popularizing scientific racism, claiming the white race combined the best human traits and therefore was superior to, and should be isolated from, inferior races. Pogroms were increasing in Eastern Europe, as was the trickle of pious European Jewish emigrants to Palestine.²³

Reading their newly revealed scriptures in light of such developments, nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints articulated three main and enduring theological positions regarding the Jews’ status. All three positions included the ideas of judgment, lineage, and return: Orson Hyde and Wilford Woodruff saw the promises made to the lineage triggering a return which would lead to conversion. Parley and Orson Pratt urged Christianization as necessary for removing the judgment on the Jewish lineage and thus permitting the Jews’ return. And Brigham Young disassociated return from the removal of judgment on lineage and from conversion. Instead, he associated conversion with the Second Coming.

Orson Hyde’s 1841 prayer to “dedicate and consecrate this land [the Holy Land] . . . for the gathering together of Judah’s scattered remnants” included the themes of judgment, lineage, and delayed conversion, with the return to Palestine receiving the focus of attention—expressed formulaically as judgment/lineage/RETURN/delayed conversion (with the emphasized topic capitalized). While praying to “incline them to gather in upon this land” and “constitute her people as a distinct nation and government,” Hyde also petitioned to “let Thy great kindness conquer and subdue the unbelief of Thy people.”²⁴ Almost the same blend of return and conversion exists in the Twelve’s 1845 *Proclamation*. Composed by Wilford Woodruff, it charges “the Jews among all nations . . . to return to Jerusalem” but implies impending conversion: “For be it known unto them that *we* now hold the keys of the priesthood and kingdom which are soon to be restored unto them.”²⁵

In contrast, Parley P. Pratt’s “Address to the Jews” in his 1852 “Proclamation” emphasizes a second formula of judgment/lineage/immediate CONVERSION: “To the Jews we would say—Turn from your sins.” “We have now shown you the door of admission into



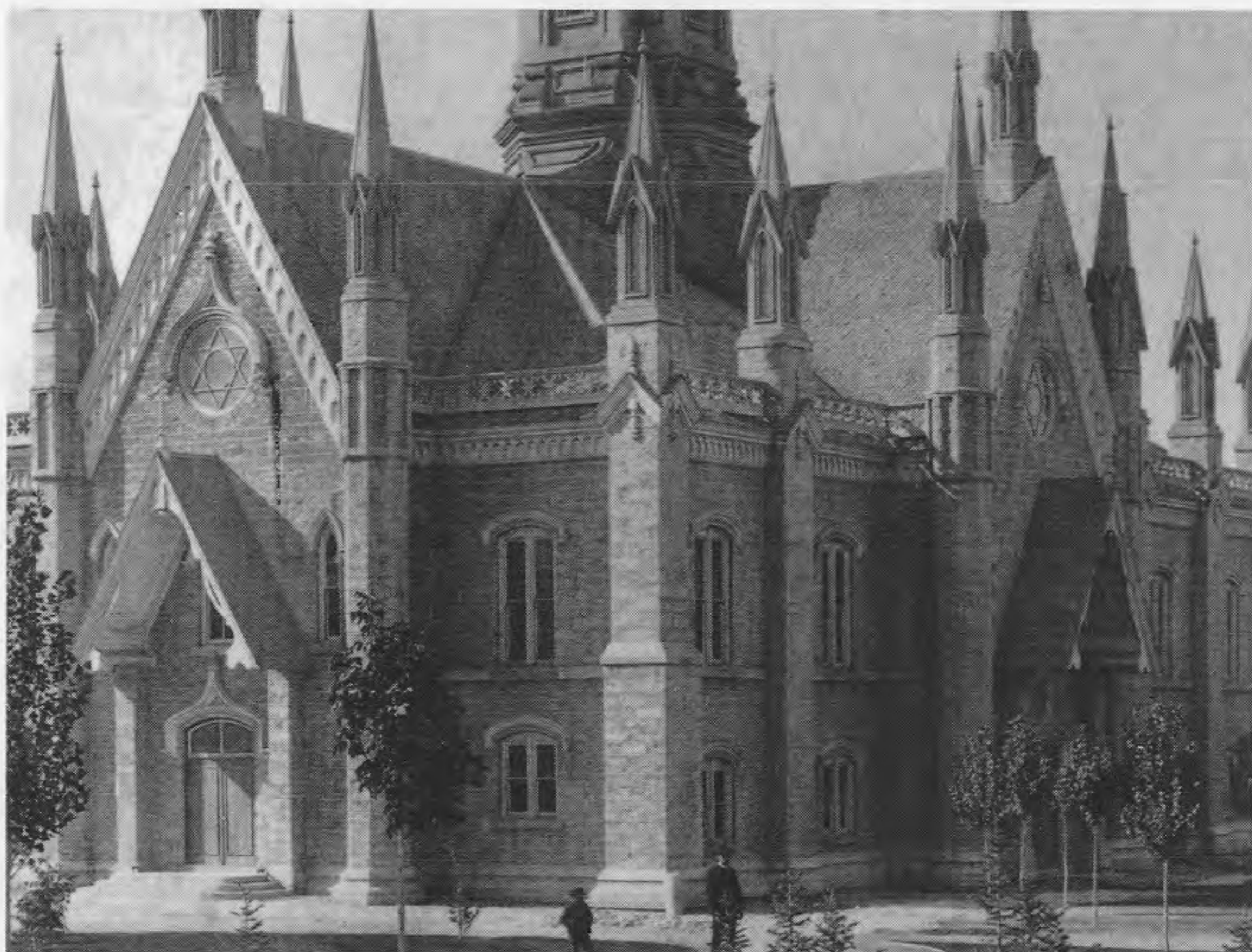
Orson Hyde (1805-1878) about 1853. Elder Hyde, who was ordained an Apostle in 1835, was called in 1840 to go to Jerusalem. On the Mount of Olives, October 24, 1841, he dedicated Palestine for the return of the Jews. Attributed to Marsena Cannon. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

the kingdom of God, into which you would do well to enter." Return to Jerusalem is implied as a benefit of conversion. As Orson Pratt explained, "The main part of [the Jews] will believe while yet scattered."²⁶

A third formula of JUDGMENT/LINEAGE/return/DELAYED conversion was articulated in 1866 by Brigham Young. "Let me here say a word to the Jews," he said. "We do not want you to believe our doctrine. If any professing to be Jews do so, it would prove they were not Jews. A Jew cannot now believe in Jesus Christ." "The decree has gone forth from the Almighty," he continued, "that they cannot have the benefit of the atonement until they gather to Jerusalem, for they said, 'Let his blood be upon us and our children.' Consequently, they cannot believe in him until his second coming."²⁷ John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff softened Brigham Young's position,²⁸ then all three endorsed the theme of return by sending George A. Smith in 1872 to rededicate Jerusalem to that end.²⁹ During the years 1841 to 1933, Palestine was dedicated by Latter-day Saints seven times only for the return of the Jews, not for the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.³⁰

1881–1920. During the four decades straddling 1900, the Jews' legal status improved in North America and western Europe, where assimilation seemed likely, at least until the Dreyfus Affair (in which Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish French officer, was court-martialed for spying, even after the main evidence against him was proven to be forged). Meanwhile, the Jews' condition drastically worsened in Eastern Europe, the "great migration" to the West began, and new expressions of secular and religious Zionism materialized. These forces provoked the first two Zionist *aliyahs* (waves of Jewish emigration to Palestine) and swelled the previous trickle to a stream.³¹ These events, particularly the obvious movement of large numbers of Jews to the Holy Land, prompted additional LDS pronouncements that confirmed and expanded the Hyde, Pratt, and Young conceptions of the Jews' destiny.

