The Perception of Sacred Space: the Case of Utah and Other Sacred Places in Mormondom

Roger L. Henrie

Brigham Young University - Provo

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THE PERCEPTION OF SACRED SPACE: THE CASE OF UTAH AND OTHER SACRED PLACES IN MORMONDOM

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Geography
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by
Roger L. Henrie
August 1972
Dedicated to David, Heidi, Roland, Ruth, and Derrick

with a father's love
Geography, of all the sciences, is most interesting. It has the broadest base and the most general nature. Geographers are those rare scientists who take the whole world as their laboratory. They move freely among the scientific fields, utilizing whatever may be useful to the particular problem at hand. The romanticism of early explorers at times shows through. They combined the traits of Van Humboldt and Ritter, discovering rare birds in the Andes and having a thorough knowledge of the geography books in the library.

I have had the opportunity of knowing five geographers: Dr. Robert Layton, Dr. Alan Grey, Dr. Dale Stevens, Dr. Richard Jackson, and Dr. Lloyd Hudman. With diverse interests, these men are united by a common concern for students and a love for geography. However, they could probably never agree on what geography means. I have studied for almost four years under their tutelage, and I appreciate all they have given me. They have challenged me with enough new concepts that it may well take the rest of my life to sort and develop them. A healthy situation exists in the Geography Department at Brigham Young University. Few norms exist; no geographical concept is too sacred to be questioned. The only real goal appears to be the exposure of ideas.

The concept of relative space was introduced. It was challenging and exciting. Dr. Jackson introduced me to the ideas of environmental perception. He showed how that concept could be used as a
unifying factor to much of geography. He introduced me to the geography of religions. From these clusters of ideas developed a concern with the perception of sacred space.

I appreciate Dr. Jackson for his encouragement, which without I would have never finished, and probably never would have even started this thesis. He has been generous with his time and ideas. I appreciate Dr. Grey for serving on my committee. Especially do I appreciate his ideas on geographic methodology.

I wish to thank the other people in the Geography Department--instructors, secretaries, and students--for their friendship and interest. Thanks to John Jensen for assistance with the technical problems of map reduction. I appreciate all of the Mormons who replied to my questionnaire.

Thanks to my wife, Betty, and my children, to whom this thesis is dedicated, and to my parents, Roland and Margaret Henrie, Leigh and Idell Preston, and Mabel Sims for their support, interest, and encouragement.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Entering Utah by highway, one is greeted with the words, "Welcome to the different world of Utah." The promotional bureau probably had in mind the striking and "different" landforms found in the state and the influence on the state of the predominant and "different" Mormon culture. The greeting implies a uniqueness and peculiarity in Utah in reference to its sister states, but similar landforms are found in the neighboring states and the "Mormon culture" is correctly a subculture of the Anglo-American culture and the even greater culture of Western Civilization. However, Utah has its own distinct and unique personality, and one of its most unique characteristics is the common feeling among Mormons that it is a sacred place. No other state shares in a perception of sacredness to the same degree or in the same manner as Utah. The Puritans had appreciated Massachusetts and Connecticut as a divinely established "promised land," as a base for the cleansings of the world, but this perception largely died with the sect. Missouri receives a

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1The official name of this religious group is "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." The term "Mormon" is most commonly used by members and nonmembers. Mormons also are commonly referred to as "Latter-day Saints," "L.D.S.," and "Saints."

special feeling of sacredness from the Mormons, but it is for a projected future condition and not of the present-day state. When one enters Utah, he sees no sign instructing him to "put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."¹ The feeling of sacredness is much more subtly expressed than that. Many traveling through the state never sense it. Others perceive it strongly, as this thesis will attempt to establish and explain. This thesis then is a study in the perception of sacred space.

An appraisal of the perception of sacred space within the established framework of geography spans the sub-disciplines of "the geography of religions" and "environmental perception." Although both of these fields have roots in the man-land relationships of traditional geography, they both are on the frontier edges of the discipline. Past studies have been largely pioneering works. Literature is limited and scattered, mostly appearing in the last ten to fifteen years. Well developed methodologies are lacking. However, in both fields interest is on the increase, especially in environmental perception, which, as a unifying theme for a variety of types of studies, deals with man's attitude towards the environment.

Environmental Perception

As noted, the perception of the environment is not entirely new to geography. Saarinen has noted that many of the ideas are part of the larger "system of man and environment which has always been a

¹Exodus 3:5.
major concern of geography. Cultural geographers have long noted that different cultures perceive and use the same environment differently, that being a major case stated in favor of possibilism. Regional geographers have noted the relationships between perception and land use, and they have expressed their own perceptions of a region in their descriptions of it.

Although the foundations for environmental perception were laid down in traditional geography, the recent emphasis goes beyond, being strongly influenced by behavioral science techniques. The trend in this frontier field is towards a "psychogeo graphy," the geography of the mind, that is what we feel and think about the environment.

John K. Wright in his presidential address to the Association of American Geographers in 1946 discussing the terrae incognitae of an individual's geographical knowledge stimulated thought that eventually led to extensive perceptual studies. He introduced the


2 Possibilism is a theory in geography developed to explain man-nature relationships. Possibilism states that man is a free agent and is able to choose between a limited number of possibilities that the physical environment might offer. It was developed to refute environmental determinism which maintained that the physical environment largely determines man's actions. Richard Hartshorne, Perspective on the Nature of Geography (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1959), pp. 56-59.


term "geosophy," meaning "the study of geographical knowledge from any or all points of view." He further defined it as encompassing "the geographical ideas, both true and false, of all manner of people— not only geographers, but farmers and fishermen, business executives and poets, novelists and painters, Bedouins and Hottentots." In effect, he recommended investigation into the most subjective realm of geographical knowledge, that of the individual mind! David Lowenthal, enlarging on Wright's theme in 1961, emphasized the varying geosophies of the 'world view,' their ethnocentric character, and their cultural and individual differences. Lowenthal established the importance of perception in the geographical epistemology and with Wright developed the philosophical bases for perceptual studies within geography.2

In the past decade an increasing number of studies dealing with perception have appeared in the literature of the social and behavioral sciences and in that of the professional planners. Early works by White, Kates, Burton, and Saarinen were concerned with the perception of and responses to natural hazards.3 Lowenthal, Prince, and Lynch

1Ibid., p. 83.


explored the perception of rural and urban landscapes.\textsuperscript{1} The perception of personal space was examined by non-geographers, Hall and Sommer.\textsuperscript{2} Gould discussed the problems of measurement in perceptional studies and stressed a need for quantitative analysis.\textsuperscript{3} Good summaries of work in the field have been prepared by Saarinen and Kates.\textsuperscript{4} Mention needs to be made of Glacken's noteworthy accomplishment, \textit{Traces on the Rhodian Shore}, since he makes numerous references to the importance of religion in the development of historical geosophsies. He has traced historical man's perception of the environment from Classical Antiquity to the eighteenth century. Evaluation was made of three intellectual themes, that of a designed earth, the influence of the environment on man, and man as a modifier of the environment.\textsuperscript{5} However, a direct examination of the perception of sacred space has not been accomplished. The foundations for such a study have been laid. The need for such a study should be evident since so much of the earth's surface is perceived as sacred.


The Geography of Religions

The geography of religions, the other sub-discipline related to this study, investigates the religious component of cultural geography. The two definitive workers in the geography of religions have been Isaac and Sopher. Isaac limits it to "the study of the part played by the religious motive in man's transformation of the landscape."¹ Sopher broadens the field to include several relationships existing between religious thought and actions, and the environment.² The study of the perception of sacred space could easily be embodied within this latter definition since religious ideas and organizations have an effect on the perception and use of the environment.

