



1-1-2008

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Recommended Citation

Van-Dyke, Blair G. and Berrett, LaMar C. (2008) "In the Footsteps of Orson Hyde: Subsequent Dedications of the Holy Land," *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 47 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol47/iss1/3>

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In the Footsteps of Orson Hyde

Subsequent Dedications of the Holy Land

Blair G. Van Dyke and LaMar C. Berrett[†]

Standing atop the Mount of Olives just prior to sunrise is a singular experience. Often there is a stillness about the spot that evokes deep thought and contemplation. Eyes are drawn across the brook-carved valley toward the Holy Mount where the temple stood in antiquity. Reflecting upon sacred events that unfolded in the Holy City is the natural result of standing on the Mount of Olives, particularly certain events in the life of Jesus and the ministries of Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Isaiah, Lehi, Jeremiah, Peter, and Paul. And as a result of Orson Hyde's ascent up the Mount to dedicate Palestine, Latter-day Saints include him in this select group. On October 24, 1841, he dedicated the Holy Land for the return of Judah and the House of Israel generally.¹

As important as Orson Hyde's dedicatory mission was, it was not the last time the Holy Land was dedicated in this manner. Historical records indicate that the Holy Land has been formally dedicated for the return of Judah and the house of Israel in at least ten other dedicatory prayers in this dispensation.² In the scriptures, repetition connotes importance.

1. Orson Hyde's prayer can be found in Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d. ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1949), 4:456–59 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*). This article is an expansion of information found in Lamar C. Berrett and Blair G. Van Dyke, *Holy Lands: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Near East* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant, 2005).

2. It is important to note that numerous prayers have been offered in the Holy Land by latter-day apostles and prophets that, while sacred and significant, did not employ the language and wording typically found in dedicatory prayers. For the purpose of this article, a formal dedication would include explicit dedicatory

Blair G. Van Dyke and LaMar C. Berrett

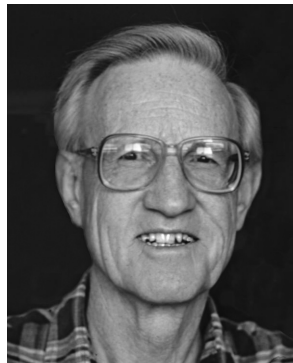
I met LaMar Berrett at a McDonald's restaurant in Evanston, Wyoming, in the spring of 1997. He was guiding a group of religious educators (of which I was a part) on a tour of the final one hundred miles of the Mormon Trail. Our conversation over Egg McMuffins quickly turned to the love we shared for the peoples and places of the Near East. I had just concluded my doctoral studies among the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which I pursued after participating as a student at the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. LaMar had recently retired from BYU after twenty-nine years of teaching in the College of Religious Education. During that time he had traveled to the Near East over fifty times.

Our acquaintance developed into friendship, and LaMar proposed that we collaborate to write a history of the Church in the Near East. We worked together constantly over eight years until *Holy Lands: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Near East* was published in 2005. Our ongoing research of the dedicatory prayers offered in the Holy Land resulted in this article. We worked together until LaMar passed away on August 25, 2007. I have always felt, and LaMar shared the same feeling, that our meeting in Evanston was not happenstance. Rather, it was orchestrated to bless our lives and perhaps shed additional light on the history of the Church in the Near East.

LaMar Berrett was a pioneer in Latter-day Saint religious education in at least four ways. First, he was selected by Daniel H. Ludlow to direct the second Lands of the Scriptures Workshop (the first was led by Ludlow himself). The program was designed to take religious



Blair G. Van Dyke



LaMar C. Berrett

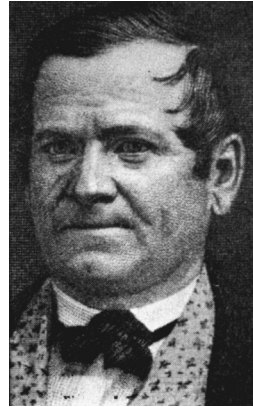
educators to the Holy Land and other sites of biblical import. Second, his research and preparation for these initial workshops resulted in his landmark book *Discovering the World of the Bible*, which has served as a traveler's guide to the Near East since its publication in 1973. Third, he led the second BYU Study Abroad group to Israel. They enjoyed nationwide television coverage, being the first tourists to cross the Allenby Bridge from Jordan into Israel following the 1967 Six Days War. LaMar moved the students into the City Hotel just north of the Old City. This became the first permanent home for BYU Study Abroad students in Jerusalem. Fourth, he was the general editor of *Sacred Places* (6 volumes). This series stands as the definitive work on Church historical sites from New England to Salt Lake City.

In some ways it is hard to believe that "In the Footsteps of Orson Hyde" will be the last in a long list of publications authored or coauthored by LaMar C. Berrett. I saw in his pursuit of research a perpetual "hubba hubba" that would not soon be extinguished. ("Hubba hubba" is a phrase familiar to any of the thousands of people who traveled with LaMar as their tour guide. It meant, "Hustle up! We have more to see and learn!") I was convinced he would live to be a hundred years old. Unfortunately, Parkinson's disease and related complications took him much earlier. My last conversation with LaMar took place just hours before he passed away. I was able to explain to him that this article had been accepted for publication. He could not respond, but I know he was pleased.

When compared to LaMar Berrett, I am not a pioneer. However, I love the peoples and cultures of the Near East and have committed much of my life to learning, writing, and teaching about this fascinating part of the world. I have lost count of how many times I have traveled to the Holy Land. Even so, Jerusalem, Haifa, Gaza City, Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Aleppo, and so many other places in the region capture my imagination over and over again. The Church's involvement in the Near East, from Orson Hyde to the present, has been an ongoing series of miracles associated with the latter-day restoration. I feel a deep respect for the pioneers of the Church who sacrificed so much to build the kingdom in this important part of the Lord's vineyard.

—Blair G. Van Dyke

The doctrines and principles that receive repeated treatment from the prophets are, by their very nature, consequential. Given this pattern, the spiritual conversion and subsequent physical gathering of Israel to Jerusalem and the building up of the city in the last days must be of great import: eleven separate apostolic dedications of the land have taken place since the restoration of the gospel. These repeated dedications indicate that what the Lord said about the land and its people anciently is still binding in the last days. It is “a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year” (Deut. 11:12)



Orson Hyde

The purpose of this article is not only to review the dedicatory mission and prayer of Orson Hyde and compare his experience with subsequent dedications of the Holy Land but also to explore the intended purposes of the various dedications. In order to understand the differences between the eleven dedicatory prayers, it is essential to appreciate the spiritual, sociocultural, and political settings in which the different prayers were offered. This analysis may partially explain why multiple prayers were offered by one, or as was the case in 1873, three Apostles in close succession. Ultimately, we must bear in mind that no other place on earth has been dedicated as many times as the Holy Land. This article will provide a historical framework and analysis from which we may more carefully consider this singular and, in large measure, little-known series of events in Church history.

Orson Hyde’s Dedication and the Promised Blessings of Gathering

After an arduous journey from Nauvoo, Hyde arrived in Jerusalem in October 1841. On Sunday morning, October 24, before the sun rose, he walked out of the walled Old City and ascended the Mount of Olives. There Hyde knelt in solemn prayer and dedicated the Holy Land for the return of Judah. As part of his prayer he pled that the land might become fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs and that Jews would soften their hearts and gather as a people, accept the covenants of the restored gospel,

language and the presence and approval of at least one member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles or First Presidency.

become a distinct nation and people, raise up Jerusalem as their capital, and embrace Christ as their king.³

Hyde's prayer was a call to gather. Who is included in that call? To many, the word "Jew" connotes a descendant of the ancient tribe of Judah within the House of Israel. This certainly was the way Joseph Smith and Orson Hyde used the word during the Nauvoo period when Hyde was called to travel to Palestine. In their minds, Hyde's mission to Palestine was focused on the Jews—meaning Judah.⁴

However, given the way many subsequent leaders of the Church have interpreted Hyde's prayer, the Lord likely had more in mind. The language contained in Hyde's dedicatory prayer was sufficiently broad in its wording to accommodate more inclusive interpretations regarding the promised blessing to gather to the Holy Land.⁵ For example, Hyde prayed:

O thou, who did'st covenant with Abraham thy friend, and who did renew that covenant with Isaac, and confirm the same with Jacob with an oath, that thou would'st also remember their seed forever. . . . Their children are scattered and dispersed abroad among the nations of the

3. Orson Hyde, *A Voice from Jerusalem, or a Sketch of the Travels and Ministry of Orson Hyde, Missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to Germany, Constantinople, and Jerusalem* (Liverpool: Parley P. Pratt, Star Office, n.d.), 29–32. See also Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 13–27; Marvin Sidney Hill, "An Historical Study of the Life of Orson Hyde, 1805–1852" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955); Howard H. Barron, *Orson Hyde: Missionary, Apostle, Colonizer* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1977), 113–41.

4. Richard D. Draper and Jessica E. Draper, "The Gathering of the Jews as Understood in the Nauvoo Period," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History: Illinois*, ed. H. Dean Garrett (Provo, Utah: Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1995), 141.