As during the years 1840 to 1880, a frequently expressed position was Hyde's judgment/lineage/RETURN/delayed conversion formulation. For example, it appeared in the dedicatory prayers of the Manti Temple (1888) and the Salt Lake Temple (1893) offered by Lorenzo Snow and Wilford Woodruff respectively.³² In 1899,



Star of David motif. The Latter-day Saints used a Star of David motif in the round windows over the main entrances of the Assembly Hall. Dedicated in 1882, the Assembly Hall is among the buildings on Temple Square that architectually utilize symbols of the Mormon faith. C. R. Savage, 1888. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

J. M. Tanner contributed a flattering, academic description of Zionism. Five years later, J. M. Sjodahl placed a positive connotation on judgment—“Persecution has been the means of preserving their nationality”—then cited Old Testament return passages as a prelude to identifying Zionism as “exceedingly important.” This position was reiterated in 1917 by James E. Talmage: the scattering permits biblical Israel to bless the nations, and the prophesied return has begun. Subscribers to this trend considered General Allenby’s capture of Jerusalem in November 1917 to be particularly significant.³³

A version of Brigham Young’s view (JUDGMENT/LINEAGE/return/DELAYED conversion) appeared in 1918 when E. H. Lund enumerated cases of the Jews’ “unrighteousness and hypocrisy” per the Old

Testament and then interpreted 2 Nephi 10:3–5 as asserting that the Jews were the only nation having the “necessary mental qualities” to crucify Jesus. Yet, he observed, present developments suggest that “the Lord is gradually withdrawing the curse which he placed on that land anciently,” although “the innate skepticism and unbelief of the Jews will still possess them” until the Second Coming.³⁴

Pratt’s emphasis on judgment/lineage/CONVERSION/return also found new voices. For example, during 1901 the *Improvement Era* addressed a reader’s question: “When the Jews gather to Palestine, will they be in a condition of belief or unbelief in Jesus Christ?” The respondent, John Nicholson, dismissed what he called “the complete unbelief theory” and concluded, “Doubtless there will be a class of those who gather to Palestine who will be unbelievers, but it will probably be proportionally small.” Nicholson also made a novel observation. Citing Reform Jews who proposed sympathetic (revisionist) views of Jesus, he commented, “These statements are evidences that the Jews are ‘beginning to believe in Christ,’ and are therefore being prepared for complete conversion.” This idea was repeated in general conference in 1902 by B. H. Roberts and in 1918 by David O. McKay.³⁵

1921–1947. In 1920 the League of Nations entrusted a mandate over Palestine to Great Britain, which at first promised to sponsor the creation of a Jewish national home. The great migration, the relocation of over four million Russian Jews to the West from the 1880s to the 1920s, was accompanied by growing Judeophobia in western Europe and America—compounded after the 1917 Russian Revolution by a Communist, or “red,” scare. By the late 1930s, moreover, Britain completed its “decommitment,” announcing in 1939 an intent to transfer sovereignty over the Holy Land to the native Arab Palestinian majority. During that decade, Nazism arose in Germany and proceeded to attack the Jews’ economic interests, then their legal status, and ultimately the Jews’ very existence as individuals and as a people in both Germany and the lands it conquered during World War II. The third, fourth, and fifth *aliyahs* from Poland and Germany swelled the stream of immigrants to a flood.³⁶

During this period, Joseph Fielding Smith perpetuated the judgment-on-lineage formula associated with Brigham Young and

E. H. Lund.³⁷ Hyde's formula of lineage/RETURN/delayed conversion was continued by Heber J. Grant, Janne Sjodahl, and David O. McKay.³⁸ And Pratt's stress on lineage/CONVERSION/return was redefined by B. H. Roberts. President of the Eastern States Mission from 1922 to 1927, Roberts noted, "In greater New York, there are two millions of the House of Judah, and for the last several years I have been wondering how we could . . . have the material to present to them that would place in their hands the great message that God has for that branch of the House of Israel."³⁹ By 1927, Roberts had already created some "material"—several pamphlets formulating the LDS message especially for Jews. These were later consolidated into a book entitled *Rasha—the Jew: A Message to All Jews*.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, two new emphases emerged tentatively during this era. In response to the red scare and anti-Semitism, Heber J. Grant, while implying lineage, partnership, and return, articulated a position of Judeophilia. Speaking at the April 1921 general conference, he called attention to "the agitation that is going on at the present time . . . against the Jewish people"; recalled Orson Hyde's mission; cautioned, "Let no Latter-day Saint be guilty of taking any part in any crusade against these people"; and concluded, "I believe in no other part of the world is there as good a feeling in the hearts of mankind towards the Jewish people as among the Latter-day Saints."⁴¹

John A. Widtsoe, who visited Jerusalem for another rededication of the land in 1933, befriended a prominent Palestinian Arab, then articulated a position of conversion/return/UNIVERSALITY. In his autobiography, Widtsoe described meeting Shaykh Ya'qub al-Bukhari, who "became one of our loyal friends with whom we corresponded for years." This Muslim friend "gave us the Arab view of the colonization of Palestine." Widtsoe concluded, "It is my personal belief that the Jews will succeed in taking over Palestine fully only when they accept Christ. Until that time, bloody conflict, hate, jealousy, and fear will accompany the Jewish efforts to colonize Palestine." He then expressed a universalist stance:

The oft-asked question, "Who are the children of Abraham?" is well answered in light of the revealed gospel. . . . All who accept God's plan for his children on earth and who live it are the children of Abraham. Those who reject the gospel . . . forfeit the promises made to Abraham and are not children of Abraham.⁴²

The optimistic LDS outlook for the Jews' future expressed during the 1920s transmuted into pessimism with the onset of World War II. Attempts were made to understand events in traditional terms. For instance, Melvin J. Ballard depicted Hitler as "an instrument in the hands of God" to drive Europe's Jews back to Palestine, and Charles A. Callis interpreted Nazism's threat against Jews as a fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy.⁴³ Such efforts underscored Latter-day Saints' interest in developments among Jews primarily as evidence that would validate their own current views or dogmas.⁴⁴

1948–1979. By the time the modern state of Israel was created in 1948, the Cold War had started. Until Stalin's death (1953) and the Suez Crisis (1955–56), the USSR supported Israel as did the United States, but thereafter, the Arab-Israeli conflict coincided more or less with the global East-West conflict. As antireligion became orthodoxy in the East bloc and received constitutional protection in the West, many faiths acted to mitigate ancient animosities between themselves to permit cooperation in maintaining common spiritual beliefs and values. Thus an ecumenical dialogue began. Not yet participating in that process directly, the LDS Church nevertheless grew beyond its traditional base in the Western United States, becoming more global and interacting with peoples in Africa and Asia as well as in Europe and the Americas.⁴⁵ These were among the factors that further shaped the attitudes of Latter-day Saints toward the Jewish people and the state of Israel.