Literature on the geography of religions is very sparse. Sopher reports that "substantive and methodological writing that deals with religion within the field of geography is small in bulk and scattered among publications in several languages."¹ He maintains that while "geographers have long recognized that religious ideas and organizations may play an important role in the way man occupies and shapes the land, important geographic studies focusing on this theme only recently have begun to appear."³ Sopher, building on those few early works, has written the most definitive work in the field, the Geography of Religions. Although the author admits that it is hardly more than a map of a frontier territory with some indications where its boundaries may lie, it is of primary importance. In this book Sopher expressed a


³Ibid., p. vii.
strong interest in the phenomenon of sacred space.\textsuperscript{1}

That phenomenon has not been entirely neglected by other geographical writers. Fickeler discussed the concept of sacred space in relation to primitive culture, especially Asiatic.\textsuperscript{2} Tuan examined the concept in the light of escapement from environmental chaos, in both the primitive and modern worlds.\textsuperscript{3} Bartlett explored the conservative nature of some sacred places, reporting that sacred groves among primitive tribes have been important in the preservation of primary forest in the tropics.\textsuperscript{4}

Major contributions to this theme by non-geographers are the works of Eliade and the articles in Hasting's multivolumed religious encyclopedia. Eliade examines important definitions useful to this study, looking at sacred space, the making of the world sacred, and the sacredness of nature.\textsuperscript{5} Hastings describes the functions and

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., pp. 44-55.


distribution of sacred places in the world in a specific manner.\(^1\)

Several other geographers are important to the geography of religions. Their work has not specifically dealt with sacred space, but their concepts are useful in examining it. Isaac has been active in the field.\(^2\) His major concern has been with developing a methodology centering around the concept of the "rite" as the fundamental factor in understanding why some religions transform landscapes and others do not.\(^3\) Planhol found religion important to his explanation of the Islamic landscape,\(^4\) and Simoons found it equally important to his explanation of food avoidances.\(^5\) In the past decade a limited number of worthwhile articles in the field have appeared in professional journals.\(^6\) Basically, however, little has been written on the perception of sacred space, and no thorough study has appeared dealing directly with the perception of sacred space by a modern religious group.

\(^{1}\) "Places (Sacred)," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1951, X, 50-52.


\(^{5}\) Frederick J. Simoons, *Eat Not This Flesh* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1961).

Hypotheses

In an effort to deepen understanding of the perception of sacred space among a modern religious group several hypotheses have been formulated. It is hypothesized that (1) most Mormons perceive some of the earth's space as sacred. It is further hypothesized that (2) although personal differences exist, there is general agreement as to what types and individual places are sacred, and that (3) trends in degree and kind exist among subgroups (independent-variable groups, e.g. age). It is also hypothesized that (4) the state of Utah is one of the most sacred places to Mormons and that as a result, (5) this perception may have important effects upon the future economical and political aspects of the state.

Methods

The techniques used in testing these hypotheses were direct interviews, historical research, and statistical analysis. Interviews were conducted to determine present-day perception. Historical research was undertaken in order to trace the development of perception, which was discovered to be important to all explanations. The statistical tests used to determine correlation and significance were the inferential tests of Fisher's analysis of variance and Pearson's chi-square.

Interviews formed the primary source of the study. Three types of interviews were administered. The first, preliminary interviews, were largely unstructured. A small sample of people, with varying backgrounds in the L.D.S. Church, were selected. Attempts were made to solicit opinions from the wide spectrum of Mormon thought. Open-ended questions were asked, and the people were encouraged to pursue
a line of thought or wander off into related areas. This type of interview formed the basis for structuring the more formal nature of the remaining interviews. They provided insight into interpreting results and understanding complex relationships of all the collected data. Although essential in preliminary research, this type of interview was continued throughout the complete period of data collecting whenever opportunities were present because of its valuable characteristics.

The second and third types of interviews contained structured questions. People were asked direct questions and responded by making a choice among possible alternative answers. The second type was the longest of the two, containing eleven opinion questions, twenty-one places requiring the respondents to rank preference, and eleven informational questions about the personal backgrounds of respondents. These questionnaires were administered to a random sample drawn from the Sacramento North Stake of the L.D.S. Church in and near Sacramento, California. The region comprises the general northwest sector of the city extending through the nearby suburbs. These interviews were administered by telephone. Random telephone numbers were selected from the stake directory with the use of a random number table. The questions were asked to the persons answering the telephone if he was over fourteen years in age and a Mormon, if not such a person was solicited. A sample of sixty-one was selected from a population of approximately 3,000. Hereafter, this sample will be referred to as the Sacramento sample.

The third type of interview was the most important and provided the most conclusive data. The questionnaire was shortened for effi-
ciency to include the eleven opinion questions, only seven places to be ranked, and the eleven background questions.1 This interview was administered by mail to a larger sample located throughout the contiguous United States. A sample of 800 members was selected from the Mormon population, and 306 questionnaires were returned.

The sampling technique used for determining the opinions of the large Mormon population within the contiguous states was both complex in nature and laden with some difficulties related to the availability of addresses. There existed no complete list of L.D.S. Church members that was available to the researcher. However, a directory of local officers was available.2 The following procedure was followed in order to select as random a sample as possible with the facilities available: in order to investigate the significance of regionality, the contiguous states were divided into eleven regions (see Figure 1); for each region nineteen local officers were randomly selected from the directory with the aid of a random number table; then each officer was sent four questionnaires and was requested to administer them to four randomly selected Mormons in his area.

Within this manner of selection are found certain intrinsic weaknesses. (1) The complete Mormon population of the contiguous states was not randomly sampled by one direct method. Only the local officers were so sampled. (2) It appears obvious that the local officers did not use a scientific method in selecting the members to administer their four questionnaires. Rather, they probably

1A copy of each of the questionnaires that were used is included as Appendix A.

2The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Directory: General Authorities and Officers 1971.
FIGURE 1
Regions of the United States as used in the Nation-wide Survey
administered them to people nearest them at the time they received the request. The fact that church officers by the nature of their positions see a great number of people in relatively short periods would tend to make the sample random. However, it is the more active Mormons they see the most of, which would tend to bias the sample towards such people. To verify this assumption one may note that of the 306 questionnaires returned, only 18 respondents had marked on them that they did not attend church meetings often, while in the overall Mormon population the percentage of inactive members would be considerably higher.

Therefore, it cannot accurately be assumed that each person within the total Mormon population, under consideration, received an equal chance of having been chosen. It is therefore necessary to more sharply define the population that was sampled and interviewed under this third process. It was that portion of the Mormon population which was the more active in and attentive to church functions. With the population so defined, the sampling procedure produced much more accurate results. Also, this weakness is not as important as it may first appear. As the data demonstrates, the more active portion of the Mormons were the most consistent in their feelings of sacredness. It was that portion which would be of most importance to the study, and a fairly representative portion of the opinions of inactive Mormons was expressed in the Sacramento sample, in earlier studies by the author, and even in the few such returns of this sample. As long as

1By comparing this proportion of returned questionnaires with general church averages of active members, it is estimated that the population here sampled is about 50 per cent of the total Mormon population in the area considered.
no more is assumed than the techniques and data will allow, the study is scientific and will increase our understanding of this largely neglected area of geographic research, the perception of sacred space. Hereafter, this latter sample will be referred to as the nation-wide sample.

**Overview**

The remaining portion of this thesis will examine in detail the concept of sacred space, especially as it applies to a modern religious group, the Mormons. Theoretical aspects of the concept will be explored in chapter two. Concepts concerning the development of and the reasons for sacred places, generic classifications, and generic and genetic relationships will be developed. Chapter three will investigate these concepts as they relate to Mormon thought and action. The perception of specific places will be examined. The responses to the ranking of sacred places by interviewees will be evaluated, and some explanations will be proposed.

Zion is one of the most sacred places to Mormons. The unique concept of a place called "Zion" in America will be examined in chapter four. The historical development of the concept will be traced and the variation of perception in time noted. Chapter five will investigate the responses from the surveys on the perception of Utah and other places as Zion. Chapter six will examine the problem of what makes Utah a sacred place and discuss the possible future effects of this perception on the state according to responses from interviews.
CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF SACRED SPACE

Geographical Space: A Fundamental Concept in Geography

Geographical or earthly space has traditionally been a fundamental concept in geography, used in conceptualizing most geographical methodologies. As with any vital and progressive academic discipline, the methodology of geography is in continual flux. The methodological debate and the challenging of norms are healthy and life-giving to the science. To prescribe bounds to it by establishing a simple, direct definition of geography has proven untenable; and yet, an almost mutually accepted concern with geographical space has acted as a unifying factor.1 Peter Haggett listed five traditional themes of geographic scrutiny: areal differentiation, landscape, man-environment, spatial distribution, and the currently popular geometric theme.2 Although not explicitly stated in the titles, each of these themes has, to a greater or lesser degree, an implicitly unifying central concern, that of geographical space, especially as the home of man. The traditional chorological paradigm has the spatial construct as a central concern, as Hartshorne illustrated by defining geography


as the "discipline that seeks to describe and interpret the variable character from place to place of the earth as the world of man."

"Space" may be defined as the indefinitely great three-dimensional expanse in which material objects are located and events occur. Universal space is the total expanse of the universe. The construct of "earthly" or "geographical space" is limited to include that portion of universal space that is at or near the earth's surface. The construct of "place" is further defined and limited to be a particular portion of geographical space.