5. Latter-day Saint perspectives on the Jews and Israel are varied and have shifted from Joseph Smith's time to the present day. While a discussion of this subject goes beyond the scope of this piece, the fact remains that several views exist. This variance creates, according to John W. Welch, an "unsettled openness" on the subject, which may also "positively reflect the richness of a living religion." John W. Welch, "Three Views on Latter-day Saints and the Jews," in *BYU Studies* 34, no. 4 (1994–95): 110. While we have employed a universalistic interpretation to Hyde's prayer, we urge careful exploration of the spectrum of teaching and writing on the subject. See, for instance, Howard W. Hunter, "All Are Alike unto God," in *1979 Devotional Speeches of the Year* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), 35–36; Arnold H. Green, "Gathering and Election: Israelite Descent and Universalism in Mormon Discourse," *Journal of Mormon History* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 195–228; Grant Underwood, "The Jews and Their Future in Early LDS Doctrine," *BYU Studies* 34, no. 4 (1994–95): 111–24; Arnold H. Green, "Jews in LDS Thought," *BYU Studies* 34, no. 4 (1994–95): 137–64; Armand L. Mauss, *All Abraham's Children* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

Gentiles like sheep that have no shepherd, and are still looking forward for the fulfillment of those promises which thou did'st make concerning them; and even this land. . . . Let the land become abundantly fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs . . . Let them know that it is thy good pleasure to restore the kingdom unto Israel—raise up Jerusalem as its capital . . . Let that nation or that people who shall take an active part in behalf of Abraham's children, and in the raising up of Jerusalem, find favor in thy sight.⁶

Over time, many Church leaders have employed a pan-Israelite interpretation of Orson Hyde's prayer, particularly President Spencer W. Kimball when he dedicated the Orson Hyde Memorial on the Mount of Olives.⁷

The Significance of Dedicatory Prayers to Latter-day Saints

To dedicate means to set apart for a holy purpose. Dedicatory prayers invoke the power of heaven upon the land or building being dedicated to more completely facilitate the accomplishment of God's designs. They also consecrate the hearts and minds of people associated with the furtherance of God's work there. The most ancient account in scripture of a dedicatory prayer is Solomon's prayer dedicating the Holy Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs. 8). Similarly, Latter-day Saints dedicate church buildings such as temples, meetinghouses, schools, and visitors' centers. They may also dedicate their homes. Furthermore, continents, regions, and countries are also dedicated under the direction of latter-day apostles and prophets.

So far as we know, Palestine was the first land to be rededicated in the history of the Church. However, Italy, Russia, China, Czechoslovakia, and the Philippines, to name a few, have also been rededicated by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.⁸ As a general rule, dedicatory

6. Hyde, *Sketch*, 29–30; *History of the Church*, 4:456–57.

7. See, for example, Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 348–50; Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 429–30; Russell M. Nelson, "The Gathering of Scattered Israel," *Ensign* 36 (November 2006): 82 n. 28.

8. Italy was dedicated by Lorenzo Snow on October 29, 1850, and rededicated by Ezra Taft Benson in November 1966. Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan, *Unto Every Nation* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 34, 106. Russia was dedicated on July 24, 1903, by Francis M. Lyman and rededicated by Russell M. Nelson on April 26, 1990. Kahlile B. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 29, 184. China was dedicated by David O. McKay on January 9, 1921, and rededicated by Matthew Cowley on July 14, 1949. Cannon and Cowan, *Unto Every Nation*, 312, 348. Czechoslovakia was dedicated by John A. Widtsoe on July 24, 1929, and rededicated by Russell M. Nelson on February 6, 1990. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern*

prayers, like other priesthood blessings, are pronounced at the outset of significant work to be done in the Lord's kingdom—it is part of an ongoing work. Multiple dedicatory prayers do not suggest that previous prayers were not efficacious. Rather, they suggest that a new era of growth has begun, that a change in political circumstances has occurred, or that the servants called to accomplish the work require added strength in order to fulfill their duties.⁹

So it is with dedicatory prayers in the Holy Land. One does not lessen another. Quite the opposite, each prayer builds upon the former, creating even greater anticipation for the fulfillment of the promises decreed in the collective whole.¹⁰ In Palestine, ten subsequent dedicatory prayers were offered over a sixty-year period of time (1873–1933). In every case, the presiding authorities of the Church assigned particular Apostles to travel to the region. In some instances, such as the 1873 prayers, a specific assignment was given to dedicate the Holy Land. In most cases, however, Apostles traveled to the region to establish a Church presence—or to tour, regulate, and revitalize the established mission of the Church in the region (known by one of three names over several decades: the Turkish,

Europe, 48–49, 187. The Philippines were dedicated in 1955 by Joseph Fielding Smith and rededicated by Gordon B. Hinckley on April 28, 1961. Cannon and Cowan, *Unto Every Nation*, 327, 360.

9. A precedent for this principle may be found in dedicatory prayers offered in the Nauvoo Temple. On November 8, 1841, Joseph Smith dedicated the temporary wooden baptismal font located in the basement of the temple to ensure that work for the dead could begin in the temple at the earliest possible moment. Richard O. Cowan, *Temples to Dot the Earth* (Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 1997), 51. On October 5, 1845, the temple was nearing completion, with all work on the exterior finished. Brigham Young offered a dedicatory prayer on the building “thus far completed,” enabling the Saints to hold a general conference in the temple. On November 30, 1845, Brigham Young offered a dedicatory prayer on the newly completed attic story of the temple. Thereafter, this section of the temple was used for council meetings and for performing endowment ordinances, eternal marriages, and sealings. On January 7, 1846, a new altar located in the main attic portion of the temple was dedicated where eternal marriages were performed and families were sealed together. Brigham Young dedicated the entire, yet incomplete, temple prior to the departure of most Latter-day Saints to the West. The finished temple was dedicated by Elder Joseph Young in a private dedicatory service on April 30, 1846. The next day (May 1), Orson Hyde offered the public dedicatory prayer over the Nauvoo Temple. Don F. Colvin, *Nauvoo Temple: A Story of Faith* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2002), 245–51.

10. This principle occasionally applies to priesthood blessings given to the sick and afflicted. A compelling example may be found in two blessings the Savior pronounced upon a blind man who was healed in stages (Mark 8:22–25).

Armenian, or Palestine-Syrian Mission) and visit Saints who were members of small branches already in existence in the Near East. Then, while in Palestine, they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost to dedicate the Holy Land by offering—or in one instance, overseeing—a dedicatory prayer. For Latter-day Saints, these prayers indicate that many important events have occurred and will yet take place in that part of the world.

The Rededications: Possible Intended Purposes and Content of Prayers

The Holy Land has commanded a prominent place in Latter-day Saint perspective that began with Joseph Smith and continues today. Although the Holy Land is one of the most visible places of interest to Latter-day Saints, the ten dedicatory prayers that have been offered since Orson Hyde are little known. Furthermore, while some are familiar with the multiple dedications of Palestine by Latter-day Apostles, an analysis of each prayer in light of the others is, heretofore, unavailable.

A one-to-one comparison and contrast of the ten subsequent dedicatory prayers is not possible because we do not have the full text of any of these prayers, unlike Orson Hyde's dedication. Figure 1 represents much of the information that we do possess. The categories emanate from our analysis of the available accounts of the ten different prayers and capture main points of emphasis when the prayers are considered collectively. While these prayers have many aspects in common, there are also many differences. What accounts for these differences? We believe that some

FIG. 1
Main Themes in the Dedications of the Holy Land

	Date of Prayer	Bless/ Dedicate Land	Israel/Jews Gather	Welfare of Church	Missionaries	Prophecies Fulfilled	Confound Enemies	Soften Hearts	Rebuild Jerusalem
O. Hyde	10/24/1841	×	×	×		×	×	×	×
A. Carrington	3/2/1873	×							
L. Snow	3/2/1873	×							
G. A. Smith	3/2/1873	×	×	×		×	×		×
A. Lund/ F. Hintze	5/8/1898	×	×						
F. Lyman	3/2/1902	×	×						
F. Lyman	3/4/1902	×	×	×	×	×			×
F. Lyman	3/16/1902	×	×	×				×	
J. Talmage	10/18/1927	×	×	×	×				
J. Widtsoe	5/21/1933	×		×	×	×	×	×	
J. Widtsoe	5/31/1933	×	×		×	×	×	×	

of the differences between the prayers are due to the historical context and the intended purposes behind the five separate journeys to Palestine wherein dedicatory prayers were offered subsequent to Orson Hyde's dedicatory mission (1873, 1898, 1902, 1927, 1933). We will therefore review briefly the historical accounts of the five journeys and assess how circumstances may have determined, in part, the content of the different dedicatory prayers. In some cases, this analysis may provide clues as to why multiple dedicatory prayers were offered by the same Apostle within a very short period of time.

1873: Second, Third, and Fourth Dedicatory Prayers

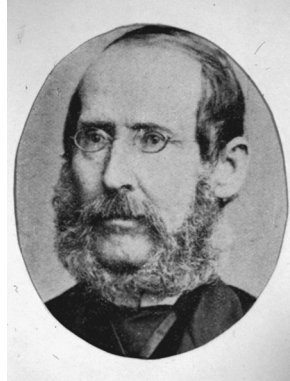
In 1872, the Saints were well established in the Salt Lake Valley, but Brigham Young continued to encourage new settlements throughout the Great Basin of the American West. Young was in the last five years of his life and he was not always in good health. Nevertheless, he pursued and directed several projects of major importance. For example, the trans-continental railroad had been completed in 1869, and Young made every effort to connect key Mormon settlements to Salt Lake City by rail. Also, the St. George Temple was under construction. It would become the first Latter-day Saint temple in the West, and Brigham Young felt a keen desire to see the building completed before his death. Finally, Young instituted a cooperative economic system known as the United Order.