Orson Hyde's emphasis on the return of the Jews expressed itself in some LDS officials welcoming the creation of Israel as a fulfillment of prophecy. In 1950, Ezra Taft Benson asserted, "In fulfillment of these ancient and modern promises, a great drama is being enacted in Palestine. The Jews are returning as one of the events of the last days." In his *Israel! Do You Know?*⁴⁶ LeGrand Richards included a section entitled "New Nation of Israel Fulfills Prophecy" and suggested that the Three Nephites fought on the Jewish side in the 1948 War. The next year, he stated that "what is going on over in the Holy Land today is a great miracle," an assertion seconded in 1958 by Lynn M. Hilton. A year later, Arthur V. Watkins, U.S. Senator from Utah, wrote, "Israel, as an independent nation, is an established fact and must be accepted. No one believing in the prophecies of God would contend otherwise."⁴⁷



Ezra Taft Benson and Flora A. Benson with David Ben-Gurion. The three met in 1963 in Dr. Ben-Gurion's Tel Aviv home. On several occasions, President Benson taught that "in fulfillment of . . . ancient and modern promises, a great drama is being enacted in Palestine." As a result, he believed that the LDS Church approaches Jews "in a different way than any other Christian church." Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

Partly fusing the Hyde and Pratt traditions, many advocates of the return of the Jews seemed to feel at this point that the time had arrived for conversion. Hilton indicated, "It is my sincere prayer that we will not be as reluctant to take the gospel from the Gentiles and give it to Israel as Peter was reluctant to do the converse in the meridian of time." Richards, whose *Marvelous Work and a Wonder*⁴⁸ anthologized his Southern States Mission presentations, wrote *Israel! Do You Know?* as a lesson plan to explain the LDS gospel to Jews. In it he declared, "God is calling the Jews. He invites them into the fold of Christ." During the late 1950s, Richards organized LDS "Jewish Missions" in Los Angeles; Salt Lake City; Ogden; San Francisco; Portland, Oregon; New York; and Washington, D.C., some of which produced their own "lesson plans."

Teddy Kollek presenting a token of appreciation to LeGrand Richards, 1979. Mayor Kollek wrote to Elder Richards, who was then president of the Orson Hyde Foundation, in “appreciation for the beautiful park you have helped us add to the ancient face of Jerusalem. The park is a permanent monument to your church’s faith, love and concern for our city” (Teddy Kollek to Mr. LeGrand Richards, November 12, 1979, LDS Church Archives). Elder Richards was also involved in missionary work to the Jews. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.



The First Presidency terminated these missions in 1958, but high-level interest in communicating with Jews continued. For example, in 1976 Ezra Taft Benson delivered a “Message to Judah from Joseph,” in which he indicated that the LDS Church approaches Jews “in a different way than any other Christian church because [Latter-day Saints] represent the restored covenant to the entire house of Israel.”⁴⁹ On the other hand, Bruce R. McConkie, although emphasizing the idea of “believing blood”—“the more of the blood of Israel that an individual has, the easier it is for him to believe the message of salvation” [Jews excepted?]-reiterated that “the conversion of the Jews as a people . . . will not take place until after the Second Coming.”⁵⁰

The dicta of Ezra Taft Benson and Arthur Watkins in the 1950s contained a political undercurrent. The idea that Israel not only fulfilled prophecy, but also figured in the Free World’s containment of Communism became explicit in W. Cleon Skousen’s *Fantastic Victory: Israel’s Rendezvous with Destiny*,⁵¹ which put Israel on the side of the angels and portrayed its Arab opponents as diabolic Soviet agents and clients. A reviewer observed, “The tragedy of this type of analysis lies in its inability to recognize that the Soviet

Union's success in the Middle East during the past decade is primarily due to an American foreign policy based upon this one-sided view of the Arab-Israeli crisis."⁵²

Meanwhile, Heber J. Grant's 1921 expression of Judeophilia was taken up by LDS scholars who were familiar with Jewish contributions to Jewish-Christian dialogue⁵³ and who, for the first time, directed their formulations to Jewish and academic audiences. So they downplayed judgment and Christianization while emphasizing JUDEOPHILIA/partnership/return. For example, Eldin Ricks's article published in the *Herzl Yearbook*⁵⁴ selectively reviewed "material bearing on Zionist themes" in the Book of Mormon (see endnotes 15–20 below), recounted Orson Hyde's mission, then selectively quoted from Sjodahl and other later adherents of the RETURN/delayed conversion formula. Like Ricks, Truman G. Madsen selected Book of Mormon return passages and then discussed Orson Hyde, but he also distanced Mormonism from traditional Christian trinitarianism and drew parallels with Judaism.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, Armand L. Mauss conducted a sociological study of "the unique Mormon doctrine of 'Semitic identification,' which holds that Mormons and Jews literally have the same ethnic origin," and concluded that "Mormons [are] less likely than any other denominations to hold secular anti-Jewish notions."⁵⁶

During the same period, LDS scholars participating in the Church's increased involvement in Africa and Asia echoed Widtsoe by articulating the theme of universalism. For example, in *Mormonism—A Message for All Nations*, Spencer J. Palmer criticized earlier formulations of "a narrow Mormonism," stressed the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God, and asserted that the restored gospel "is not the peculiar property of any one people, any one age, or any one nation" and that "it is a proclamation for every ear that will hear and for every heart that humbly seeks the truth."⁵⁷

Since 1979. The LDS Church's accelerating global expansion, together with the 1978 revelation extending the priesthood to "all worthy male members of the Church . . . without regard for race or color" (OD—2), has put a stronger emphasis on the universalist thread. LDS scholars have expressed considerable interest in this trend,⁵⁸ as have General Authorities. The First Presidency issued a statement in 1978 "that all men and women are brothers



Reaching out. A scene from the Bay Area Jewish Open House, hosted by the Oakland California Stake, November 17–18, 1979, under the motto “Our gift to you.” Pictured are two of the two thousand guests, assisted at the buffet table by Jennifer Hudson and Nina Fraley. Other guests were President Ezra T. Benson; Mordekhai Artzieli, consul general of Israel; and Charles Stiener, executive director, Northwest Region Jewish National Fund. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

and sisters, not only by blood relationship from common mortal progenitors, but also as literal spirit children of an Eternal Father.”⁵⁹ In “All Are Alike unto God,” Howard W. Hunter affirms mankind’s common origin and brotherhood and states, “Our Father does not favor one people over another, but accepts all those of every nation who fear him and work righteousness.”⁶⁰ In “The Uttermost Parts of the Earth,” Spencer W. Kimball similarly expresses the need to preach the gospel in Africa, China, India, and Southeast Asia and behind the Iron Curtain.⁶¹

As applied by some General Authorities to the question of the Jews’ restoration, this recent high-level emphasis on universalism has, in effect, produced a restatement of the Pratt CONVERSION/return formula. For example, in a May 1981 conference address,