**Sacred Space**

This paper is specifically concerned with a certain kind of space, that of sacred space. Sacred space does not naturally exist as such, hence it is a much more abstract construct than those mentioned above. It exists only in the real, three-dimensional expanse as man defines, limits, and characterizes it. Sacred space exists only for the esoteric, those who know and accept its *raison d'être* and its characteristics. Sacred space largely exists in the minds of men. Its expression in geographical space is, however, the major concern of geographers. As noted earlier, they have, at least in part, realized its importance. A knowledge of the perception of sacred space is essential to a fuller explanation of that expression. We need to understand what is in the mind in order to understand man's earth and his use of it.

Man first defines space as sacred when it manifests itself to him as something "wholly different from the profane" space he is most

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1Hartshorne, *Perspective on the Nature of Geography*, p. 35.
familiar with.¹ The religious man sensing the unfamiliar perceives it as a manifestation of the sacred. The place is perceived in an emotional manner, usually becoming a supernatural reality to him. He may not even be able to recognize the natural character of the place, thereafter. To the man without the manifestation, the place remains profane, like the rest of geographical space, and his perception of it would be of a more rational and a less emotional nature.

Eliade claims that the history of religions, from the most primitive to the most highly developed, is constituted by a great number of manifestations of the sacred. He noted that the "completely profane world, the wholly desacralized cosmos, is a recent discovery in the history of the human spirit."² From a ridge-top revered by primitive tribes to a religious capital respected by modern church members, sacred space is a manifestation of something of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong completely to our natural and profane world.

Classification of Sacred Places

Explanations as to why certain portions of geographical space manifest a sacred power and as a result become sacred places are difficult to formulate. Reasons are numerous, and this study will be unable to unravel the complex chains of causal relationships a complete explanation would require. The causal chains reach deep into the past beyond recorded history, deep into an individual's psyche and a community's mind, and deep into the infinitely complex nature of

¹Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 11-13.
²Ibid., p. 13.
geographical space. At present, all of these are beyond our complete scrutiny and comprehension. Intervening variables confuse relations. However, a generic classification will be formulated, and genetic relationships will be deductively stated. Within the limits of the techniques used, inductive examinations of genetic and generic relationships will follow as they apply to this case study.

Five general types of sacred places can be identified: (1) places of mystical manifestations, (2) homelands, (3) places important to historical legacies, (4) functional religious places, and (5) places connected with the past or future purported fulfillment of prophecy. In places of each of the five types, there is perceived manifestation of sacred power to members of a sect or a restricted social group. To them the manifestations are realities not myths. The manifestations may be related to deeply religious piety or to equally deep non-religious sensitivities based more strongly on emotion than on rationale. These five categories are not mutually exclusive. They, however, provide a basis for the further examination of the perception of sacred space.

**Generic and Genetic Relationships:**

**Emergence from Chaos**

To the theoretical early man possessing no developed culture or philosophy, the world was chaotic, chaotic within and without. Chaos existed throughout his surrounding environment, within his cosmic milieu,¹ his geographical space, and his own psyche. As man rose from the animal stage, harmonistic needs began to be felt,

¹The cosmic milieu is the perceived universe.
particularly the need to make a functional, workable adjustment
to the world and some explanation of the nature and purpose of his
life in it. Primitive man brought order to the chaos. Metaphysical
questions were naively answered through religious animism. Order
was brought to the environment by the structuring of space.¹ The
sacred became manifested in space as a place was designated as home,
as areas were recognized as food producers, as places of danger were
discovered, and as places of taboo or sanctity were recognized. The
mental wrestling with metaphysical questions, the bringing of order
to chaos, and the structuring of space have been and still are the
major reasons for the development of sacred places. Without modern
man's huge cultural legacy, his world would appear to be even more
chaotic than that of primitive man's, and hence the existence of
sacred places today. Regardless of the nature of the religion, these
factors are involved. Religious systems from simple, primitive
animism to complex, advanced Buddhism and Christianity have generated
sacred places. Even nonreligious humans consciously or subconsciously
recognize some places as sacred. It appears to be a common human
trait, resulting mainly from a felt need to bring order to the per-
plexing nature of reality.

Places of Mystical Manifestations

Places of mystical manifestations help man to emerge from
this chaos.² They are places providing for believers "truths"

¹Tuan, Man and Nature, pp. 18-21.

²"Mystical" is used here in the broad and mild sense as an intu-
itive and emotive apprehension of spiritual reality. It is used in the
sense that most sensitive men (whether religious or not) are mystical.
believed to transcend ordinary understanding or provide an intimate relationship with the supernatural. This type of sacred place is related to the deepest of spiritual feelings, and as a result it is most keenly felt by the more religiously or humanistically sensitive people.

Places of mystical manifestation are common among animists. Overawed with reality, unable to explain their cosmic milieu, they perceive the sacred to be manifested in the most ordinary of environmental processes and places. They find gods and spirits in objects like plants, animals, and tools, and in places like mountains, hills, and groves. These objects and places are venerated not for their own sake, but for their perceived manifestation of supernatural power.¹

Advanced religions have a similar but more sophisticated perception of places of mystical manifestation. For them, they are places for deep contemplation, spiritual communication, and religious ritual. Temples, cathedrals, retreats, caves are examples. To both the religious and the nonreligious, places located within nature provide a sanctuary for higher thought and reflection away from the mundane world. One's study or garden, or any place of solitude, regardless of size or ownership, may be such a place. The sacred is manifested in and through these places providing contemplation of and communication with higher realities and the developing of unity with the cosmic milieu. Chaos is removed or at least repressed.

A major subdivision of this type of sacred place are those identified with a sanctifying power. It calls for seeking out and

making contact. It is a sanctuary or a refuge. Being the most common type, they are found in all religions and among many nonreligious people. They provide order through solitude or through congregational worship.

A second subdivision is a place perceived as containing a dangerous power. It is taboo and demands appeasement, usually through ritual. It is never dealt with carelessly or casually and is approached with anxiety, and often avoided completely. These places are common among animists. They are located beyond the tribal hearth, and in the less familiar wilderness. Since these places are spared normal human use, reserves of natural forest are often preserved.

Sacred places combining traits from both subdivisions are often encountered. It may be a sanctuary to the initiated and purified, but a taboo to the infidel. The Holy of Holies in the temple of ancient Israel and Mecca, the sacred city of Islam, are examples. A pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the five religious duties required of every Moslem, if possible, but the city is taboo to non-Moslems. Places of mystical manifestations take many forms, from a grove wherein an animist appeases numerous spirits, through the Kubah stone surrounded by Moslem pilgrims, to another grove wherein an atheist contemplates his unity with nature.

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1Ibid., pp. 94-108.


3Tuan, Man and Nature, p. 25.


5Noss, Man's Religions, pp. 737-38.
At each place a degree of order is brought to man's perceived chaotic milieu.

Homelands

Homelands as sacred places are of great significance. Most people feel an emotional tie to a portion of space designated as "home," either a place where reared as a child or some home since childhood. They usually stimulate feelings of nonreligious sacredness, but often there is also an associated religious sensitivity.

A homeland, like other sacred places, is sacred because of its function in the bringing of order to chaos. "It is sacred space, not necessarily because of the ultra-mundane events that are believed to have place there; it is sacred--more generally speaking--because it is reified order. Beyond it is profane space, chaos, or wilderness." This place called "home" is a place of security, where basic needs are fulfilled. It is a place to which one knows his relationship. There he knows what to expect and what is expected of him in return. Order exists there because home is familiar. Likewise, the sacred is manifested at home because of its order. Satisfying impressions are felt in its center, but anxiety increases as one ventures off into the profane space.

Homelands often are perceived as occupying the center of the world, and space is ordered around it. This expresses the seemingly universal trait of ethnocentrism. Manifestations of sacred power are expressed in myths and legends created to give credence to this ethnocentric viewpoint. The occurrence of special events during the

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1 Tuan, Man and Nature, p. 18.
creation may be perceived to have occurred in the area, establishing it as the center, or divinely directed wanderings to the region may reveal it as the center of the world.¹

In order to perceive a place as a homeland, one need not have necessarily lived there. Ancestral homelands and cultural and ideological hearths often invoke strong feelings of reverence even though one may have never even visited the area. Israel is perceived by Jews, living in numerous different countries, as their homeland. Athens is perceived by many scholars as the "home" of Western Civilization. Many people claim several homelands, each of which are sacred to them in varying degrees.