In the midst of these and other significant undertakings, Brigham Young assigned his First Counselor, George A. Smith, to travel to Palestine and dedicate that land to the Lord. Young instructed Smith not to go alone but to select a company with whom he could make the journey. He selected Apostle Lorenzo Snow (founder of Brigham City and architect of the United Order model that was being implemented throughout the Church), Apostle Albert Carrington (president of the European Mission),¹¹ Eliza R. Snow (Lorenzo's sister, general president of the Relief Society, and

11. Albert Carrington was a graduate of Dartmouth College and was also trained in the law. His educational background led to his appointment as editor of the *Deseret News* and multiple terms of service in the Utah Legislative Council. Carrington presided four times over the European Mission. It was shortly after his first stint as a mission president that he was called as an Apostle by President Brigham Young on July 3, 1870. During his second term of service as mission president in Europe, he joined the company traveling to Palestine. At the time he was in Liverpool, England. Lawrence R. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles of the Last Dispensation* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2001), 293–94.



George A. Smith



Albert Carrington



Feramorz Little



Clara Little (1873)



Thomas Jennings



Paul Schettler



Lorenzo Snow



Eliza R. Snow

key figure in the implementation of the United Order),¹² Feramorz Little,¹³ Clara Little,¹⁴ Paul Schettler,¹⁵ and Thomas Jennings.¹⁶

The day the party left Salt Lake City, President Young presented Smith with the following letter signed by himself and his Second Counselor, Daniel H. Wells:

Salt Lake City, U. T.
October 15, 1872
President George A. Smith:

Dear Bro:—

As you are about to start on an extensive tour through Europe and Asia Minor, where you will doubtless be brought in contact with men of position and influence in society, we desire that you observe closely what openings now exist, or where they may be effected, for the introduction of the Gospel into the various countries you shall visit.

12. Eliza R. Snow was called to preside over the Relief Society when it was reestablished in the West in 1866. A leader of women, teacher, and poetess, Eliza R. Snow was likely the most prominent woman of nineteenth-century Mormonism. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, ed., *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2000). See also Jill Mulvey Derr and Karen Lynn Davidson, “A Wary Heart Becomes ‘Fixed Unalterably’: Eliza R. Snow’s Conversion to Mormonism,” *Journal of Mormon History* 30, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 98–128.

13. Feramorz Little was a nephew of Brigham Young and was a prolific business founder and manager, involved in, among other enterprises, saw mills, a hotel, the railroad, merchandising, and banking. After returning from Palestine, Little was elected mayor of Salt Lake City, serving three terms. Andrew Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History, 1901–36, 2:485–86.

14. Clara Little was the daughter of Feramorz and accompanied her father on the journey primarily to serve as the traveling companion of Eliza R. Snow. Clara was about twelve years old in 1873.

15. George A. Smith explained a major purpose of Schettler’s participation in the dedicatory party: “Elder Paul A. Schettler speaks six languages, and in attending to the financial business of the party, he had to make exchanges and was compelled to keep accounts in the currency of a dozen different nations, and even among the Arabs he could generally find some one who could speak in some one of the languages with which he was acquainted.” George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 16:101.

16. Thomas W. Jennings was the son of William Jennings, a wealthy businessman in Salt Lake City. With such a father, Jennings could afford to join the dedication party of 1872–73 and likely helped finance the dedicatory mission. Andrew Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 2:500–505. See also Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: The History Company, 1890), 764–65.

When you go to the land of Palestine, we wish you to dedicate and consecrate that land to the Lord, that it may be blessed with the fruitfulness preparatory to the return of the Jews in fulfillment of prophecy and the accomplishment of the purposes of our Heavenly Father.

We pray that you may be preserved to travel in peace and safety that you may be abundantly blessed with words of wisdom & free utterance in all your conversations pertaining to the Holy Gospel, dispelling prejudice and sowing seeds of righteousness among the people.

Brigham Young
Daniel H. Wells¹⁷

The only way that more import could have been placed upon the mission was if Brigham Young himself had journeyed to Palestine to rededicate the land.¹⁸ As it turned out, the Holy Land was dedicated by all three Apostles: Smith, Snow, and Carrington. It would have been difficult to assemble a more prominent and committed group of Saints than these.

The company landed at Jaffa, Palestine, on February 22, 1873. Two days later they arrived at Jerusalem and established a camp “on the northwest side of the city, within a few minutes walk of Jaffa gate.”¹⁹ The sprawling Ottoman Empire, of which Palestine was a part, was in serious decline at this time. For centuries, the empire had been an Islamic state that tolerated people of other faiths within her domain but perceived them to be infidels

17. George A. Smith Papers, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as Church History Library). See also Brigham Young, Papers, Brigham Young Letterpress Copybooks, 13:229, Church History Library; Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1884), 496–97; B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1930) 5:474–75; *Correspondence of Palestine Tourists* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Steam Printing Establishment, 1875), 1–2 (hereafter cited as *Tourists*). *Tourists* was compiled by Eliza R. Snow and contains letters written by George A. Smith, Lorenzo Snow, Paul A. Schettler, and Eliza R. Snow as they traveled through America, Europe, Asia, and Africa in the years 1872 and 1873.

18. The welfare of the Jews had been on the mind of Brigham Young for decades. Under his leadership, a proclamation of the Twelve Apostles addressed to kings, presidents, governors, and the people of all nations was published on April 6, 1845, in New York City. In the document, a great work was described that had yet to be accomplished. Among other aspects of this work were efforts to restore, organize, instruct, and establish the Jews in concert with building Jerusalem in Palestine.

19. Paul A. Schettler, “At Jerusalem,” *The Salt Lake Daily Herald*, April 13, 1873, 2. See also *Tourists*, 209.

and treated them as separate and unequal citizens.²⁰ Ultimate authority in the empire was held by Sultan Abdülaziz, who spurned Western thought and was a champion of Islamic ideals. There were hostile feelings from the Sultan toward many ideas and technologies from the Christian West. However, it was perceived by many (especially the young cadre of Ottoman leaders and thinkers of the day) that the backwardness of the Ottoman Empire was due largely to the scorning of Western civilization. These “Young Ottomans,” as they would come to be known, instituted a long-term movement toward maintaining the Islamic identity of the Ottoman Empire while embracing the philosophies and technologies that had made the West prosperous. In many instances these activists were banished from the empire but continued their efforts from places like London, Paris, and Geneva. Simply, the Ottoman Empire was crumbling, and the Young Ottomans were prepared to take their Islamic convictions and meld them into a new Westernized and, from their perspective, civilized nation. These deep social, religious, and political schisms only compounded the conditions of economic and cultural stress that prevailed in the empire as the Latter-day Saint contingent arrived in Jerusalem.²¹

Sunday morning, March 2, 1873, was cool and breezy in the Holy City. The Latter-day Saints, excepting Clara Little, who remained in camp, traveled by horseback to the Mount of Olives. Their guide brought with him a tent, table, chairs, and a carpet. The tent was pitched and at 10:00 AM the dedicatory meeting began. Elder Carrington offered a prayer wherein he dedicated “the ground, the tent, and the land of Israel generally.”²² After this prayer, Carrington and Jennings stood outside the tent to keep watch

20. The Catholic Church (including Armenian, Orthodox, and Roman branches) was part of the fabric of nineteenth-century Jerusalem. Several kinds of Protestantism emerged in the Near East during this century as well. Protestant missionaries entered the region with the general intent to shore up the existing Christian presence. Of these missionary labors, Latourette writes, “While in the nineteenth century Roman Catholic and Protestant missions multiplied . . . in the Near East, they won very few except from the existing Christian bodies. Now and then a Jew was converted and occasionally a Moslem. However, Moslem law and custom made accessions from Islam almost impossible.” Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, vol. 2, *Reformation to the Present* (Peabody, Mass.: Prince Press, 2003), 1210. See also James A. Toronto, “Early Missions to Ottoman Turkey, Syria, and Palestine,” in *Out of Obscurity: The LDS Church in the Twentieth Century* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 340.

21. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 40–128. See also Jason Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* (New York City: Owl Books, 1998), 289–321.

22. George A. Smith, Journal, March 2, 1873, Church History Library.



Looking northeast atop the Mount of Olives. In the foreground is the Church of Ascension, a mosque since AD 1187, with the Russian Tower of Ascension in the background. A tent was pitched about one hundred feet northeast of the mosque wherein dedicatory prayers were offered by George A. Smith, Lorenzo Snow, and Albert Carrington. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

since they had not brought their temple clothing with them.²³ The remaining members of the party then “engaged in divine worship” in the order of the Holy Priesthood on the mount.²⁴ The next prayer was offered by Elder Lorenzo Snow wherein “the same dedicatory sentiments were contained” according to President Smith.²⁵ Following the dedicatory prayer of Elder Snow, President George A. Smith offered another prayer. From his own journal we learn that he prayed “remembering the general interests of Zion, and dedicating this land, praying that it might become fertile, and

23. Albert Carrington, Journals, March 2, 1873, Church History Library. See also Zora Smith Jarvis, *Ancestry, Biography and Family of George A. Smith*, (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1962), 252.