Marion G. Romney quoted most of the Book of Mormon's conversion/return passages, which he said "make it perfectly clear that the restoration of the house of Israel to the lands of their inheritance will signal their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their redeemer."⁶²

Perhaps because of this emphasis on conversion, by the time his *Millennial Messiah* was published,⁶³ Bruce R. McConkie had shifted his emphasis from Young's judgment-on-lineage position to Pratt's CONVERSION/return expression. McConkie stipulated that the modern state of Israel "is not the gathering promised by the prophets. It does not fulfill the ancient promises. Those who have thus assembled have not gathered into the true Church." It is rather a "gathering of the unconverted." He repeated this assessment in *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* under the heading "The Myth of the Jewish Gathering": "The present assembling of people of Jewish ancestry into the Palestinian nation of Israel is not the scriptural gathering of Israel or of Judah. It may be a prelude thereto. . . . But a political gathering is not a spiritual gathering." McConkie did, however, reaffirm the literal nature of the gathering within the tribes of Israel framework and the idea of "believing blood."⁶⁴

The universalist emphasis has also spawned among Church members a new discussion of the tribal-blood framework and the status of the Jewish people within it. One trend has sought to broaden the framework—either to include all possibly identifiable Abrahamic peoples or by defining the "scattering" as being so extensive that virtually no one could conceivably be excluded.⁶⁵

Spencer Palmer at first participated in this trend by arguing for possibilities of Asiatic descent from Abraham, but he later offered another solution that relied on Paul (Rom. 2:11, 28–29; Gal. 3:28–29) and on 2 Nephi 26:33—a purer universalism which in effect reduces the tribes of Israel to a metaphor.⁶⁶ Critical observers like Sterling McMurrin, while applauding such intentions, expressed doubt that the LDS Church can transcend its lineage-based theology; movement toward genuine universalism occurs "only if the missionaries are after all the souls that are out there in the wicked world and not just the lost sheep of the House of Israel."⁶⁷

On the other side of the discussion, some have come to the defense of the fundamental role of lineage in the Mormon doctrine

of gathering.⁶⁸ Robert Millet and Joseph McConkie's *Our Destiny: The Call and Election of the House of Israel*⁶⁹ represents an effort to introduce into this discussion Bruce R. McConkie's post-1979 position: the Church now constitutes the blood-based covenant Israel, but membership in the house of Israel is accessible to all through conversion. Without conversion even Jews cannot enjoy Abrahamic blessings [including covenant-related possession of the Holy Land?].

In this recent discussion, positions have emerged along a spectrum, the poles of which might be labeled "universalism" and "literal blood of Israel," with some voices toward one of the purist ends and some in the synthetic middle. Spokespersons for each position have tended to use scriptural and other texts selectively in their efforts to define what are—or ought to be—the "living" elements in Mormon gathering theology. On the one hand, Steven Epperson's *Mormons and Jews: Early Mormon Theologies of Israel*,⁷⁰ by emphasizing Joseph Smith and limiting its coverage to the nineteenth century, functions in certain respects as an objectivist check on subjectivist tendencies, some of which minimize the prominent "Judah-consciousness" of early Mormonism. On the other hand, one of Epperson's main arguments—that Joseph Smith expressed a position of Judeophilia unsullied and unconditioned by such negative traditional Christian features as judgment and conversion—renders Epperson's work, too, open to inquiries into possibilities of selectivity.

Summary and Conclusions

As a review of an LDS textual tradition, this exercise leads to four conclusions. First, three interpretive traditions arose by the 1860s and survived for a century: Hyde's return emphasis (which passed through Wilford Woodruff, J. M. Sjodahl, and Ezra Taft Benson, among others); Pratt's conversion formula (John Nicholson, B. H. Roberts, LeGrand Richards); and Young's stress on judgment (E. H. Lund, Joseph Fielding Smith, Bruce R. McConkie).

Second, some of these traditions, along with variations on them, can be correlated with contemporaneous ideologies or developments: the tendency of the Civil War era to see things in

racial terms, the successes of the Zionist movement, the British conquest of Ottoman Palestine, an American Judeophobic red scare, the creation of the state of Israel, the Cold War, Mormonism's growth to global dimensions, and the 1978 priesthood revelation.

Third, after 1948 there occurred a partial merger of the Hyde and Pratt traditions, and after 1979 the leading earlier spokesman for the Young position endorsed that of Pratt.

Fourth, until the 1970s the discussion, assuming lineage as common ground, centered on the tension between the principles of judgment, conversion, and return. However, after 1979, by which time positions of universalism (John A. Widtsoe, Spencer Palmer, Howard W. Hunter) and Judeophilia (Heber J. Grant, Eldin Ricks, Truman G. Madsen) had reemerged, a further consensus arose on the basis of the Pratt formula, and the discussion shifted to consider the tension between lineage and universalism.

In this regard, surveying an issue's past also serves as a prelude to ongoing discussions. President Romney's 1981 conference address—the most recent pronouncement on this topic from the pulpit of the Tabernacle—may have been intended to settle the question once and for all. But at a nonauthoritative level, position takers are likely to continue taking stands. Most of these persons, despite a few objectivist antiquarians inquiring into the total record for its own sake, can be expected subjectively to cull the many texts for passages that support their efforts to shape the dynamic tradition in the direction they wish to see it go. This observation stems not from cynicism, but from the way a “living theology” functions. What this generation enlivens depends on what it selects to remember—or to forget.

Speaking personally, although it runs counter to my objectivist historical training, I would like to “forget out” nineteenth-century racism from our living theology, but I would like to “remember in” the courageous, outreaching efforts of Joseph Smith and Heber J. Grant, both of whom drew upon a special theological tradition in order to befriend the beleaguered Jews despite prevailing hostility. Someone is likely to ask, however, whether what I deem worth forgetting and worth remembering are related. While those on various sides of that question and others germane to it may subjectively approach the past in regard to their own

positions, as in trial law they will at least function objectively with regard to each other's, which may keep the relentless revision process honestly rooted to some extent.

Arnold H. Green is Professor of History at Brigham Young University.

NOTES

¹Its belief in continuing revelation, along with the general aphorism that living prophets take precedence over dead prophets, in effect endows Mormonism with a mechanism to legitimize revisionism—as exemplified in the 1978 priesthood revelation, which rendered generations of speculation irrelevant. On the role of revelation in the gospel, see Harold B. Lee, “The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer and Revelator” (address to Seminary and Institute of Religion Faculty, Brigham Young University, July 8, 1964); Hugh W. Nibley, “The Expanding Gospel,” *BYU Studies* 7 (Autumn 1965): 3-27; James B. Allen, “Line upon Line,” *Ensign* 9 (July 1979): 32-39; and Thomas G. Alexander, “The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine from Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology,” *Sunstone* 5 (July-August 1980): 24-33.

²See Karen J. Winkler, “How Should Scholars Respond to Assertions That the Holocaust Never Happened?” *Chronicle of Higher Education* 38 (December 11, 1991): A8-10; and B'nai B'rith, *Hitler's Apologists: The Anti-Semitic Propaganda of Holocaust "Revisionism"* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1993).