Places Important to Historical Legacies

The historical legacy of a group is essential to its perpetuation. It provides cohesiveness to the group, keeping it from disintegrating. It is composed of historical events and myths, often important in the establishment of order. Since these events, real or fabricated, occurred in space, the places are remembered and become sacred. The place of "historical-religious holiness" is linked with an historical personality, as a founder or a saint.² A birth, a miracle, an enlightenment, a sacrifice, a martyrdom, or a revelation are events making places sacred.

Places important to historical legacies are recognized by most social groups. Being common among religious groups, these places are not limited to them. Places of important patriotic or nonreligious

¹Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religions, pp. 374-79.
ideological occurrences often invoke special feelings of reverence. Monuments and memorials to people and events are included. Gettysburg and Gethsemane are both sacred places important to the historical legacies of patriotic Americans and believing Christians.

Functional Religious Places

Functional religious places are sacred since they are regularly encountered in a person's or a group's religious life. Buildings for congregational assemblies are sacred. Often they may also be places of mystical manifestation, but not always, due to their more common functional nature. Other buildings and places are included.

The religious capital is an interesting type of sacred functional place, usually invoking strong feelings of sacredness. Usually important religious events draw large crowds to the capital. They may be centers of instructional meetings, rituals, or pilgrimages. They are probably also places having characteristics of the other four general types. The site may have contained the most revered place of mystical manifestation, or have been the cultural homeland, or a key place in the historical legacy, and then from that start it grew into the religious capital. Religious capitals are complex places, in other respects, allowing profane functions to occur alongside sacred functions. As a functional religion exists to remove chaos for great numbers of people, these places help to bring order to reality.

Places for the Fulfillment of Prophecy

Places important in the past or future purported fulfillment of prophecy are not important to all religious groups. Most groups are not prophetic by nature. Traditional Judaism and fundamental
Christianity, especially millennialist groups, have prophecy in their legacy. Jerusalem, to them, is a sacred place not only because it fulfills the requirements of the other four categories, but also because of the numerous prophecies which have purportedly been fulfilled there and will yet be fulfilled. The Mormons are a very prophetic religious group; and this type of sacred place is important to them; but the discussion of their perception of them will be found in the remaining chapters.
CHAPTER III

THE PERCEPTION OF MYSTICAL SACRED PLACES IN MORMONDOM

In the preceding chapter theoretical aspects of sacred space were discussed, and a generic classification was formulated. In this chapter these ideas will be extended to include an examination of mystical sacred places (one of the five classes) as perceived by the Mormons. To the average member of the Mormon Church, places of mystical manifestation would appear to be lacking in the Church. On closer examination it is discovered that the major reason for this is their misconception of the word 'mysticism.' Mysticism is almost never used by Mormons in discussing their religious experiences. To most of them it is an obscure word with negative connotations, associated with "apostate churches" and "pagan religions." However, with its more general meaning (that of a spiritual reception of truth directly from deity, or in more commonly used Mormon terms "revelation" and "divine inspiration"), Mormonism may be considered a highly mystical religion. The places most commonly associated with the reception of revelation are the Mormon temples. The Sacred Grove (Figure 2) and to a lesser extent the Mormon chapels and meeting houses and even the

1"The Sacred Grove" is the name given to a grove of trees near Palmyra, New York, where Joseph Smith (the founder of the Mormon Church) when fourteen years old purportedly received his "first" vision of God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, His Son. The Sacred Grove has become the property of the Mormon Church and is visited often by its members.
FIGURE 2

Sacred and Historical Places
Mentioned in Text
homes of members are also viewed by some as places of mystical manifestations, under this definition.

**Mormon Temples**

The Mormon temples are places where the sacred is perceived to be the most strongly manifested. They are believed to be the "houses of the Lord," places where God visits and where His spirit is most abundantly felt.\(^1\) Adding to their sacred nature, many other supernatural occurrences have been reported to have occurred inside or in connection with most of them.\(^2\) Setting them even further apart from profane space, they are maintained as taboo to non-Mormons and even "unrighteous" members. A recommend, attesting to the worthiness of an individual, is required for his admission. To those qualified to enter, the temple becomes a sanctuary, shielding him from the profane-ness of the profane world outside. Fourteen temples are presently (1972) being used in the Church: six in Utah, two on the West Coast, one each in Arizona, Hawaii, Canada, England, Switzerland, and New Zealand. A temple is under construction in Maryland. They all command deep feelings of reverence from believers.

As indicated by the preliminary interviews and the responses from the Sacramento sample, the temples were perceived as being the most sacred of sacred places. The respondents interviewed in the Sacramento sample were asked to rank two groups of places, with seven

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\(^1\)Mormon doctrine states that God has a physical body and is physically limited to time and space, but His spirit is omnipresent; Doctrine and Covenants (*Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1921) 130:20.

places in each group, according to their perceived sacredness. They were informed that the term "sacred" meant feelings of religious reverence or nonreligious emotional respect. This broad definition recognizes for them that the sacred could be manifested in nonreligious places as well as religious places. In most cases (84 per cent) people ranked religious places above nonreligious places. Likewise, in the majority of cases (71 per cent), the temples were ranked as the most sacred.

Only two of the Mormons interviewed did not perceive the temples as sacred. There was general agreement among subgroups (independent-variable groups, e.g., age) as to the sacred status of the temples, with no significant differences existing between them on the issue. Mormons who have never been inside the temples and who are inactive in church attendance are some of the greatest defenders of the sanctity of these edifices. To these people the temples symbolize an ideal. The temples have a sacred, mystical nature about them which is powerfully felt and expressed.

Perception of the Salt Lake Temple

The Salt Lake Temple to the majority was perceived as being the most sacred place in Mormonism. With the first group of places to be ranked according to sacredness, members of the Sacramento sample compared the Salt Lake Temple with other temples, chapels, and their homes. The Salt Lake Temple was chosen the most sacred by 55 per cent of the respondents, receiving a mean ranking of 1.92 (on a scale of 1 through 7, with 1 being the highest possible rank). Its nearest rival

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1See Appendix B for the means of these responses.
in sacredness was the Oakland Temple, being the nearest temple to them and a new structure to which many had made donations for its construction. It was chosen by 14 per cent as the most sacred and received a mean ranking of 2.39. The remaining temples presently being used in the Church received a mean ranking of 3.43.

When the Salt Lake Temple was compared with the Sacred Grove (to be discussed later), Bethlehem (the birthplace of Jesus Christ), and other places, it remained the most sacred place, but lost slightly some of its status. In this case the Salt Lake Temple was chosen first place by 50 per cent. Twenty-three per cent chose the Sacred Grove as the most sacred and 25 per cent chose Bethlehem. These responses indicate the strongly entrenched position of the Salt Lake Temple in the minds of the L.D.S. people.

Why is the Salt Lake Temple perceived by so many as being so sacred? Along with its sacred status as being an L.D.S. temple, several other factors have helped to separate it even further from the profane world. It is generally perceived that the temple was built by a despoiled and destitute people, over an extensive period of time (forty years), at a time when they were struggling for existence in the midst of adverse surroundings. It is perceived as massive, towering, and majestic. Numerous supernatural events have been attributed to have occurred there.¹ It is there that many believe the president of the Church receives divine revelation.

The architectural morphology of the Salt Lake Temple is often perceived as divinely designed. This belief probably has its roots

¹Lundwall, Temples of the Most High, pp. 122-46.
in a claim by Brigham Young, that he had seen the temple in a vision five years before the Saints had entered the Salt Lake Valley and testified that he saw it having "six towers instead of one." The image of the temple is commonly perceived as an unofficial symbol of Mormonism. It is recognized by most in the Church and many outside it. The new L.D.S. temple under construction (1972) in Silver Springs, Maryland, will have its design based on its prototype in Salt Lake City so it can "immediately be recognized as a Mormon Temple." The Salt Lake Temple is the most sacred place in Mormonism today, and it commands greater interest and excitement from Mormons and visitors than any other place in the Church, as is illustrated by the over one million annual visitors to its grounds.

The Protective Nature of the Temples

If a temple is such a sacred place and is the Lord's house, would He be likely to protect it in the event of disaster? In an earlier unpublished study by the author, it was demonstrated that the majority of Mormons in Provo and Manti, Utah, believe that He would provide protection for His temples. The intervention of God into natural disasters in order to provide protection was perceived to be significantly higher than in disasters caused by man. In both cases there was at least a partial conviction that God would intervene to protect His temples.