24. “President George A. Smith’s Party,” *Millennial Star* 35 (April 1, 1873): 201. See also Eliza R. Snow, in *Tourists*, 260. We presume that engagement “in divine worship” on the Mount of Olives while dressed in temple clothing is a direct reference to a prayer circle. This order of prayer was instituted by Joseph Smith perhaps as early as 1842. From that time until May 3, 1978 (when Church leaders determined that this form of worship should be limited exclusively to the temple), prayer circles were commonly convened outside temples in meeting-houses and in homes under the direction of local and general leaders. D. Michael Quinn, “Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles,” *BYU Studies* 19, no. 1 (1978): 79–105. At the time of this dedicatory mission, there was of course no operating temple on earth. Indeed, by this time, an entire generation of Latter-day Saints had grown up without a temple.

25. George A. Smith, Journal, March 2, 1873.

the early and latter rains descend upon it, and the prophecies and promises unto Abraham and the prophets be fulfilled here in the own due time of the Lord.”²⁶ Eliza R. Snow recalls his dedicatory prayer as follows:

President Smith leading in humble, fervent supplication, dedicating the land of Palestine for the gathering of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and returning heartfelt thanks and gratitude to God for the fulness of the gospel and the blessings bestowed on the Latter-day Saints. . . . To me it seemed the crowning point of the whole tour, realizing as I did that we were worshiping on the summit of the sacred Mount, once the frequent resort of the Prince of Life.²⁷

Other accounts of the dedication mention the promise that the land would be redeemed from its sterility and that its historic fruitfulness would abound.²⁸ Additionally, Smith prophesied that Jerusalem would be rebuilt as a result of a hastened gathering of the tribes of Israel in the last days.²⁹

Following the dedicatory prayers, Lorenzo Snow prayed again. Then George A. Smith offered a benediction at 10:34 AM, and “all engaged felt greatly blessed of the Lord.”³⁰

26. George A. Smith, Journal, March 2, 1873. Following his return from Palestine to Salt Lake City, Smith spoke at the Tabernacle on June 22, 1873, and provided an account of his travels and his dedicatory prayer. He explained: “When on the Mount of Olives, with our faces bowed toward Jerusalem, we lifted our prayers to God that he would preserve [the Latter-day Saints] and confound [their] enemies. We felt in our hearts that Zion was onward and upward, and that no power could stay her progress; that the day was not far distant when Israel would gather, and those lands would begin to teem with a people who would worship God and keep his commandments; that plenty and the blessings of eternity would be poured out bounteously upon that desert land, and that all the prophecies concerning the restoration of the house of Israel would be fulfilled.” *Journal of Discourses*, 16:102.

Furthermore, we learn from Smith’s journal that part of the service on the Mount of Olives included the reading of the last two verses of Matthew 23 and the last two verses of Matthew 24. They also read the letter from Brigham Young and counselor Daniel H. Wells, dated October 15, 1872, directing them to dedicate Palestine (full text of this letter is included earlier in this article).

27. Eliza R. Snow, in *Tourists*, 260.

28. “President George A. Smith’s Party,” 201.

29. “George A. Smith,” *Contributor* 4 (May 1883): 312.

30. “President George A. Smith’s Party,” 201. After the dedicatory prayers were offered and the meeting was closed, the group returned to their camp, ate lunch, and then gathered in a tent for a sacrament meeting. Part of this meeting included the reconfirmation of Smith, Little, Schettler, and presumably Jennings by Elders Snow and Carrington. These four had been rebaptized in the Jordan River on March 28. Smith’s journal includes Jennings by name as one who was rebaptized but does not specifically name him when listing those who were reconfirmed.

From the historical account, what can we learn about the intended purpose and unique aspects of these rededications? George A. Smith, Albert Carrington, and Lorenzo Snow traveled to Palestine by assignment from Brigham Young to dedicate the Holy Land. As with Orson Hyde's mission, the principal point of the 1873 journey revolved around dedicating the land for gathering. Young believed the Jews must first gather to Jerusalem and at the Second Coming they would be convinced of the efficacy of the Atonement and believe in Christ.³¹

In Young's mind, the Jews *must* gather, and Apostles Carrington, Snow, and Smith could turn the keys to expedite their return to Palestine. In this light, the abbreviated prayers offered by Carrington and Snow were sufficient. Despite their brevity, Smith referred to them as distinct dedicatory prayers.

Smith's prayer, on the other hand, was lengthier and more detailed. Perhaps this difference can be accounted for in the letter that Brigham Young and Daniel H. Wells delivered to Smith dated March 15, 1873. The letter was very prescriptive, telling him to pray for the land, the return of the Jews, and ultimately the fulfillment of ancient prophecies and accomplishment of the purposes of God. Carrington and Snow did not receive these instructions.

In addition to these prescribed aspects of Smith's prayer, it is not surprising that he prayed that the enemies of the Church would be confounded. It was during this general time period that Brigham Young was falsely accused of being an accessory to murder and was unjustly jailed for a time. Also, the Church was embroiled in a series of lawsuits brought by anti-Mormons intended to break down the strict prohibition statutes then in place in the Territory. The transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869, forever changing the complexion of the population among the previously isolated Saints in the West. Furthermore, apostate groups like the Godbeites were opposing the leaders of the Church at every turn in Salt Lake City. Amasa Lyman, formerly a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, joined the ranks of this splinter group. This turmoil in the Church weighed heavily on Smith's shoulders. It is not surprising that his prayer contained a petition to confound enemies.

The dedicatory mission of 1872–73 stands tall in Latter-day Saint history. Not since the great missions to England of the 1830s and 1840s had so many high-ranking leaders traveled together abroad. Furthermore, this mission is additional evidence of the long-term interest of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Holy Land. George A. Smith makes

31. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 11:279.

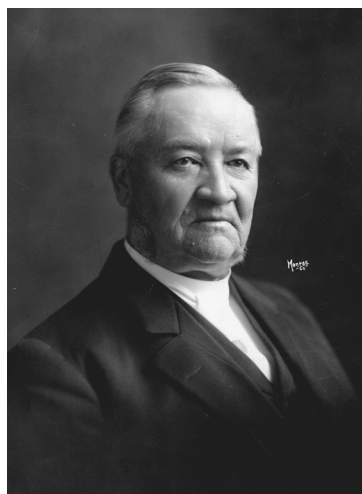
it clear in his journal entry that the three Apostles offered three separate dedicatory prayers. Elder B. H. Roberts said of apostolic dedications that they unlock a great work, “how great, men at present know not.”³²

1898: Fifth Dedication

Twenty-five years passed before the Holy Land was dedicated again. Apostle Anthon H. Lund traveled with Ferdinand Hintze to Palestine and offered another dedicatory prayer. From 1873 to 1898, many important developments had transpired regarding the growth of the Church in the Near East. For example, in 1884, a Latter-day Saint missionary named Jacob Spori was sent from the European Mission to teach an Armenian named Hagop Vartoogian in Constantinople, who had sent inquiries about the Church to the European Mission office. Vartoogian believed Spori’s teachings and was baptized, becoming the first Latter-day Saint convert in the region.

Three years later, in 1887, Ferdinand Hintze was called to serve as the first president of the Turkish Mission, of which Palestine was a part. He served from 1887 to 1890, then again during a second assignment ten years later. Under his leadership, the focus of missionary work shifted from the large coastal cities of Turkey (like Constantinople) to the predominately

Armenian cities and villages of central Anatolia. Generally speaking, he was deeply loved by the Armenian Saints in Turkey. Regarded as the father of the Turkish and Armenian missionary effort, Hintze is one of the most significant figures in the history of the Church in the Near East.



Anthon H. Lund

In 1898, Anthon H. Lund had been a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for almost a decade. Three years later (October 1901) he would be called to serve in the First Presidency as a counselor to President Joseph F. Smith. Lund was assigned by the First Presidency to tour Palestine

32. B. H. Roberts, “The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo,” *Contributor* 8 (March 1887): 162.



Front row, left to right: Ferdinand Hintze, Elder Anthon H. Lund, Nishan Sherinian. Back row, left to right: Philip Maycock, Andrew Larson. This picture was taken in Palestine on May 9, 1898. Courtesy Church History Library, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

with Hintze and together explore the possibility of a Mormon colony in Palestine.³³

By 1898, the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of collapse. Earlier in the century the empire had had no choice but to take out loans from the Western countries it so despised. The mass weight of retaining the autocracy of the Sultanate and adopting forms of Western bureaucracy was too great for the debt and in 1875 the Ottoman Empire declared bankruptcy. As one writer observed, “The Turks had lost the benefit of their old ways without mastering the advantages of the new.”³⁴ Interestingly, in December 1876, the Young Ottomans succeeded in drafting a constitution and calling an assembly of representatives under the watchful eye of Sultan Abdulhamid II. They met for the first time in March 1877, but war broke out with Russia six months later and the Sultan did away with the constitution and the assembly altogether. The Sultanate regained exclusive power, and the machinery of the massive empire continued to grind to a halt.

By 1898, the Ottoman Empire had lost large tracts of land to Britain, Russia, Greece, and France, while other regions were striving for their independence. With the land went some seven million Muslims, thus changing the demographic makeup of the empire. One result of this shift was that certain groups, heretofore submissive to Ottoman power, began to rise up. Armenian Christians spoke of an independent Armenia, which was viewed as a threat to the Ottoman Empire. In the mid-1890s, Ottoman Turks persecuted Armenians and, in many instances, massacred them. Conditions of instability prevailed.