³See David Boucher, *Texts in Context: Revisionist Methods for Studying the History of Ideas* (Boston: Nijhoff, 1985); John W. Jandora, *March from Medina: A Revisionist Study of the Arab Conquests* (Clifton: Kingston, 1990); Scott Heller, “‘Revisionist’ Art History Portrays Impressionists with New Brush Strokes,” *Chronicle of Higher Education* 38 (April 8, 1992): A8-9; Geoffrey Roberts, “The Fall of Litvinov: A Revisionist View,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 27 (October 1992): 639-57; Gaile McGregor, “Domestic Blitz: A Revisionist History of the Fifties,” *American Studies* 34 (Spring 1993): 5-33; Stephen G. Rabe, “Eisenhower Revisionism: A Decade of Scholarship,” *Diplomatic History* 17 (Winter 1993): 97-115; and Ronald H. Chilcote, “Revisionist Interpretations of the Brazilian Labor Movement,” *Latin American Perspectives* 2 (Winter 1994): 132-43.

⁴In *descriptive*-explanatory historical studies, revisionism is an expected, often praiseworthy, activity easily identified because historians tend to seek credit for their innovations. Reinterpretation also occurs in *prescriptive*-explanatory theology, where recognizing it is more problematic. Because novelty is seldom a religious virtue, innovators tend to package their formulations not as “modern reconsiderations” but as “original meanings,” at times disparaging as later deviations those prior teachings differing from theirs in substance or emphasis and thereby provoking “more-primal-than-thou” contests. Scholars who attempt to trace such contests’ history, particularly if exploring the primary texts’ initial

messages, are often seen as partisan contenders or worse. For example, the nineteenth-century German scholars who pioneered the methods of form and source criticism and applied these to Bible studies—*inter alia* Wilhelm Vatke, Karl Heinrich Graf, and Julius Wellhausen—asserted that the scribes and rabbis up to the time of the Council of Jamnia in the first century after Christ had fundamentally revised the Bible while compiling it and that the new German methods would help retrieve the original documents and their meanings. However, critics of the scholars have accused them of merely imposing modern secular-evolutionist views on the sacred texts. See also Leslie C. Allen, “The Structuring of Ezekiel’s Revisionist History Lesson,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 54 (July 1992): 448–62.

⁵Friedrich Meinecke, “Historicism and Its Problems,” in *The Varieties of History*, ed. Fritz Stern (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 268.

⁶Carl L. Becker, *Everyman His Own Historian: Essays on History and Politics* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1935), 252. Becker derived his idea of “living history” from Croce, who characterized as “dead history” that which is promulgated by institutional authority and that which is undertaken as “a learned exercise.” Benedetto Croce, *History: Its Theory and Practice*, trans. Douglas Ainslie (1st Italian edition, 1916; New York: Russell and Russell, 1960), 19, 32–33. See also Benedetto Croce, “L’attitude subjective et l’attitude objective dans la composition historique,” *Revue de Synthèse Historique* 6 (June 1903): 261–65.

⁷Croce, *History*, 14. Becker stated that “the relevant facts must be clearly established by the testimony of independent witnesses not self-deceived” (Becker, *Everyman*, 243).

⁸Contrasting “Christianity’s relation to life” with “scholarly distance from life” in the 1840s, Kierkegaard suggested that Christians can personalize Abraham’s faith by living faithfully through their own Abrahamic predicaments and can implement Christianity by “upbuilding” fellow beings “the way a physician speaks . . . at the bedside of a sick person.” Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (1st Danish edition, 1843; New York: Viking Penguin, 1985); and Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (1st Danish edition, 1848; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 5. Kierkegaard’s subjectivism was utilized by theologians contemporary with Becker, including Karl Barth, who asserted that “we must think *in* our time *for* our time.” Originally published during 1923 in *Christliche Welt*, this phrase was quoted by H. Martin Rumscheidt, ed., *The Way of Theology in Karl Barth* (Allison Park, Pa.: Pickwick, 1986), vii.

⁹1 Nephi 19:23–24. Compare Spencer J. Condie, “And We Did Liken the Scriptures unto Our Marriage,” *Ensign* 14 (April 1984): 16–20.

¹⁰Neal A. Maxwell, “The Reality of the Living Scriptures,” in *Things as They Really Are* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 83; and Russell M. Nelson, “Truth *and* More,” Annual University Conference, August 27, 1985, Brigham Young University.

¹¹While “liken” and “wrest” can differ in kind, they can also differ merely in degree or perspective—“*I* liken, *you* wrest.”

¹²By “judgment” is meant punishment on earth that is presumed to be divinely inflicted. See Patrick D. Miller Jr., *Sin and Judgment in the Prophets* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982).

¹³Compare 1 Nephi 1:19-20; 2:13; 3:17-18; 10:11; 17:44; 2 Nephi 6:9-11; 10:3-6; 25:2, 9-18; 27:1; Jacob 2:31; 4:14-15; Mosiah 13:27-30; 3 Nephi 10:4-7; 16:9; 17:14; 4 Nephi 1:31; Mormon 3:21; 7:5; and Doctrine and Covenants 45:21-24.

¹⁴See Paul's epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. Then compare Paul's substance, tone, and use of rhetorical devices, for example, to the approaches of John Chrysostom, *Discourses against Judaizing Christians*, trans. Paul Harkins (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1979), 354-407; and Augustine, "Les Juifs et les Donatistes" and "Aveuglement des Juifs," *Oeuvres complètes de Saint Augustin* (Bar-le-Duc: Guérin, 1867), 5:396-430, 531-34, 555-58. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Anti-Semitism," identifies in Matthew and John "the two cardinal themes appearing in Christian anti-Semitism": collective guilt for deicide (Matt. 27:25) and affiliation with evil forces (John 8:44; compare Rev. 2:9; 3:9).

¹⁵Compare 1 Nephi 10:2-3, 12-14; 15:14, 19-20; 22:6, 11-12; 2 Nephi 6:13-14; 9:1-2, 53; 10:7-8, 16-18, 22; 25:11, 17-18; 29:1-6, 14; 30:4; Jacob 5; 6:4; 3 Nephi 16:5; and Ether 13:7-11.

¹⁶"Ye are a light unto this people, who are a remnant of the house of Joseph. . . . Ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold" (3 Ne. 15:12-21; compare D&C 98:17).

¹⁷"I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it" (2 Ne. 29:12; compare 2 Ne. 3:12, 29).

¹⁸"The Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come . . . should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord . . . and that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land" (Eth. 13:3-6; compare 3 Ne. 20:22; 21:23; and D&C 42:9; 45:66; 84:2; 124:36).

¹⁹Compare 1 Nephi 15:19-20; 2 Nephi 6:9-11; 25:11; Mosiah 12:23; 15:30; 3 Nephi 16:19; 20:46; 21:1-4; 9; Mormon 5:14; and Doctrine and Covenants 77:15; 109:62-64. See also Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831-1836* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1994), 44, 65, 106, 108, 121, 133, 135, 159, 184; Grant Underwood, *The Millennial World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

²⁰Compare the Book of Mormon's frontispiece; 1 Nephi 10:12-14; 13:39; 15:14; 19:15-16; 22:11-12; 2 Nephi 6:13-14; 9:2, 23-24; 10:7; 25:16; 26:12; 30:2, 7; 3 Nephi 10:5; 16:4-5, 11-12; Mormon 3:21; Ether 4:15; and Doctrine and Covenants 20:9; 39:11; 77:15; 90:9; 107:33-35; 109:67; 112:4; 133:8.