1 Brigham Young, Millennial Star, XV (1853), 488.


An important problem evolves from the one above. If God was to protect the temple from disaster, would the surrounding area also be protected? Is the area surrounding a Mormon temple more secure from disaster than an area without a Mormon temple? This latter question was asked people surveyed in the nation-wide sample. Most of the people interviewed at least partly believed that the area surrounding a temple was more secure from disaster. Only 19 per cent could definitely state that they could see no connection between security and having a temple located in the area. One lady from Manti said that she had been taught by religious leaders, especially the Stake Patriarch, that their valley was protected because of the temple being located there. Others felt that a city containing a Mormon temple would be protected if a majority (one man said even a tithe or 10 per cent) were righteous according to the L.D.S. connotation of that term. A few stated that the temple would act as a center of security and that the surrounding area would be protected as far out from it as there could be found people who lived righteously.

Interesting differences existed among subgroups on this issue (Table 1). The active Mormons (those people who stated that they attend church meetings often) expressed a significantly stronger positive answer, significant at the .01 level of confidence, to the question of the temples providing protection than their fellow inactive Mormons. This is as one would probably assume since inactive Mormons are not allowed inside the temples after they are dedicated, but it

1Stake Patriarchs in the Mormon Church are local officers receiving high esteem from the members residing in their individual regions. Their commissions are to give blessings to "worthy" church members.
### TABLE 1
RESPONSES TO QUESTION #4

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<tr>
<th>Mean Responses Differentiated by Respondents' Attendance at Church Meetings</th>
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<td>Often (active)</td>
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<td>Occasionally (inactive)</td>
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<th>Mean Responses Differentiated by Whether Respondents Were Lifetime Members or Converts</th>
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<td>Lifetime Members</td>
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<td>Converts:</td>
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<td>Less than 5 years</td>
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<td>5-9 years</td>
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<td>Greater than 20 years</td>
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<th>Mean Responses Differentiated by the Age of the Respondents</th>
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<td>Age (in years)</td>
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<td>60-69</td>
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<td>Over 69</td>
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<th>Mean Responses Differentiated by the Region in Which Respondents Live</th>
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<td>Region</td>
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<td>Southern California</td>
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<td>Northern California</td>
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should not be overemphasized. Only 31 per cent of the inactive Mormons made a definite "no" response, compared with 18 per cent of the active Mormons. Even though they do not regularly attend church meetings, the majority of the inactive Mormons have strong feelings about the temple and about living near it.

An interesting pattern of differences existed between responses from lifetime church members and converts to Mormonism, with significance at the .05 level. Responses from lifetime members were assumed to be a standard to which responses from converts were compared. Converts with less than five years in the Church responded less positively than lifetime members, expressing probably a lag in conversion to this secondary and unofficial Mormon belief. The peak in positive responses was received from converts of from five to ten years in the Church, expressing probably an "over conversion." From ten years in the Church on, there was a general subsidence in the intensity of positive responses and an equalization to the level of those from lifetime members.

The response pattern that existed when age groups were isolated and compared is equally interesting. With an increase in age there was a significantly general increase in the strength of "yes" responses on this question of whether the temples provide security to an area (significant at the .05 level). There is also a significant slump in the strength of responses from the twenty-to-thirty age group.

Responses from regional subgroups were very complex and difficult to explain. The differences were significant at the .01 level of confidence. There was a significantly stronger response from rural
Utah than from urban Utah (Figure 2)\(^1\) which may have been an expression of rural fundamentalism. Responses from southern Idaho and the Pacific Northwest were similar to those from rural Utah, while responses from California were similar to those from urban Utah. This reflects the similarity in the areas, with California and urban Utah being urbanized and the other areas more rural. Large cities exist in the Pacific Northwest, but it is a more rural region than California. The highest responses were from the northeastern states, the region most distant from a Mormon temple. Conversely, the three lowest mean responses were from areas which have a temple within their region (the Southwest, southern California, and urban Utah). A simple explanation based on a strong response from areas distant from a temple and a weak response when a temple is near is not possible because of the very high responses from rural Utah and southern Idaho (which have temples). The difference in perception seems to be a function of both distance and urban-rural location.

**Summary**

In summary it may be stated that places of mystical manifestations are the most sacred of sacred places. They are places in which communication with the Eternal is least impeded. By definition all sacred places afford spiritual communication, and in that sense all sacred places would be places of mystical manifestation. Here, however, we have been concerned with those places whose primary reason for being sacred is that they inspire spiritual communication and contemplation.

\(^1\)Urban Utah, for the purposes of this study, was defined as the four urbanized counties of Salt Lake, Utah, Davis, and Weber. Rural Utah was the rest of the state.
of a high order. In Mormonism the temples are the most important places of this category, but they are not the only such places. Other examples will be discussed later in other connections.¹ Members of the L.D.S. Church usually agree that the temples provide communion with God and the "spirit world." Parley P. Pratt, one of the first Apostles in the Mormon Church, expressed this idea at the cornerstone-laying ceremony of the Salt Lake Temple, when he said that the temple will provide a holy sanctuary where "the people may seek their God" and "that the heaven and earth, and world of spirits may commune together."² Most Mormons perceive the temples as providing portals for communication with the divine and the spiritual, as any place of mystical manifestations should provide.

¹The Sacred Grove will be discussed in connection with places important to the historical legacy and chapels with functional religious places.

CHAPTER IV

OTHER SACRED PLACES IN MORMONDOM

As with many religious bodies, sacred places in Mormondom are not a rarity. Places of all five general types occur. In the preceding chapter, mystical sacred places were examined, and it was found that the Mormon temples are the best examples of places of that category occurring within Mormondom. Sacred places growing out of the historical legacy are many. They include the most important places associated with Biblical events and numerous places associated with early Mormon history. Sacred places of the functional category include the religious capital of Salt Lake City and chapels and meeting houses. Cemeteries are both places important to a family's historical legacy and serve functional religious purposes, illustrating again that the categories are not mutually exclusive. A place called "Adam-ondi-Ahman" (Figure 2) is sacred not so much because of its historical legacy, and it serves no present function, but because of the belief that in the future important prophecy will be fulfilled there. As a result of recorded prophecy, the sacredness of several places is increased. The homes of members are perceived by many to be sacred. Jackson County, Missouri, and the present state of Utah (Figure 2), both historically important and having interesting prophecies recorded about them, are largely sacred because they are perceived as the homelands of Mormonism. As a result, they rank as some of the most sacred of places. In this
chapter we will examine these remaining types of sacred places as they are perceived to exist by the Mormons, except the sacred homelands which will be discussed later.

Places Important to the Mormon Historical Legacy

Some places are perceived as sacred because of the exceptional events that are attributed to have occurred there. The Mormons, as inheritors of a rich historical legacy, have many such sacred places. Borrowing from the ancient Hebrews, they accept the history and myths of the Old Testament. The holy places of the Hebrews are honored, but those places becoming sacred to Judaism after the beginning of Hellenistic control are generally rejected as being sacred. Mount Sinai has sacred connotations to most, but the Wailing Wall does not. As will be illustrated later, Old Testament references have had a strong influence on the Mormon perception of sacred space even when the places considered are in the New World.

Of course, the Mormons accept the sacred places associated with the New Testament, especially those places connected with the life of Christ. However, those places associated with Christian history after the close of the Apostolic Era are not perceived as sacred since Mormon doctrine maintains that Christianity then entered a period of apostasy. Gethsemane is sacred, but St. Peter's Basilica or the Cathedral at Canterbury are not sacred. From the nation-wide sample interviews, the Holy Land received a mean ranking as the third most sacred place below the Future City of Zion (believed by many to later be built in Jackson County, Missouri) and Utah, but above early Mormon historical areas, the individual's present state of residence, regions
surrounding Utah, and present-day Jackson County, Missouri.¹

Nineteenth Century America saw the emergence of the Mormon Church, the eventful history of the infant religious group, and the making of several important sacred places as a result. From Sharon, Vermont, where Joseph Smith was born in 1805, to Utah, where the main body of the Saints began to settle in 1847, places reminiscent of important historical and spiritual events are located.²

Located in western New York about two miles south of the town of Palmyra (Figure 2), is a house in which Joseph Smith lived as a boy and young man. Joseph Smith claimed he had received several divinely instigated visions in that house. Nearby is the Hill Cumorah where Smith purportedly received the "golden plates" from which he translated the Book of Mormon. As a result, the hill and the house are generally perceived as sacred. Near to these places is one of the most sacred places in Mormonism, the Sacred Grove. It was in the Sacred Grove that Joseph Smith claimed his religious career began. That career eventually led to him becoming the prophet and founder of the Mormon Church and culminated in his murder twenty-four years later. He purported that he went into the grove when he was fourteen and saw in vision God, the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, in human-like form. From them he

¹Places other than the Holy Land will be discussed under the section on homelands.