In response, Hintze and other Church leaders supported the establishment of a Mormon colony. The immediate need for a colony was twofold: First, the Armenian Saints needed protection. Church members living in central Anatolian cities such as Aintab, Zara, and Sivas were in serious danger and needed to move. Second, immigration policies in the United States were becoming increasingly restrictive, making it very difficult for the Armenian Church members to leave the Ottoman Empire and join the body of Saints in the American West. Therefore, the First Presidency recommended that they be relocated to Palestine. In a letter to Lund and Hintze, the First Presidency wrote:

33. See Anthon H. Lund, *Danish Apostle: The Diaries of Anthon H. Lund, 1890–1921*, ed. John P. Hatch (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with the Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2006), 40–41. See also Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 243–63; Rao H. Lindsay, “The Dream of a Mormon Colony in the Near East,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Winter 1966): 50–67.

34. Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons*, 309.

You are aware of the stringent laws which are being formulated from time to time in our land against the influx of certain classes of foreigners. The enactment of such laws may seriously interfere with the emigration of people from Oriental lands.

On this account, we feel led to endeavor to select a place of gathering for the Latter-day Saints in the Holy Land. We feel that it would be better for the people themselves, in view of their traditions and habits and their surroundings, as well as in view of the predictions of the holy prophets, that there should be a place of gathering selected at some suitable point in Palestine.

This is really the great object to be accomplished by you on the mission which is assigned, and we trust that you will give this your most earnest and thorough consideration; that you will make yourselves thoroughly familiar with every portion of the land that would be likely to furnish a suitable place for gathering.³⁵

During their search for a site for a colony, Lund oversaw the fifth dedication of the Holy Land. Accounts of this dedication are comparatively sparse, but the following will provide an overview of the 1898 mission and prayer.

Lund and Hintze departed Salt Lake City bound for Palestine on December 30, 1897, and arrived in Jaffa on February 17, 1898.³⁶ Hintze was set apart by the First Presidency to serve as the new president of the Turkish Mission the day before they left.³⁷

Through much of their travels in the Holy Land they had missionaries with them who were serving in the Turkish Mission. One of these missionaries was Elder Andrew L. Larson. He noted in his diary that the party ascended the slopes of the Mount of Olives on May 8, 1898. They found seclusion in a grove of olive trees near the base of the Russian Tower of Ascension. The group knelt and prayed, with Ferdinand Hintze as voice, and, under the direction of Elder Lund, Palestine was dedicated for the return of Judah and the house of Israel.³⁸

35. Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith to Anthon H. Lund and Ferdinand F. Hintze, December 29, 1897, Wilford Woodruff Letterbook, 21:529–31, Church History Library.

36. Turkish Mission History, February 19, 1898, Church History Library. See also Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 123; Lindsay, “Dream of a Mormon Colony,” 55.

37. Lund, *Danish Apostle*, 41.

38. Andrew Larson, Diary, May 8, 1898, Church History Library. See also LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, *Discovering the World of the Bible* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book, 1996), 44; A. J. Hansen, “Ferdinand Friis Hintze,” biographical sketch written in Rexburg, Idaho, May 10, 1928, 7; copy in possession of author.



Russian Tower of Ascension on the Mount of Olives. Ferdinand Hintze (under the direction of Anthon H. Lund) and Francis M. Lyman offered dedicatory prayers near the base of this tower. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

For Ferdinand Hintze to act as voice for this prayer was uncommon. Nevertheless, he was authorized by Elder Lund and it was acknowledged to be a dedication of the Holy Land. Under the date of May 8, 1898, a note in the mission history records that “the Elders visited the Mount of Olives and there united in a dedicatory prayer.”³⁹ It is apparent from other records that Elder Lund considered Hintze’s prayer to be as binding as if he had offered it himself, and he was not the only one who thought this way. For example, Elder Francis M. Lyman offered a dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives approximately four years later on March 4, 1902. A few weeks after offering this prayer, Elder Lyman wrote a letter to President Joseph F. Smith dated May 5, 1902, wherein he stated, “I presume President Snow would be pleased to know that I

had traversed those sacred precincts where he and President George A. Smith together visited and prayed, as President Hyde had done, *and as President Lund did later.*”⁴⁰ This letter indicates that Lund discussed the 1898 prayer offered by Hintze under his direction with other members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and identified it as a distinct dedication of the Holy Land.

Besides the fact that an Apostle did not offer the prayer, what else sets this dedication apart from others? As with the 1873 expedition, Elder Anthon H. Lund and Ferdinand Hintze traveled to the Near East by assignment from the First Presidency (this time Wilford Woodruff, George Q.

39. Turkish Mission History, May 8, 1898.

40. Francis M. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, May 5, 1902, Church History Library; emphasis added. See also Francis M. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” *Deseret News*, April 12, 1902, part 3, p. 17.

Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith). Their primary objective, however, was to search out a suitable location for a Mormon colony in Palestine.

A common feeling among Church leaders at this time was that a Latter-day Saint colony in Palestine would facilitate the gathering of Jews as prophesied in the scriptures (this feeling is evident in the letter written by the First Presidency to Lund and Hintze). Furthermore, Lund noted in his diary that George Q. Cannon believed the colony in Palestine “would be the inaugurating of the Eastern Zion.”⁴¹ This perspective persisted into the first three decades of the twentieth century until colonization was no longer deemed practical or essential. With this context in mind, it is understandable that the prayer offered by Hintze and overseen by Lund focused on blessing the land and gathering Judah and Israel. As prescribed by the First Presidency, this was the fundamental purpose of the tour.

1902: Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Dedications

Only four years after Lund’s visit, Elder Francis M. Lyman traveled to Palestine in company with Sylvester Q. Cannon and dedicated the land three times. Following are accounts of the sixth, seventh, and eighth dedications of the Holy Land in modern times.

Lyman turned sixty-two in January 1902. He had served as an Apostle for just over twenty-one years. During that time he had several dreams regarding a future mission to the Holy Land. In these dreams, he was vis-



Francis M. Lyman

ited by men who shared a keen interest in the affairs of that land and was instructed by them.⁴² In one dream, he visited the Holy Land with President Joseph F. Smith and the late George Q. Cannon. In another dream, he traversed Palestine with President Joseph F. Smith and Anthon H. Lund. The dream that moved Lyman most strongly took place in September 1901. In the dream, he stood before President Lorenzo Snow and President Joseph F. Smith. The two prophets discussed a very difficult and delicate

41. Lund, *Danish Apostle*, 40.

42. Lyman was familiar with Palestine. He had toured the Holy Land in 1886, as well as Egypt and Greece, to identify promising fields for proselytizing in what would become the Turkish Mission. Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 46–49.

mission that needed to be performed in the Holy Land but were undecided as to who should fill the assignment. Lyman felt impressed to step forward and volunteer for the mission by saying, "I will undertake it and do the best I can." To this President Snow said, "We don't want to wear you out that way." Lyman then replied, "I shall wear out and shall not rust out."⁴³

At the time of this last dream, Lyman was presiding over the European Mission. Shortly after the dream, he received an assignment from the First Presidency to tour the Turkish Mission. This tour took Elder Lyman to Palestine in 1902. To Lyman this calling was but a fulfilling of his prophetic dreams of the past. In fact, one of his prime objectives of the journey was to dedicate the Holy Land.⁴⁴

On February 5, 1902, Sylvester Q. Cannon, son of George Q. Cannon and president of the Netherlands and Belgium Mission,⁴⁵ joined Lyman in Paris, and the next day the two sailed for Alexandria, Egypt, from Marseilles.⁴⁶ Sylvester Cannon served as Lyman's guide and interpreter, speaking fluent Dutch, French, and German.⁴⁷ They arrived at Jaffa, Palestine, on February 26, 1902, where they were met by Albert Herman, president of the Turkish Mission.⁴⁸

On Sunday, March 2, 1902, Elder Lyman, in company with mission presidents Cannon and Herman, retired to the Mount of Olives to offer a dedicatory prayer. Lyman was desirous to know on what part of the mount Elders Hyde, Smith, Snow, Carrington, and Lund had offered their dedicatory prayers, but such knowledge was unavailable.⁴⁹ As they searched for a suitable spot to pray, Lyman recorded that

43. Francis M. Lyman to Lorenzo Snow, May 5, 1902, Church History Library.

44. Francis M. Lyman to President Joseph F. Smith, May 5, 1902, Church History Library.

45. Sylvester Q. Cannon served in the Netherlands and Belgium Mission in 1899. In 1900, while still in his early twenties, he was called to serve as the president of that mission. See Flake, *Prophets and Apostles*, 474.

46. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12.

47. Francis M. Lyman to President Joseph F. Smith, February 1, 1902, Church History Library.

48. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12. President Albert Herman was a veteran missionary in the Near East by 1902. He arrived in Constantinople for his first stint of service on October 6, 1891. He introduced the gospel in Damascus, Syria, and was making good progress until he was banished by Syrian officials for preaching. Because of health concerns, his first mission was cut short. Almost ten years later, Albert Herman was called to return to the Near East to be the president of the Turkish Mission.

49. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12.

it seemed as if the elements all combined to prevent us. We could have ascended the Russian tower to have a good survey of the city and the hills of Judea, but the winds were so furious it seemed as if the tower, 200 feet high, would certainly be blown down. The mount is so occupied that we could not decide where a suitable spot could be had where we could be undisturbed. We felt clearly impressed to appoint Tuesday, March 4 for a second trip with the design to find a suitable place for us to appear before the Lord upon that sacred mount.⁵⁰

Later that night, March 2, 1902, they retired to their rooms at the Casa Nova Hospice. Elder Lyman called Cannon and Herman to his room, where they knelt and prayed. During his prayer, Lyman dedicated the Holy Land for the sixth time. Cannon described the dedicatory prayer in his personal journal. He wrote that “apostle Lyman, in praying this evening, prayed fervently for the restoration of fruitfulness and prosperity to the land and the people, and pronounced a renewal of dedication and a blessing upon the land for the gathering of Judah and Israel.”⁵¹

Lyman was determined to dedicate the Holy Land on the Mount of Olives. In the early afternoon of Tuesday, March 4, Lyman, Cannon, and Herman ascended the Mount of Olives in search of a peaceful location where the dedication could be performed. They were drawn to a grove of cypress trees about fifty yards east of the base of the Russian Tower of Ascension. It was grassy, shady, and peaceful and would be forever identifiable as long as the tower would stand. Lyman wrote: “The more I thought of [this spot] as we came down, the more sure I felt in my spirits it was the very place.”⁵²

Elder Lyman had a heavy Irish rug that he spread out on the grass between the trees. Lyman knelt on the rug with Cannon on his right and Herman on his left. As they prayed they faced west toward the Temple Mount, the temples of the most high on the western continent, and Church headquarters in Utah.⁵³ Elder Lyman began praying at 3:30 PM, and all present noted that a most profound silence and spirit of peacefulness fell over the Mount of Olives. This peaceful silence persisted throughout the duration of the prayer, which lasted a half hour.⁵⁴

50. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

51. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 2, 190, Church History Library. See also Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

52. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

53. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 2, 1902. See also Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

54. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 2 and 4, 1902. See also Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12; Sylvester Q. Cannon, “President Lyman’s Tour,” *Millennial Star* 64 (April 3, 1902): 213.

In his prayer, Lyman remembered the prayers of dedication that had preceded his and pled with the Lord that they might be fulfilled, causing the lost ten tribes to be gathered, with Judah returning to Jerusalem. He recalled the prophecies of Isaiah, the Savior, and others of the ancients and begged for a fulfillment of their words regarding Jerusalem. He noted Joseph Smith's prophetic feelings for scattered Israel and prayed for their fulfillment. Lyman blessed the land itself that fruitfulness would return. He then blessed scattered and gathered Israel and all the posterity of Abraham and supplicated the Lord for their best interests—particularly that the gospel would be preached in all nations. Additionally, he prayed for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, including the building of a temple. In conjunction with this plea, he petitioned that a temple also be built in the "Center Stake" of Zion on the western hemisphere. Finally, Lyman prayed for the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and all the missionaries throughout the world.⁵⁵

In his letter to the First Presidency, Lyman described his satisfaction and frame of mind and spirit as the dedication was completed. He wrote that "our souls were full of gratitude and great joy. We felt that one prime object of our coming at this time was accomplished. We have been particularly light and joyous in our spirits ever since."⁵⁶

The group left Jerusalem on March 8, 1902. After touring Galilee, they came to Haifa in mid-March. On Sunday, March 16, after sacrament meeting, Lyman, Cannon, and Herman ascended Mount Carmel near the western point of the mountain.⁵⁷

In climbing the mount it was not Elder Lyman's design to dedicate the Holy Land again, but as he reached the summit he felt impressed to pray. In fact, as he approached the grounds of Kaiser's Watch, he was drawn to a grove of pine trees about seventy feet east of an obelisk. Elder Lyman knew "that it was just the very spot and occasion for us once more upon a sacred mount to supplicate the Lord, as we had done upon the Mount of Olives."⁵⁸

55. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12. See also Cannon, "President Lyman's Tour," 213; Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 4, 1902.

56. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12.

57. This is the place where Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm was brought for a panoramic view of the city of Haifa and the Bay of Acre on October 25, 1898. A six-foot-tall obelisk stands on the site to commemorate the visit. Berrett and Ogden, *Discovering the World of the Bible*, 159. See also Francis M. Lyman, "President Lyman in Jerusalem," *Deseret News*, April 19, 1902, 4.

58. Lyman, "President Lyman in Jerusalem," 4. See also Cannon, "President Lyman's Tour," 228.

The group knelt facing Jerusalem, and Lyman prayed for over half an hour.⁵⁹ He supplicated the Lord for the necessities of Judah, Jerusalem, Zion, and all the children of Israel. Lyman explained that

the Lord gave us copiously of his Spirit, and it was a season ever to be remembered. We seemed to remember everything in connection with the work and purposes of the Lord. The spot where we prayed is known as the “Kaiser Watch” and will always be known if destruction does not overtake it. The day seemed as if arranged specially for the occasion.⁶⁰

Sylvester Cannon recorded that Elder Lyman prayed for the lightening of burdens from the land and that fruitfulness may be restored. He also prayed that the people’s hearts may be softened and become more susceptible to enlightenment from the Spirit. Furthermore, he prayed for each member of the party separately and “dedicated us all to the Lord—our time and our talents from this time henceforth. It was a powerful blessing.”⁶¹

Their experiences in Haifa brought a close to their travels in the Holy Land, and they departed for other destinations in their tour of the Turkish Mission. Following the tour, Lyman and Cannon resumed their missionary labors in Europe. Shortly thereafter, Elder Lyman declared that his travel to the Holy Land was the “crowning journey for my life of travel.”⁶²

It is evident from diaries and correspondence that Francis Lyman intended to dedicate the Holy Land as part of his assignment to tour the Turkish Mission. It is obvious from these sources that he was also determined to offer a dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives. Of his three prayers, the prayer offered on the mount was more comprehensive and panoramic in content than the other two. By drawing primarily from this prayer we can identify clues that may indicate his deeper intentions and feelings.

59. Regarding the location of the site of dedication, Elder Lyman recorded that within a grove of seven hundred young pine trees was the remains of “a raised foundation of stone and earthwork upon which the German emperor stood and viewed Mt. Hermon.” *Journal History*, March 17, 1902, 4. LaMar C. Berrett located this grove of pine trees and the remains of the small wall that Elder Lyman described in his correspondence. This spot lies seventy feet east of the obelisk. Berrett and Ogden, *Discovering the World of the Bible*, 159. Both Elders Lyman (1902) and Talmage (1927) offered dedicatory prayers at this site.

60. Lyman, “President Lyman in Jerusalem,” 4.

61. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 16, 1902.

62. Francis M. Lyman to his son, John Lyman, May 5, 1902, Church History Library. Elder Lyman calculated that he had been gone for eighty-six days, traveled eight thousand miles, and spent a total of seven hundred dollars.

First, Lyman prayed for the welfare of the Church. The year 1902 was a tumultuous time for several reasons. The Church was in financial straits due to large debts. In 1899, Lorenzo Snow had received revelations indicating that obedience to the law of tithing would free the Saints from these debts. As Lyman prayed on the Mount of Olives, the Church was still struggling to release itself from financial bondage. Also, the Church had suffered bitter and ongoing persecution due to the practice of polygamy. Political powers were brought to bear against the Saints as never before. For example, in 1898, Elder B. H. Roberts was elected to the United States House of Representatives but was denied his seat in Congress because he was a polygamist. Anti-Mormons rallied to collect over seven million signatures nationwide in opposition to Roberts's seat in the House. The Roberts case took over one year to settle. In 1902, Apostle Reed Smoot was mounting a campaign to run for the United States Senate. Given Roberts's recent failure in the national political spotlight, Smoot's bid was particularly bold. These are just some of the struggles the Church was facing in 1902. Finally, Lorenzo Snow died on October 10, 1901, and Joseph F. Smith was in the first months of his presidency. These are likely reasons why Elder Lyman prayed for the welfare of the Church in two of his three dedicatory prayers.

Second, Lyman was in Palestine by assignment to tour the Turkish Mission. This purpose was evident in his dedicatory prayer offered on the Mount of Olives. He prayed that the work of Latter-day Saint missionaries throughout the world would prosper. This request was germane to Lyman's position as an Apostle and as president of the European Mission. More specifically, missionary work in the Turkish Mission at the time was very challenging. The Church enjoyed no recognition by the Ottoman Empire, and any persons who joined the Church were disenfranchised by the Ottomans and culturally, socially, and economically ostracized from their Armenian peers. Most members of the Church were impoverished. In every case, they were second-class citizens in the predominantly Islamic empire.

Furthermore, for missionaries, the Turkish Mission was remote and expensive, and usually one year's service in the mission was required before the difficult languages could be mastered sufficiently so that a missionary could speak and teach effectively. Under these circumstances Elder Lyman's apostolic blessing was unquestionably a boon to President Herman, the missionaries, and the Saints in the region.

Third, Lyman prayed that ancient and modern prophecies be fulfilled related to Judah, Israel, Jerusalem, and the city of Zion in the western hemisphere. Orson Hyde and George A. Smith were the only other Apostles to

offer dedicatory prayers specifically asking that Jerusalem be rebuilt. Additionally, only Orson Hyde and Francis Lyman prayed that a temple be built in Jerusalem. Finally, Lyman went beyond Hyde and included a plea that a temple be built in Jerusalem *and* the center stake of Zion in America in accordance with ancient and latter-day prophecies.

We conclude that this bold, unique, and prophetic spirit indicates Francis Lyman possessed a clear sense of his dedicatory mission long before it transpired. Like Hyde, Lyman experienced dreams wherein he toured Palestine with his peers in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency. Indeed, Lyman seemed to possess a kinship to Hyde. He was keenly aware of Hyde's mission and even desired to pray at the exact location where Hyde had prayed, if that site could be identified. Because of this preparation and kinship, it is understandable that Lyman dedicated the Holy Land in a way that was akin to Orson Hyde's dedicatory prayer in tenor, content, and scope.