²¹The issue of timing is related to that of lineage, for Mormons have interpreted Luke 21:24 to mean that, whereas in biblical times the gospel was preached first to the Israelites and then to the Gentiles, in the latter days the order is reversed, so that "when that day shall come, shall a remnant be scattered among all nations; but they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (D&C 45:24-25). See LaMar E. Garrard, "The Last Shall Be First and the First Shall Be Last," in Carlos E. Asay and others, *The Old Testament and the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1986), 233-60.

²²Compare 2 Nephi 30:8.

²³See Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Sefton D. Temkin, *Isaac Meyer Wise: Shaping American Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Mel Scult, *Millennial Expectations and Jewish Liberties:*

A Study of the Efforts to Convert the Jews in Britain, up to the Middle Nineteenth Century (Leiden: Brill, 1978); R. H. Martin, "United Conversionist Activities among the Jews in Great Britain, 1795-1815: Pan-evangelism and the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews," *Church History* 46 (December 1977): 437-52; *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Christian Zionism"; Robert M. Healey, "The Jew in Seventeenth-Century Protestant Thought," *Church History* 46 (March 1977): 63-79; Mayir Vreté, "The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought, 1790-1840," *Middle East Studies* 8 (January 1972): 3-50; George Gordon Noël Byron, *Hebrew Melodies* (London: John Murray, 1815); Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Paris: Didot, 1853); Moses Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem: A Study in Jewish Nationalism*, trans. Meyer Waxman (New York: Bloch, 1918); and Jacob Barnai, *The Jews in Palestine in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Naomi Goldblum (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992).

²⁴"Prayer of Orson Hyde on the Mount of Olives," contained in a letter from Orson Hyde to Orson Pratt, dated Alexandria, Egypt, November 2, 1841; reproduced in Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1908), 4:456-57.

²⁵Wilford Woodruff, *Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to All the Kings of the World, to the President of the United States of America, to the Governors of the Several States, and to the Rulers and People of All Nations* (Liverpool: n.p., 1845) and appended to *Millennial Star* 6 (1845): 3.

²⁶Parley P. Pratt, "Proclamation to the People of the Coasts and Islands of the Pacific (Ocean), of Every Nation, Kindred, and Tongue," *Millennial Star* 14 (September 18, 1852), 468; Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855-86), 7:187; hereafter cited as *JD*.

²⁷"Remarks," December 23, 1866, *JD* 11:279. The principle of subordinating individuals' spiritual opportunities to their lineal descent from remote ancestors under ancient judgment had earlier been applied to blacks. See *JD* 2:179-91; 7:282-91. Brigham Young explained that Jesus will not appear initially in Jerusalem at his Second Coming, but "will appear first on the land where he commenced his work in the beginning," namely America. When he eventually appears in Jerusalem, the Jews will "see the wounds in his hands . . . and then they will acknowledge him, but not till then." *JD* 11:279.

On several occasions, Brigham Young distinguished between the kingdom of God (by which he meant all the people on the earth during the Millennium) and the Church of Jesus Christ or Zion. *JD* 2:316-17; 11:275; 12:274. The kingdom of God will house "every sort of sect and party, and every individual following what he supposes to be the best in religion, and in everything else, similar to what it is now" (*JD* 2:316), including "Infidels" and those who "know nothing of Him from whom all good comes" (*JD* 12:274), so long as they bow the knee to God and Jesus Christ, however reluctantly (*JD* 2:316-17). In that day, all except the sons of perdition will be "gathered into kingdoms where there will be a certain amount of peace and glory." *JD* 12:274. Thus Brigham Young declared that the Presbyterians, the Quakers, and the Jews would remain free to live under the aegis of the kingdom of God, to have their own kingdoms, and to believe as they wished, not being "obliged to belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." *JD* 11:275. He did not mean, however, that they will be Saints or

enjoy celestial happiness and glory. *JD* 12:274. In individual cases, even one who thought of himself as a Jew, did not have “any of the blood of Judah in his veins” if he had become “a good Latter-day Saint.” *JD* 11:279.

²⁸*JD* 2:200; 4:232; 18:199–200; 18:220–21.

²⁹Letters written during the journey by George A. Smith and his traveling companions—Lorenzo Snow, Eliza Snow, and Paul A. Schettler—were compiled and published in George A. Smith and others, *Correspondence of Palestine Tourists* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1875).

³⁰Steven W. Baldrige and Marilyn Rona, *Grafting In: The History of the Latter-day Saints in the Holy Land* (Murray, Utah: Roylance, 1980), 1–4.

³¹Jonathan Frankel and Steven Zipperstein, eds., *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Naomi W. Cohen, *The Jews in Christian America: The Pursuit of Religious Equality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Richard Griffiths, *The Use of Abuse: The Polemics of the Dreyfus Affair and Its Aftermath* (New York: Berg, 1991); Wladimir Kaplun-Kogan, *Die jüdischen Wanderbewegungen in der neuesten Zeit* (Bonn: Marcus and Weber, 1919); Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (1st German edition, 1896; London: Pordes, 1972); Israel Cohen, *Theodor Herzl: Founder of Political Zionism* (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1959); and S. Levenberg, *The Jews and Palestine: A Study in Labour Zionism* (Westport: Hyperion, 1976).

³²*Millennial Star* 50 (June 18, 1888): 385–92; and *Contributor* 14 (April 1893): 298–99.

³³J. M. Tanner, “The Zionist Movement,” *Improvement Era* 3 (November 1899): 1–8; Jan M. Sjordahl, “The Jew, His Past, Present and Future,” *Improvement Era* 7 (March 1904): 350–63; James E. Talmage, “The Tragedy of Israel,” *Improvement Era* 21 (November 1917): 12–15; James E. Talmage, “The Last Dispensation,” *Juvenile Instructor* 53 (February 1918): 76–78; “The Fall of Jerusalem,” *Improvement Era* 21 (January 1918): 259–61; Jan M. Sjordahl, “Concerning Palestine,” *Millennial Star* 80 (March 7, 1918): 152–54; and “Gathering of the Jews,” *Millennial Star* 80 (August 15, 1918): 520–22; James H. Anderson, “Jerusalem Restored,” *Relief Society Magazine* 5 (August 1918): 425–26; “The Return of the Jews,” *Relief Society Magazine* 5 (August 1918): 469–70; and “A People of Promise, the Jews,” *Relief Society Magazine* 5 (August 1918): 471–74.

³⁴E. H. Lund, “The Return of the Jews,” *Improvement Era* 21 (July 1918): 774; and 21 (August 1918): 774–75, 883.

³⁵John Nicholson, “Gathering of the Jews,” *Improvement Era* 5 (June 1902): 632–33; B. H. Roberts, *Conference Reports* (April 1902): 13–16; David O. McKay, *Conference Reports* (October 1918): 44–49.