²Works on Mormon history are numerous, but standard references include: Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1902). (Hereinafter referred to as History of the Church.); B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930). (Hereinafter referred to as Comprehensive History.); Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials in Church History (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1953). (Hereinafter referred to as Essentials.)
received his commission to be a prophet.¹

Based on the responses from the Sacramento sample, the Sacred Grove was perceived as the second most sacred place in Mormonism.² When compared with the Salt Lake Temple, Bethlehem, and several other places, the Sacred Grove received a mean ranking in sacredness just below that of the Salt Lake Temple. While the Salt Lake Temple is the strongest image or symbol associated with Mormonism, the image of the Sacred Grove, as it is invoked by the artist's conception of it showing the young prophet kneeling with heavenly beings standing above him in the air, is perceived as the second strongest such image.

The Sacred Grove was ranked above Bethlehem in perceived sacredness. The Sacred Grove recalls to Mormons the three central figures of their religion, while Bethlehem recalls just one. The Sacred Grove is unique to Mormonism, but Bethlehem is shared with all Christians. The events at the Sacred Grove are closer to Mormons in time and space than is Bethlehem.

Some interesting variations from the overall mean rankings occurred when the sample responses were differentiated according to two independent variables. Converts of less than ten years in the Church generally perceived Bethlehem as more sacred than both the Salt Lake Temple and the Sacred Grove, while after that time converts tended to rank Bethlehem below these other two uniquely Mormon sacred places. This limited sampling tends to indicate that there occurs a period of several years after conversion when a convert's perception

¹Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 1, 1-51.

²Mean rankings from the responses from this sample are included in Appendix B.
of sacredness in universally accepted Christian places is replaced by those that are uniquely Mormon. Looking at another independent variable, inactive Mormons generally ranked the Salt Lake Temple as the most sacred, but felt that Bethlehem was more sacred than the Sacred Grove. There appears to be, among inactive Mormons, a stronger perception of sacredness for traditional Christian places than for those that are uniquely Mormon, with the exception of the over-all strength of the image of the temple being impressed over the whole.

It is interesting to note that Carthage Jail in Illinois, the place where the Mormon prophet was killed, was ranked as the fourth most sacred place in the total comparison. When one considers that the Carthage Jail as a sacred place involved the lesser of the three central figures, it can easily be understood why it was perceived as less sacred than Bethlehem, which was associated with the greater figure. And both of those places were ranked below a place associated with both figures, the Sacred Grove.

Sacred places of this category, those developing out of historical legacies, are not limited to religious places. Places may be perceived as sacred in the sense of invoking emotional respect or appeal, having nothing to do with the religious or supernatural. If sacred may be defined as deep respect tinged with awe, then sacred, nonreligious places exist. Sacred places can and usually do develop out of one's social, political, and family legacies. Sacrifice, valor, and statesmanship are nonreligious characteristics producing such places. When the Lincoln Memorial was compared with other places, it was perceived as the least sacred. This does not mean that there exists a lack of patriotism among the Mormons. Only three per cent of the
people responded that they did not perceive it as a sacred place. It just was not perceived as being as sacred as the religious places or the respondent's home town to which it was compared. This comparison, the comparison of family homes with other places, and the preliminary interviews indicate that an over-all hierarchy exists among places as they are perceived sacred by the Mormons descending from religious through family to national.

Functional Religious Places

As with any religious group, those places which commonly serve religious purposes are perceived as sacred. Salt Lake City, being the religious capital of Mormonism, is so perceived. Salt Lake is not solely a Mormon city. Early in its history non-Mormons made their homes there, and today only about half of its inhabitants are not in the L.D.S. Church. Many small communities away from this core have a population composed of a much higher proportion of Mormons. Profane functions are widespread throughout the city as it serves as a central place for all of Utah and much of the surrounding regions in neighboring states. Yet Salt Lake City is perceived by many as a sacred city.

In interviewing people it was expressed that the strongest feelings of sacredness were centered on the Salt Lake Temple, and as one moves out from Temple Square the perceived sacredness becomes less strong. One man in Sacramento said that a photograph, showing an oblique view of the city taken from an airplane conveyed to him stronger feelings of sacredness than views from within the city itself. Other Mormons in Sacramento were then asked about the degree of sacredness changing with changes in vantage points. Most agreed that the "air-
plane" view showing much of the city and the mountains in the background kindled greater feelings that Salt Lake was a sacred city than views from within, with the exception that views within Temple Square were the most sacred of all.

It was also expressed, especially by out-of-state Mormons, that Salt Lake City often becomes a symbol of church authority since that is where the church headquarters are located. Directives to church members are often said to have come from "Salt Lake City" rather than specifying that they are from the "church headquarters" located at that city. Mormons from throughout the world come to the city for conference, to visit the temple, or to transact church business. As a result of these and numerous historical reasons, it becomes evident why Salt Lake City is perceived as sacred and a symbol of authority.

Ward chapels or meeting houses serve functional religious purposes. They were generally perceived as less sacred than the temples because of the chapel's more familiar function. When the Sacramento sample was asked to compare the sacredness of chapels with the temples and their own homes, most of the respondents expressed that the ward chapels were less sacred than the temples, but more sacred than their homes. Only 6 per cent of those responding perceived the ward chapels as the most sacred, but 22 per cent perceived them as less sacred than both the temples and their homes.

In summarizing the characteristics of the perception of functional religious places, a tentative generalization can be developed. Out-of-state Mormons generally feel stronger about Salt Lake City being a sacred city than Utah Mormons. The city is perceived as more sacred from a distant, oblique view than from within. The familiar chapels are
perceived as less sacred than the more restricted and less familiar temples. From this very limited evidence it would be futile to attempt too much of a generalization, but it appears that the more familiar a place is, the less sacred it becomes.

Places Important to the Fulfillment of Prophecy

In considering the world religions, those which have inherited or borrowed scriptures and tradition from the ancient Hebrews (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) are by nature the most prophetic. Considering the Christian churches, the Mormon Church, likewise, has one of the most prophetic of natures. The Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith's first published work, contains numerous prophecies connected with the future of the Church and the world. The Mormon prophet later made numerous other prophecies.¹ Associated with many of these prophecies are places, places where events are to be fulfilled. Some of these places are perceived as sacred. Most are also sacred because of other reasons, but the fact that there exists a prophecy needing to be fulfilled there adds to the place's sacred nature. If an important event has been prophesied to occur in a place, that place cannot easily be forgotten or allowed to revert to profane space.

Several sacred places of this category are associated with the Bible and are found in the Holy Land located in modern Israel and Jordan. Prophecies connected with these places are not necessarily duplicates of Biblical prophecy. Joseph Smith and to a lesser extent other Mormon prophets have re-interpreted Biblical prophecy or have

¹These prophecies are mostly recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants (canonized as Mormon scripture) or the History of the Church; see also Duane S. Crowther, Prophecy: Key to the Future (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1962).
made completely new prophetic statements about the Holy Land, always in reference to the Mormon Church and its dogma. The Mormons join with the Jews and Christians in accepting the Holy Land as a sacred place. Joseph Smith prophesied that the Jews would return to "the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father." The city of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives are perceived as sacred partly because Jesus Christ has been prophesied to return to these places and convert the Jews to Christianity, moreover Mormonism. Mormonism also teaches that Jerusalem is to become the capital of the Old World after Christ returns, and its temple will be rebuilt.

In America several places have important prophecies pertaining to them. Jackson County, Missouri; Utah; the "Rocky Mountains;" and America, itself, have been prophesied as Mormon homeland. One of the most unique of Mormonism's sacred places is Adam-ondi-Ahman. Adam-ondi-Ahman is a hill covered with rock in Daviess County, Missouri. Joseph Smith in May, 1838, first saw the hill and named it "Adam-ondi-Ahman, because said he, it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people." Smith informed those with him "that this is the place where Adam assembled his posterity three years before his death, and there bestowed upon them his blessing. On that occasion the Lord appeared

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1The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1920), 111 Nephi 20:28-29; see also Doctrine and Covenants 110:11, 113:10.

2Doctrine and Covenants 45:51-52, 133:13-25; Charles W. Penrose, Millennial Star, XXI (September 10, 1859), 583.