Elder Lyman continued to feel deep impressions regarding the dedicatory mission after his return to mission headquarters in Liverpool. In a letter to Albert Herman dated June 10, 1902, Lyman wrote that "our tour through Palestine grows on me, and is of greater importance every time I think of it."⁶³

1927: Ninth Dedication

Twenty-five years passed before Elder James E. Talmage offered the ninth dedicatory prayer.⁶⁴ He received an assignment from the First Presidency to travel to Palestine to meet Joseph Wilford Booth, who was presiding over the missionary efforts in the Near East.⁶⁵ In 1921, the name

63. Francis M. Lyman to Albert Herman, June 10, 1902, Church History Library.

64. James E. Talmage was born in Hungersford, England, on September 21, 1862. He was baptized at age eleven and emigrated with his family to America, where they settled in Provo, Utah. His initial mentor at Brigham Young Academy was Karl G. Maeser. His brilliant mind and ongoing pursuit of education led to his being named president of LDS College in Salt Lake City and later the University of Utah. He was called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1911. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles*, 439–41.

65. President Booth was the most prominent member of the Church in the Near East at the time. He was serving his third mission among the Armenians and ultimately served for a combined total of about seventeen years. He was born on August 14, 1866, in Alpine, Utah, and was an educator by training. He died on December 5, 1928, while serving as president of the Armenian Mission. He is buried in the Armenian Evangelical Cemetery in Aleppo, Syria. "From Foreign Fields," *Millennial Star* 89 (July 14, 1927): 444. See also James E. Talmage, "The



James E. Talmage and his wife, May Booth Talmage (sister of Joseph W. Booth). Courtesy Church History Library, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

of the mission was changed from the Turkish Mission to the Armenian Mission,⁶⁶ and Elder Talmage, who was serving as the president of the European Mission, was assigned to relocate the headquarters of the Armenian Mission from Aleppo, Syria, to Haifa, Palestine.

In 1927, at the time of the ninth dedicatory prayer, the Ottoman Empire was no longer in existence. It had been abolished following World War I. On July 24, 1923, a treaty was signed at Lausanne, Switzerland, that preserved the borders of the new Republic of Turkey basically as they exist today. As deliberations continued regarding the nature of the new nation, it was determined that the Sultanate would be eliminated but a member of the Ottoman princely line would hold the office of Caliph, which would be limited to religious affairs only. Soon the position of Caliph was also abolished. Elections

were held for the Grand National Assembly, and they in turn elected Mustafa Kemal (later known as Kemal Ataturk) to be president of the new nation. The capital was moved from Istanbul to Ankara, located in central Turkey. All major government entities were secular in nature.⁶⁷ Following

Armenian Mission," *Millennial Star* 89 (December 1, 1927): 760; Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 137–38, 234.

66. In general terms, the reasoning behind the name change may be attributed to two fundamental issues. First, the people who had joined the Church in the Near East were almost exclusively Armenian. As missionary efforts in the region were reinstated in 1921 following World War I, it was thought best to retire the title "Turkish Mission" and adopt a mission name that reflected the makeup of the members. Second, the Ottoman Turks had mercilessly driven and murdered the Armenian people during World War I. It is estimated that in the slaughter of 1915 over one million Armenians were killed. Hence, the Armenian Mission seemed to be a more fitting name.

67. Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 245–60. See also Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons*, 301–21; Alan Palmer, *The Decline & Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (New York City: Barnes & Noble Books, 1992), 261–69.



Armenian Mission home selected by James E. Talmage and Joseph W. Booth located at 59 Allenby Street (now David Ben Gurion and Allenby streets) in Haifa. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

World War I, much of the Ottoman Empire was carved up and the pieces controlled by the European powers. It is important to note that at this time Syria was placed under a French mandate while Palestine was placed under a British mandate.⁶⁸

Elder Talmage arrived in Aleppo on Monday, October 10, 1927. President Joseph W. Booth was there to greet him in company with many of the Saints from Syria. Four days later, Talmage and Booth left Aleppo for Haifa via automobile. They arrived on Saturday, October 15, 1927.

On Monday, October 17, Talmage and Booth canvassed the city to find prospective quarters for a mission home. After examining several buildings they rented a house at the southeast corner of Carmel and Allenby streets (now David Ben Gurion and Allenby streets).⁶⁹ With the mission

68. For further readings on the mandates over Syria and Palestine, consult J. C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 17–26. See also Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914–1971* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 50–70; James L. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998); Thomas Philipp and Christoph Schuman, eds., *From the Syrian Land to the States of Syria and Lebanon* (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission, 2004).

69. Joseph W. Booth, “Something from Syria,” *Millennial Star* 89 (November 10, 1927): 714–15. See also Joseph Wilford Booth, *Journal*, October 17, 1927,

headquarters located, Talmage desired to dedicate the land and make further recommendations to the First Presidency regarding the timing and scope of the establishment of a missionary force at Haifa. He had made this a matter of careful thought and prayer. On the morning of Tuesday, October 18, 1927, Talmage invited Booth to accompany him to the top of Mount Carmel. Booth explained in his journal that they left

the carriage on the west side of the summit and walked through the trees to the East side, about two rods [one rod is 5.5 yards] in from the road, at a little break in the trees at the end of an old stone wall running along the crest of the hill to the S. E. and there in the grove of young pines we solemnly called upon the Lord in prayer. I was asked to lead in a preliminary petition which was followed by the reading of the following scriptures. Isaiah 35 ch, II Nephi 27—last parts and Doc. & Cov. Sec. 133, last half or nearly. Then with these books opened and spread before us we kneeled together and President James E. Talmage an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, offered a prayer dedicating the city of Haifa as a place for headquarters for the mission, and rededicating the land of Palestine and Syria to the preaching of the restored Gospel, and for the gathering of the Jews to their promised land. Special blessings were invoked upon the Saints of the Armenian Mission, upon the Armenian people who are the victims of the cruel conditions of these stricken lands, and upon the children of Judah who are gathering and who will gather to their latter day inheritance. Intercessions were also made for Sister Booth and myself, and for all the missions and missionaries of the Church with all the authorities of the Church and the Saints of Zion.⁷⁰

The prayer lasted about fifteen minutes. Booth later explained that the prayer was the most sublime utterance he had ever heard.⁷¹

Talmage wrote that “immediately after our descent from the Mount Carmel I sent a cablegram to the First Presidency, reading: ‘Quickmere, Salt Lake City: Recommend six missionaries Palestine—Talmage.’”⁷² The following Monday, October 24, 1927, Talmage noted in his journal the eighty-sixth anniversary of the dedication of the Holy Land by his apostolic predecessor Orson Hyde.

L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; James E. Talmage, Diaries, October 17, 1927, Perry Special Collections.

70. Booth, Journal, October 18, 1927. See also Talmage, Diaries, October 18, 1927.

71. Joseph W. Booth, “Through Palestine,” *Millennial Star* 89 (November 17, 1927): 727.

72. Talmage, Diaries, October 18, 1927. The term “Quickmere” was the Church’s “call sign” for all telegrams sent to or from Church headquarters.

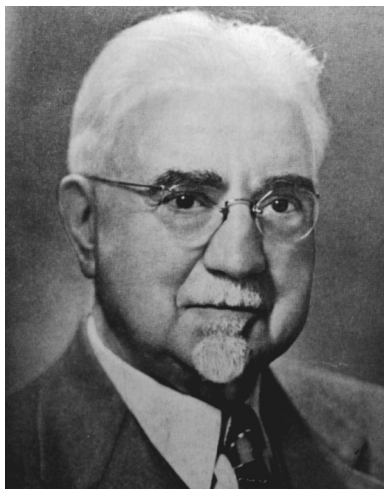
Like Francis M. Lyman before him and John A. Widtsoe after, James E. Talmage was serving as president of the European Mission when he was assigned to tour the Armenian Mission. A portion of his assignment was to move the mission home from Aleppo, Syria, to Haifa, Palestine. The focus on missionary work is evident in the dedicatory prayer that he offered in 1927. Prior to the prayer, he asked Joseph Booth to read a series of scriptural passages. One of them was Isaiah 35, wherein Isaiah prophesied that in the last days “the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose” (1). It also contains the promise that the “eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped” (5). Finally, Isaiah taught that a highway shall be established, “and it shall be called The way of holiness” (8) upon which those who see and hear the truth found in the latter-day restoration may travel and enjoy God’s richest blessings.

In his prayer one can sense Talmage’s desire to turn keys to facilitate greater interest among the people in the gospel message so that they might investigate, become converted, and join the Church. One can also readily observe his depth of concern for the Armenian members of the Church and their peers who had been severely persecuted for decades. Finally, Talmage’s blessing upon President Joseph Booth, his wife, and all the missionaries in the Church rounded out his dedicatory prayer. Again, missionary work was the driving force behind Elder Talmage’s visit to the Holy Land, and this purpose seems to have been a determining factor in the content of the dedicatory prayer.