³⁶Ronald Sanders, *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983); Gisela C. Lebzelter, *Political Anti-Semitism in England, 1918–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1978); David A. Gerber, ed., *Anti-Semitism in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); Jerry Z. Muller, “Communism, Anti-Semitism and the Jews,” *Commentary* 86 (August 1988): 28–39; Daphne Trevor, *Under the White Paper: Some Aspects of British Administration in Palestine from 1939 to 1947* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Press,

1948; reprint, Munich: Kraus, 1980); Hermann Graml, *Antisemitism in the Third Reich*, trans. Tim Kirk (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985); and Robert Jutte, *Die Emigration der deutschsprachigen "Wissenschaft des Judentums": die Auswanderung jüdischer Historiker nach Palästina, 1933-1945* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1991).

³⁷See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956), 3:47-48. Compare Joseph Fielding Smith, "The Negro and the Priesthood," *Improvement Era* 27 (April 1924): 564-65, where the constraint on Blacks is restated while cautioning against speculating about the reasons for it. At the popular level, however, expressions of judgment-on-lineage have sounded more like racism, pure and simple. For example, James H. Anderson, *God's Covenant Race from Patriarchal Times to the Present* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1944), defined "covenant race" partly in terms of "racial purity" (91-92), and Earnest L. Whitehead, *The House of Israel* (Independence: Zion's Printing, 1947), published Robert E. Lee's pedigree back to King David (575-77), and Albert W. Bell, *The Mighty Drama of Israel and the Jew* (Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallace, 1949), asserted:

The fact is, circumcision does not even make a Jew—a Jew. There is something in the blood. Circumcision is merely an index to their faith *in God*. The Jews just can't get away from it. Like the posterity of Cain, the black kinky hair, the dark skin and the breath and other marks count; but the most common expression among us, and the most sacred withal, is "The Blood of Israel." That seems to count most. (169)

³⁸See Grant's dedicatory prayers for the temples in Hawaii, *Improvement Era* 23 (February 1920): 281-88; Cardston, Alberta, *Improvement Era* 26 (October 1923): 1075-81; and Mesa, Arizona, *Liabona* 25 (November 1927): 245-49; Jan M. Sjodahl, "England and the Jews," *Improvement Era* 30 (November 1926): 21-23; and David O. McKay, *Conference Reports* (April 1922): 62-69. Compare H. C. Singer, "The Jewish State in Palestine," *Improvement Era* 32 (January 1929): 202-9.

³⁹B. H. Roberts, *Conference Reports* (April 1927): 34.

⁴⁰B. H. Roberts, *Rasha—the Jew: A Message to All Jews* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1932).

⁴¹Heber J. Grant, *Conference Reports* (April 1921): 124.

⁴²John A. Widtsoe, *In a Sunlit Land: The Autobiography of John A. Widtsoe* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1952), 214-15; and John A. Widtsoe, "Who Are the Children of Abraham?" in *Evidences and Reconciliations* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960), 398-400.

⁴³Melvin J. Ballard, *Conference Reports* (April 1938): 42-46; and Charles A. Callis, *Conference Reports* (October 1945): 80-83.

⁴⁴See Douglas F. Tobler, "The Jews, the Mormons, and the Holocaust," *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Spring 1992): 59-92.

⁴⁵Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 2 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1976, 1987); Hugh Higgins, *The Cold War* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974); Arthur J. Klinghoffer, *Israel and the Soviet Union: Alienation or Reconciliation?* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985); John Rousmaniere, *A Bridge to Dialogue: The Story*

of *Jewish-Christian Relations* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991); and James B. Allen and Richard O. Cowan, *Mormonism in the Twentieth Century*, 2d ed. (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1967).

⁴⁶LeGrand Richards, *Israel! Do You Know?* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954). According to Rose Marie Reid, at her suggestion Richards changed the key word in the title of his book from “Judah” to “Israel.”

⁴⁷Ezra Taft Benson, *Conference Reports* (April 1950): 75; Richards, *Israel Do You Know?* 206–9, 229–33; LeGrand Richards, *The Dawning of Israel's Day* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Extension Publications, 1955); Lynn M. Hilton, *The Jews: A Promised People* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Extension Publications, 1958); and Arthur V. Watkins, “When Applied Christianity Comes to Palestine,” *Instructor* 94 (November 1959): 359. Compare Dale T. Tingey, “Recent Jewish Movements in Israel in Light of the Teaching of the Latter-day Saint Prophets” (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955); Levi Edgar Young, “A Sorrowing People,” *Improvement Era* 60 (June 1957): 409–10; Daniel H. Ludlow, “Israel—Prophecies Being Fulfilled” (devotional address, Brigham Young University, August 8, 1967); and Daniel H. Ludlow, “Prophecy and Modern Israel” (devotional address, Brigham Young University, January 16, 1968). See also Michael T. Benson, “Harry S. Truman as a Modern Cyrus,” *BYU Studies* 34 (1994): 6–27.

⁴⁸LeGrand Richards, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, 1951).

⁴⁹Hilton, *The Jews*, 62; Richards, *Israel Do You Know?* 209. A missionary lesson plan for Jews was published for the Los Angeles Mission by Rose Marie Reid, *Suggested Plan for Teaching the Gospel to the Jewish People* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1958), who also prepared a self-published booklet entitled “Do's and Don't's before Teaching the Jewish People” (1957). Other self-published plans were written about the same time by Farrel Miles and Albert Ostraff (Los Angeles), Bruce Gibb (Ogden), Irving Cohen (New York), and Artel Ricks (Washington, D.C.). A committee of BYU religion professors (Daniel H. Ludlow, Ellis T. Rasmussen, Eldin Ricks, and Sydney B. Sperry) completed another lesson manual in 1960. See Arnold H. Green, “A Survey of Latter-day Saint Proselyting Efforts to the Jewish People” (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1967); Arnold H. Green, “A Survey of LDS Proselyting Efforts to the Jewish People,” *BYU Studies* 8 (Summer 1968): 427–43; and Ezra Taft Benson, “A Message to Judah from Joseph,” *Ensign* 6 (December 1976): 72. Compare “Missionary Discussions for the Jewish People,” *Ensign* 9 (April 1979): 72–73; and Howard H. Barron, *Judah, Past and Future: LDS Teachings Concerning God's Covenant People* (Bountiful: Horizon, 1979). Also noteworthy are an eloquent, honest convert memoir by Herbert Rona, *Peace to a Jew* (New York: n.p., 1952), and a Mormon-boy-converts-and-gets-Jewish-girl novel by Gerald L. Lund, *One in Thine Hand* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982).

⁵⁰Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), 77–78, 359–60. Compare Alvin R. Dyer, “The Redemption of Judah” (devotional address, Brigham Young University, June 13, 1967); Rodney Turner, “The Quest for a Peculiar People,” *Ensign* 2 (May 1972): 6–11. Several other articles in this “Holy Land Issue” of the *Ensign*—especially those by W. Cleon Skousen, Eldin

Ricks, Daniel H. Ludlow, and William E. Berrett—supported the idea of the state of Israel fulfilling scriptural prophecy.

⁵¹W. Cleon Skousen, *Fantastic Victory: Israel's Rendezvous with Destiny* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967).

⁵²James B. Mayfield, "Whose Victory?" *Dialogue* 3 (Autumn 1968): 135-37.