3Orson Pratt, Journal of Discourses, XIV (1872), 348-50; XX (1880), 153.

4Doctrine and Covenants 116.
Joseph Smith prophesied that to Adam-ondi-Ahman Adam will return and "will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man." Adam will then at Adam-ondi-Ahman turn his stewardship over to Christ, before Christ begins his millennial reign. In talking to Mormons during the interviewing, it became apparent that most believe that Adam-ondi-Ahman is a sacred place. Many do not understand fully Joseph Smith's prophecies pertaining to the place. Most expressed that they felt no special need or desire to visit the place, but they generally accepted it as a place with a divine mission.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter some of the most important of Mormonism's sacred places have been examined as they are perceived to exist. Through interviewing a sample of the Mormon population, the opinion and perceptions have been gathered, synthesized and are being selected, but certainly we have been unable to show how the complete Mormon population perceives sacred space. Weaknesses inherent within any sampling procedure exist, and those inherent within this one have been discussed earlier. However, certain trends of perception as they exist within the population may be inferred within the limits of a reasonable error.

The major fact that this chapter has presented is that Mormonism is not lacking in sacred places. Those places invoking the strongest feelings of sacredness are those associated with religion, although most Mormons express feelings of reverence for their family homes and

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1 Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials, p. 211.
2 Joseph Smith, History of the Church, pp. 386-87.
the nation's patriotic shrines. Up to this point, the sacred places of Mormondom have been examined as they may be grouped under four of the five generic groups.

It has previously been discovered that the most sacred group is the one comprising the places of mystical manifestations. In a sense all sacred places are places of mystical manifestation, but in this category we were concerned with those places for which the major purpose for them being sacred is that they stimulate mystical communication of a high order. A continuum of varying degrees of perceived sacredness appears to be cognitively developed by most people. Places of mystical manifestations occupy the most positive end of that continuum in most people's minds, because they usually inspire maximum spiritual communication. Places of this category are associated with the Eternal. Their primary purpose is in bringing order to the chaos as one would perceive it to eternally exist, to bring meaning to man's minute existence in the eternity of time and space. In Mormonism, the Salt Lake Temple becomes a place and a symbol of maximum spiritual and mystical communication with that which is eternal.

Places developing out of the historical legacy and (as will be shown later) sacred homelands are usually perceived on the continuum of sacredness following the above-mentioned category. These places are mostly associated with historical time (contrasted with eternity). They provide perceived earthly security. They bring order to terrestrial chaos (contrasted with eternal chaos). Carthage Jail and Utah help Mormons to provide order and meaning to their space during their "earthly existence." Places of these two categories have eternal ramifications, but they are secondary.
Places whose main reason for being sacred is that they either serve functional religious purposes or are associated with the fulfillment of prophecy are generally perceived to be lower on the sacredness continuum. In the first case, these places are even more strongly associated with bringing order to historical time and terrestrial space. With the latter, there is the inherent problem with prophecy of any nature. It has not occurred yet, and as a result it becomes somewhat dubious even to many believers.

It should be stated again that the generic classification was based upon common traits that exist in sacred places. Most places, if not all, have multi-traits. Although it will not always hold true, there is some usefulness in the statement that the greater the number of categories a place could be grouped under, the more sacred it presumably would be. The Salt Lake Temple is a place of mystical manifestation; it serves present religious functions; and it has a rich historical legacy. It is no wonder that is is perceived to be the most sacred place in Mormonism.

The homelands of Mormonism also can easily fit into other generic divisions. They are large places and as a result are some of the most important places in Mormonism. It is necessary to examine the historical development of the concept of Zion in Mormonism as we study the development of sacred homelands.
CHAPTER V

THE MAKING OF SACRED HOMELANDS
AND THE LOCATING OF ZION

Mormondom has an abundance of sacred places. Utilizing the
generic system of the five categories of mystical, historical, func-
tional, and prophetic sacred places, and homelands in the examination
of the current perception of those sacred places has been helpful.
Even though the categories are not mutually exclusive, they have pro-
vided a systematic method for the examination of sacred space. The
Mormon perception of places in four of the five categories has been
examined in the previous chapters. The present perception of sacred
homelands will now need to be examined in this same manner, but before
this can successfully be done, it will be necessary to look at the
historical development of these homelands.

History is a part of any sacred place. The moment after a
perception is developed it becomes history. If events were involved
in the development of the perception, they would soon be historical
events. In order to completely explain the current perception of
a place, its history would need to be examined. It has not been
deemed necessary or even desirable to recount here the history of
all the sacred places examined in this study, except those places
important to the Mormon historical legacy (as has already briefly
been presented) and the sacred homelands which will be presented
in this chapter. The histories of places in the three categories
of mystical, functional, and prophetic sacred places are only of minor explanatory importance when compared with the factors of mysticism, function, and prophecy. A recounting of their history here would only distract from the general theme of this paper, rather than clarify that theme. However, the understanding of the perception of sacred homelands can only be successfully understood with an examination of the history of past perceptions of and attitudes toward them. Here we are not concerned with the histories of the places per se, but with the history of the ideas about the places.

The history of those ideas can best be presented as the continuous development of the Mormon concept of "Zion as a place." This concept had its beginnings in ancient Israel as the homeland of the Hebrews. It was adopted into Mormonism by Joseph Smith and applied to places in the New World. The present perception of the Mormon homelands in America can best be understood with an examination of the Mormon concept of Zion.

Some of the most sacred places in Mormondom are those accepted as homelands and called "Zion." These are large areas, extending from county-size through continent-size. Jackson County, Missouri (Figure 2); the modern state of Utah; the Rocky Mountains; and the continents of America are recognized as such. Two of these places are larger and include the remaining places. The Rocky Mountains, as that place-name is usually used by the Mormons, includes Utah and portions of the surrounding states. The American continents include all of the localized homelands of Jackson County, the Rocky Mountains, and Utah.

These places have been important in Mormon history. The Mormons believe that profound prophecies have been made concerning them, and as
a result, they are embodied in the Mormon beliefs. They are viewed as promised lands, as places of refuge, and are of course called "Zion." The beginnings of the use of that latter place-name occurred among pagans in the Middle East, over 3,000 years ago.

**Zion Before the Mormons**

The name "Zion" was first used in the Bible in the narrative of the conquest of Jerusalem by David as described in II Samuel, Chapter 5. Zion was a citadel built on a hill of the same name by the pagan Jebusites. The etymology of the name is uncertain, but it is probably related to the Arabic sahweh or sahyur, interpreted as "hillcrest" or "mountain ridge." The "stronghold of Zion" along with the city fell to David at about 1000 B.C.

David made Jerusalem his capital. On the Mount Zion, Solomon built his temple. When the Ark of the Covenant was transferred to the temple, Mount Zion was truly a sacred place, and Yahweh was then said to dwell there. The Kingdom looked to Zion for the revelations of Yahweh. In time the name "Zion" became a synonym for the name "Jerusalem." Zion then encompassed the complete city, the religious capital. The name "Zion" is overwhelmingly a prophetic and poetic

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4. Yahweh is the name of the Hebrew God.


designation. It usually has emotional and religious overtones. It was taught that the nations which attack Mount Zion will be scattered and those on Mount Zion will escape disaster.¹

After the fall of Jerusalem to the Assyrians and again after the destruction of the city in 70 A.D., the Jews looked with anticipation to the Messianic expectation and the re-establishment of Zion. The Zionist movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is an outgrowth of these feelings.² Most people today, when they think of Zion, think of Zion as the home of the Jews.

Although the name "Zion" is rare in the New Testament, it has been very frequently used in Christian literature and hymns. There it refers either to a heavenly city where Christians live after death, or to an earthly city symbolic of the Church. Anabaptists, Millerites, and other millennialists have looked toward the establishment of a Christian Zion in connection with the millennial reign of Christ, but it is the Mormons who have been most literal in their treatment of the Zionic concept in connection the Christianity.

Early Mormon Concepts of Zion

The Mormon concept of Zion has its roots in a concept of millennialism, which maintains that in the near future "Christ will reign personally upon the earth" for a thousand years, and that a new "Zion will be built upon this (the American) continent."³ From almost the beginning of Joseph Smith's religious career, he taught


²Noss, Man's Religions, pp. 522-26, 560-66, 583.

³Joseph Smith, History of the Church, IV, 541.
the idea that Zion would be built in America in order that Christ might have a capital from which to reign.