1933: Tenth and Eleventh Dedications

Joseph W. Booth, president of the Armenian Mission, died unexpectedly at Aleppo, Syria, on December 5, 1928. From that time to 1933, the mission was without a president and the work lagged. Under the direction of the First Presidency, John A. Widtsoe, Apostle and president of the European Mission, and his wife, Leah, were sent to Palestine to call a new mission president and revitalize the proselytizing efforts in what would then be called the Palestine-Syrian Mission. Widtsoe dedicated the land twice during this trip.⁷³

73. John A. Widtsoe was born on January 31, 1872, in Daloe, Isle of Froyen, Trondhjem, Norway. Elder Widtsoe’s father died when John was six, and at about the same time his mother joined the Church. Soon thereafter, they joined the Saints in Utah. Elder Widtsoe was an exceptional student, graduating with honors from Harvard in 1894. He married Leah Dunford in 1898. Elder Widtsoe distinguished himself as a world-renowned agriculturalist with expertise in dry



John A. Widtsoe

Elder Widtsoe oversaw the calling of Badwagan Piranian to serve as president of the new Palestine-Syrian Mission.⁷⁴ Piranian was an Armenian by birth but spent most of his life in continental Europe, Russia, and England, and he held Swiss citizenship. His wife, Bertha, and daughter Astchig accompanied him to the new mission. They moved into a home that served as the Palestine-Syrian Mission headquarters.⁷⁵

Elder and Sister Widtsoe arrived in Palestine on Wednesday, May 17, 1933. On Sunday, May 21, Widtsoe presided over a sacrament meeting. Only the Widtsoes and the Piranians

attended. During this meeting, Widtsoe taught the significance of dedicatory prayers and then dedicated the new mission home and the mission and rededicated the land of Palestine. He prayed

that the home may be blessed, purified, and sanctified, protected against all evil and that [those] who pass it or visit it may feel its influence—the influence of a dedicated house. It was dedicated to be a home and a place for mission meetings. At the same time in the prayer the whole mission was brought before the Lord. The Lord was petitioned to help move His work forward in these lands as never before, that the Spirit of God might find its way throughout the land and touch the hearts of all seekers after truth; that those who labor here may be the means of fulfilling the covenants between God and man, as well as to fulfill the prophecies of old. The land was rededicated, as was also the mission.

farming and irrigation. He was called to be an Apostle in 1921. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles*, 453–56.

74. Journal History, June 24, 1933, 4. On July 11, 1933, Elder Widtsoe wrote the following letter to President Piranian concerning the new name of the mission: “The First Presidency answered my letter about the change of the name of the Mission by saying that they would approve whatever we shall decide upon, but that if the word ‘Palestine’ could be included in the name of the mission it would please the people of the Church as well. We have therefore decided upon the name ‘The Palestine-Syrian Mission,’ which hereafter use in all of your official correspondence and printing. I trust this meets with your approval.” History of the Palestine-Syrian Mission, May 21, 1933, 75, Church History Library.

75. “Reorganization of Palestine-Syrian Mission,” *Millennial Star* 95 (August 10, 1933): 522–33.



The Palestine-Syrian Mission home located at 25 Garden Street in Haifa, where Elder John A. Widtsoe rededicated the Holy Land. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

The blessings of the Lord were invoked upon the authorities of the Church of Christ in the latter days and the Lord was petitioned to help the truth enter the lives of the people and to bring about a new period of enlightenment among all nations.⁷⁶

Ten days later, on May 31, 1933, Elder Widtsoe, Sister Widtsoe, and President Piranian ascended the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. There, looking down on the Holy City and the Garden of Gethsemane, Widtsoe prepared to dedicate the land again. He recorded his feelings on this occasion. He wrote:

In spite of steeples and domes, hospices and hospitals, Jerusalem, as all the world, needs the strengthening, enlivening, enlightening simple truths of the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, the plan of salvation of Almighty God. Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem! The pleading voice of two thousand years ago crept into our souls. We gathered under a noble olive tree, on the Mount where the Master often taught, and prayed to God that the restored truth might be prospered for the good of men in the Promised Land.⁷⁷

76. History of the Palestine-Syrian Mission, May 21, 1933, 77.

77. John A Widtsoe, "The Promised Land—an Editorial," *Millennial Star* 95 (July 6, 1933): 442–43.

The content of the prayer offered by Widtsoe on the Mount of Olives was recalled about twenty years later by his wife, Leah. She noted that he

blessed the land for the return of the Jews, that they would come home to the land that had been promised them by God. The land was blessed that it would be restored to its former fertility and productivity, that the returning remnants of Judah would build up the land that it would again become a prosperous area. President Widtsoe blessed the people that their hearts would be softened towards the missionaries and they would become receptive to the gospel; that they would open their hearts to the restored truth in order that they could embrace the gospel. The Jews were promised that if they would accept Christ that peace would come to their land and their persecutions in the world would cease, and this land would be given to them as their inheritance as promised by the Holy Prophets.⁷⁸

These two prayers by Elder Widtsoe at Haifa and Jerusalem constituted the tenth and eleventh dedications of the Holy Land, the last dedicatory prayers in this remarkable series of events. In both dedicatory prayers, Widtsoe prayed that the enemies of the Church would be confounded. The Church in Europe and in the Near East was usually viewed with suspicion. Articles in newspapers and magazines frequently reflected the perspectives of those who did not understand the Church or its mission. Persuasive anti-Mormon articles led many readers to believe that Latter-day Saints should be neither trusted nor respected. As president of the European mission, Widtsoe worked hard, as had his predecessor, David O. McKay, to improve the public's opinion of the Church, but the process was slow. In the Palestine-Syrian Mission, Widtsoe encouraged President Badwagan Piranian to "make friends with the newspaper people. We must secure more printed material; tracts are needed now. . . . Advertise—not pompously but consistently."⁷⁹ It is possible that his pleadings to confound the enemies of the Church emanated from his desire to make headway in the ongoing public relation battles he had fought in Europe and anticipated in the Near East.

78. So far as we know, the contents of this prayer were not recorded at the time the prayer was offered. This recollection is taken from an interview with Leah Widtsoe conducted by Dale Tingey and may be found in Dale Thomas Tingey, "Recent Jewish Movements in Israel in Light of the Teachings of the Latter-day Saint Prophets" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955), 49–50. For additional details regarding this dedication, see *Journal History*, July 29, 1933, 12. See also *Journal History*, August 12, 1933, 8.

79. *History of Palestine-Syrian Mission*, May 21, 1933, 77, Church History Library.

Similar to the dedications offered by Carrington and Snow, Widtsoe's first dedicatory prayer, offered May 21, 1933, in Haifa, did not contain a petition that the Jews gather to the Holy Land: Widtsoe's purpose in traveling to Haifa was to organize the Palestine-Syrian Mission and set apart Badwagan Piranian as its president. The dedicatory prayer offered in Haifa emerged from these purposes. This focus is evident in a letter he wrote to Elder Rudger Clawson and the rest of the Twelve Apostles dated June 6, 1933. He wrote:

A number of people have been investigating the gospel for the last two years, through correspondence with the Liverpool office. Eight of these were deemed ready for baptism and were baptized two weeks ago. The Haifa branch has been organized . . . After having been in Palestine for some days, I feel very hopeful about the future of our work here, if we proceed wisely. Conditions have so shaped themselves as to make our message sound very good to ears that have been filled with sectarian nonsense. Let us pray that the work here may be successful.⁸⁰

Ten days after this first dedicatory prayer, Widtsoe was in Jerusalem. From the same letter to Rudger Clawson, we learn that his time spent in the Holy City was different than in Haifa. He wrote, "The last few days we have been in Jerusalem. Contending sects have made it an unlovely, hateful place. I have sought out quiet places, away from shrines, to dream of the history enacted here, and yet to come. There is a need for us here, where few take religion seriously."⁸¹

It seems apparent that his time spent in Jerusalem was pensive, and his dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives reflected that pensiveness by including supplications that the prophecies related to Judah and Israel's gathering to Palestine be fulfilled. Such was not the case in Haifa. In Haifa his prayer focused more on immediate concerns, while in Jerusalem his prayer was more panoramic. Perhaps this is why he offered two dedicatory prayers within such a short period of time.

Conclusion

Our analysis indicates that portions of the prayers subsequent to Orson Hyde's dedicatory prayer likely emanated from the intended purposes for which Apostles traveled to Palestine. Church leaders' pressing concerns at home and in the world generally and prophecies in ancient

80. John A. Widtsoe to Rudger Clawson, June 6, 1933, Church History Library.

81. Widtsoe to Clawson, June 6, 1933.

and modern scripture were also factors that likely influenced content as well. These influences did not change the essential nature of the dedicatory prayers. Nevertheless, many of the subsequent prayers serve as a window into the religious, sociocultural, and political milieu of the day.

Orson Hyde's prayer and the ten subsequent dedications of Palestine have set the land apart, invoked the power of heaven upon that land, and consecrated the minds and hearts of people who are associated with furthering God's work there. Since these prayers were offered, missions were established for a time in Palestine, missionary work was conducted in the land, congregations have been organized into branches and reorganized when necessary, scriptures were translated, the State of Israel was established in 1948 opening a way for the Holocaust-surviving Jews throughout the world to gather to the Holy Land, and the land has blossomed and become more fruitful than it was when Elder Hyde knelt on the Mount of Olives in 1841. While much remains to be fulfilled, especially regarding the softening of hearts, and while the region continues to suffer from deeply perplexing conflicts, these eleven sincere prayers have only sought to bless this land for the ultimate good of all people, and these dedications can be seen to have efficaciously borne significant fruit in this important part of the Lord's vineyard.

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Images of Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, Albert Carrington, Lorenzo Snow, Eliza R. Snow, Francis M. Lyman, and John A. Widstoe, courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

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