⁵³In addition to concern about Christian accusations of deicide and association with evil (see note 14 above), these included first, objections to Christian portrayals of Judaism as having completed its preparatory function and so being at once superfluous and unable to provide salvation to its adherents, and second, charges that Christian missionary work targeting Jews in effect constitutes "spiritual holocaust."

⁵⁴Eldin Ricks, "Zionism and the Mormon Church," *Herzl Yearbook* 5 (1963): 147-74.

⁵⁵Truman G. Madsen, "The Mormon Attitude toward Zionism" (series of Lectures on Zionism, Haifa University, May 1981). Compare Truman G. Madsen, ed., *Reflections on Mormonism: Judaeo-Christian Parallels* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1978).

⁵⁶Armand L. Mauss, "Mormon Semitism and Anti-Semitism," *Sociological Analysis* 29 (Spring 1968): 11.

⁵⁷Spencer J. Palmer, *Mormonism—a Message for All Nations* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 3, 14.

⁵⁸LaMond Tullis, ed., *Mormonism: A Faith for All Cultures* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978); Spencer J. Palmer, *The Expanding Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978); Garth N. Jones, "Expanding LDS Church Abroad: Old Realities Compounded," *Dialogue* 13 (Spring 1980): 8-22; Candadai Seshachari, "Revelation: The Cohesive Element in International Mormonism," *Dialogue* 13 (Winter 1980): 38-46; and Lee Copeland, "From Calcutta to Kaysville: Is Righteousness Color-Coded?" *Dialogue* 21 (Autumn 1988): 89-99.

⁵⁹"Statement of the First Presidency," February 15, 1978, frontispiece in Palmer, *Expanding Church*.

⁶⁰Howard W. Hunter, "All Are Alike unto God," *Ensign* 9 (June 1979): 72.

⁶¹Spencer W. Kimball, "The Uttermost Parts of the Earth," *Ensign* 9 (July 1979): 2-9. Compare Carlos E. Asay, "God's Love for Mankind," in *Mormons and Muslims*, ed. Spencer J. Palmer (Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1983), 205-15; Rendell N. Mabey and Gordon T. Allred, *Brother to Brother: The Story of the Latter-day Saint Missionaries Who Took the Gospel to Black Africa* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1984); Alexander B. Morrison, "The Dawning of a New Day in Africa," *Ensign* 17 (November 1987), 25-26; and Dallin H. Oaks, "Getting to Know China" (devotional address, Brigham Young University, March 12, 1991).

⁶²Marion G. Romney, "The Restoration of Israel to the Lands of Their Inheritance," *Ensign* 11 (May 1981): 17.

⁶³Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982).

⁶⁴Marion G. Romney, "The Restoration of Israel to the Lands of Their Inheritance," *Ensign* 11 (May 1981): 17; McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, 228-31; and Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), especially chs. 52-65, pp. 503-652, on the tenth Article of Faith.

⁶⁵See James B. Mayfield, "Ishmael, Our Brother," *Ensign* 9 (June 1979): 24-32; and Bruce Van Orden, "The Seed of Abraham in the Latter Days," in Carlos E. Asay and others, *The Old Testament and the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1986), 51-67.

⁶⁶In *Mormonism—a Message for All Nations* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 12, 16, Palmer quoted Matthew Cowley and Joseph Fielding Smith to the effect that "the Lord has scattered Israel throughout the world, even to the farthest reaches of Asia." Five years later, he published "Did Christ Visit Japan?" *BYU Studies* 10 (Winter 1970): 135-58. Yet *The Expanding Church* in effect ignores the tribes of Israel framework, declaring that "latter-day Israel is not a community of blood; it is a community of faith" (28). Compare Denny Roy, "Spencer Palmer: A Man of the World," *This People* 7 (May 1986): 46-53.

⁶⁷Sterling M. McMurrin, "Problems in Universalizing Mormonism," *Sunstone* 4 (December 1979): 9-17; and Truman G. Madsen, "A Response," *Sunstone* 4 (December 1979): 18-20.

⁶⁸For example, see Daniel H. Ludlow, "Of the House of Israel," *Ensign* 21 (January 1991): 51-55.

⁶⁹Robert L. Millet and Joseph F. McConkie, *Our Destiny: The Call and Election of the House of Israel* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1993), reviewed by Steven Epperson, above.

⁷⁰Steven Epperson, *Mormons and Jews: Early Mormon Theologies of Israel* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), reviewed by Grant Underwood, above.

Editor's Preface

Two Reviews: Mormonism and the Hermetic World View

John Brooke's *The Refiner's Fire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) will likely evoke strong emotions among Latter-day Saints. Brooke's genuine curiosity has presented the strongest case yet for seeing Mormonism as a radically mystical, hermetic, and alchemical movement, but the case is still not very compelling. The first two book reviews that follow find Brooke's evidence unpersuasive. The review by William Hamblin, Daniel Peterson, and George Mitton exposes factual errors and logical fallacies found in this book—the normal task of any careful reviewer. Davis Bitton's reactions should be understood as sincere responses from a dismayed reader. Hopefully, these reviews will communicate to non-Mormon readers how this book sounds to Latter-day Saints.

Many readers and scholars outside the Latter-day Saint tradition have had a markedly different response to Brooke. As we were going to press, *The Refiner's Fire* won this year's Bancroft award in history (vindicating Bitton's prediction, page 182 below). Like Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* fifty years ago, Brooke's book may well become one of the dominant external icons about Mormonism for the next few years. Juggernauts like this are not easily forgotten.

However, people who accept Brooke's particular explanation need to reflect on its shortcomings. As has recently been observed regarding a similar use of terms such as Neoplatonism, Humanism, and Hermeticism in Yatesian historiography, each of these terms has been given "an explanatory function far beyond what it can deliver. 'Hermeticism' is a notoriously slippery concept. . . . It still remains to show that Hermeticism ever functioned as an important, independent worldview" (William H. Sherman, *John Dee*:

The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995], 20, commenting on the works of Frances Yates on the Hermetic tradition and occult philosophy in the Elizabethan age). Imagine what would happen if a writer tried to argue that the U.S. Constitution is best viewed as hermetic and alchemical. Seemingly a strong case could be made, as Bitton suggests somewhat tongue in cheek (page 185 below). Presumably, historians would react as negatively to such problematical methodology should it be applied to U.S. history as they did when Fawn Brodie turned her psychological methods from Joseph Smith to Thomas Jefferson (see Louis Midgley, "The Brodie Connection: Thomas Jefferson and Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies* 20 [Fall 1979]: 59-67). The picture of the salamander (303) shows how long a largely irrelevant image can remain prevalent in the mind of the jury of history. But then, as Brooke states, "authenticity may not matter for some" (301).

In 1930, Reed Smoot confidently stated: "The cry for 'Mormon' sensation is now happily a thing of the past. The world is recognising [*sic*] that 'Mormonism,' instead of being a debasing system, has much to teach this perplexed and harassed age" (in the foreword to Susa Young Gates, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* [New York: Macmillan, 1930], vii). Unfortunately, Brooke's book shows that Smoot was overly optimistic about the world's understanding of LDS revelation, doctrine, and religious experience.

—John W. Welch