The earliest references by the Prophet to Zion is found in the Book of Mormon,¹ which he purportedly translated from an ancient American religious history by supernatural means. The Book of Mormon, however, did not reveal where Zion was to be established. This problem of location became a major concern of the early Mormons and a source of some friction. In the spirit of his times, Smith was looking to the west. In September, 1830, while in New York, Joseph announced as part of a revelation from God:

I say unto you that it is not revealed, and no man knoweth where the city of Zion shall be built, but it shall be given hereafter. Behold, I say unto you that it shall be on the borders by the Lamanites [the American Indians].²

In this same revelation, Oliver Cowdery was called to go on a mission to the Indians.³

By June 7, 1831, Joseph Smith issued as part of a revelation, a call for himself and Sidney Rigdon to go to Missouri and revealed the "land of Missouri . . . is the land of your inheritance."⁴

In Jackson County, Missouri (Figure 2), July, 1831, Joseph Smith proclaimed the following from the Lord:

Harken, ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the Saints. Wherefore this is the land of promise, and the

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¹The Book of Mormon, Ether 13:4-6; III Nephi 21:23.
²Doctrine and Covenants 28:9.
³Ibid., 28:14.
⁴Ibid., 52:2, 42-43.
place for the city of Zion. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot not far from the court-house. (Italics mine.)

On August 2, 1831, Sidney Rigdon dedicated the land of Zion for the gathering of the Saints. The temple site was dedicated on August 3, and on August 4 the first conference was held in Zion. On August 9 Smith and Rigdon left for Kirtland (Figure 2). Zion received some of the Saints, much of the rhetoric, but Kirtland remained the most important center of the Church for the time being.

Before Joseph Smith was convinced where Zion was to be, he was under the impression that it would be a land of peace. The revelation dated March 7, 1831, stated:

It shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the Saints of the Most High. And the glory of the Lord shall be there; and the terror of the Lord shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

By the time of his first announcement of the location of Zion, he must have known the general character of the inhabitants of Independence for he recorded that "the land was in the hands of our enemies." On his first visit to the Missouri Zion, he observed the realities of a frontier settlement, a "jumping-off place" for the West. He recorded: "How natural it was to observe the degradation, leanness of intellect, ferocity, and jealousy of a people that were nearly a century behind

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1Doctrine and Covenants 57:1-3.
2Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 1, 196-97.
3Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials, pp. 134-35.
4Doctrine and Covenants 52:42.
5Ibid., 45:64-66.
the times. 1 Regardless of the ferocity of these degradated Missourians, Joseph was still very optimistic about Zion in 1833. He felt that the Church's enemies would be swept off the earth by war and the land left to the Saints. 2

When the Missouri mobs began to gather and force the Saints from Jackson County in 1833, Joseph Smith responded with "to sell our lands would amount to a denial of our faith, as that is the place where the Zion of God shall stand. According to our faith and belief in the revelation of God." 3 And again he wrote:

"You will recollect that the Lord had said, that Zion should not be removed out of her place; therefore the land should not be sold, but be held by the Saints, until the Lord in His wisdom shall open a way for your return; and until that time, if you can purchase a tract of land in Clay county for present emergencies, it is right you should do so, if you can do it, and not sell your land in Jackson county." 4

In revelation, the prophet explains why the Missouri mobs were forcing the Saints from Zion. "I, the Lord, . . . will chasten her until she overcomes and is clean before me." 5 "Zion shall be redeemed, although she is chastened for a little season." 6 The Missouri Saints are told that if they will remain obedient during this "little season" of chastisement that Zion will prosper. 7 The Zionic chastisement

1Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials, p. 129.
2Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 1, 315-16.
3Joseph Smith, History of the Church, III, 3.
5Doctrine and Covenants 90:36.
6Ibid., 100:13.
7Ibid., 97:18, 25.
became unbearable.

The Saints moved into Clay County, Missouri. In December, 1833, Joseph issued a bold revelation. "There is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed, for the work of the gathering of my Saints."1 Joseph Smith organized Zion's Camp in Kirtland, a small company of men to redeem Zion. Zion's Camp failed and was disbanded in June, 1834, but Joseph set a date for the retaking of Zion. "Be in readiness," he said, "to move into Jackson County in two years from the eleventh of September next [September 11, 1836], which is the appointed time for the redemption of Zion."2

Minutes of a General Council of the Priesthood, May 2, 1835, held in Kirtland, about 700 miles from Zion, read:

"President Joseph Smith, Jun., arose and made some very appropriate remarks, relative to the deliverance of Zion; and, so much of the authority of the Church being present, moved that we never give up the struggle for Zion, even until death, or until Zion is redeemed.

The vote was unanimous, and given with deep feeling. . . .

Wm. E. McLellin, Clerk"3

Zion was not redeemed, not in a "little season," not in their lifetime, or since. Zion was left to the "ungodly," and the Saints moved on. They were forced from Clay County, then from Far West. By May, 1839, the Saints were establishing a new center. Nauvoo, the name of the new center, was said by the Prophet to "be of Hebrew origin" and "signifies a beautiful situation or place carrying with

1Doctrine and Covenants 101:20; 105:5-14.
2Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 11, 145.
3Ibid., 11, 221-22.
it, the idea of rest."

In many ways, Nauvoo was more of a sacred place than Independence. It was a Mormon city, with a large Mormon population, an independent city charter, Mormon rule, a temple under construction, and it was a true religious capital. Yet, it was not Zion. Independence, Missouri, had the inspired pronouncements and the divine revelations—it was the place chosen by God.

Although later men were to pick up the banner of Missouri as Zion and preach of a return to Independence, Joseph Smith, in order to give the new city more spiritual status, abandoned such talk for the rest of his life. Partly for this and partly to relieve social pressure these earlier revelations were still making, Joseph Smith broadened the concept of Zion. On April 8, 1844, at a General Conference of the Church, Joseph said:

I want to make a proclamation to the Elders. I wanted you to stay, in order that I might make this proclamation. You know very well that the Lord has led this Church revelation. I have another revelation in relation to economy in the Church—a great, grand, and glorious revelation. I shall not be able to dwell as largely upon it now as at some other time; but I will give you the first principles. You know there has been great discussion in relation to Zion—where it is, and where the gathering of the dispensation is, and which I am now going to tell you. The prophets have spoken and written upon it; but I will make a proclamation that will cover a broader ground. The whole of America is Zion itself from north to south, and is described by the Prophets, who declare that it is Zion where the mountain of the Lord should be, and that it should be in the center of the land. When Elders shall take up and examine the

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1Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials, pp. 267-68.

2Many examples of this can be found in later discourses by Church leaders, like this one by Brigham Young: "We pray continually for the redemption of Zion, for the Lord to hasten the time when we can return and establish the center Stake of Zion." Journal of Discourses, IX (July 28, 1861), 137.
old prophecies in the Bible, they will see it. (Italics mine).¹

Joseph Smith was quite sure by this time that the Saints would be driven from Nauvoo. By proclaiming all of North and South America as Zion, he was able to include any place the Saints might go. They could build Zion in the Rocky Mountains.²

**The Making of the Utah Valleys into Zion**

Even though the Prophet was never to go there, Utah was to gain special religious significance, greatly subordinating the rest of America, which itself was to be considered as "Babylon." Even Independence was of secondary importance. Rhetoric about returning continued, but all plans for bringing it about had long since been dropped. Utah was to be Zion. It was the place for the gathering of the Saints.

It was the articulate and prolific writer, Orson Pratt, and not Brigham Young, who first applied the name "Zion" to the specific region that was later to be named "Utah." While Young was careful to say that Zion was America, Pratt wrote in the *Millennial Star* that Zion specifically was located in the mountains of the West.³ Pratt was one of the

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²On August 6, 1842, Joseph Smith recorded in his journal: "I prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains, many would apostatize, others would be put to death by our persecutors or lose their lives in consequences of exposure or disease, and some of you will live to go and assist in making settlements and build cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains." Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, V, 85-86.

Twelve Apostles of the Church, one of the first two men to enter Salt Lake Valley.¹ He was a diligent student of the Bible. The Book of Isaiah, with its poetic and prophetic style, attracted him. There he found several references to "Zion," "Mount Zion," and to Zion being in the "mountains." Overlooking the possibility that the Biblical writer might have been referring to the east hill of ancient Jerusalem, he applied all he read to Deseret² and to the mountains of Deseret. To him Isaiah saw Pratt's day, knew of the building of Zion by the Latter-day Saints, knew of their location, and prophesied these events many centuries earlier.³

The scripture most basic to Pratt's argument was Isaiah 2:2-3. Located just prior to Isaiah's famous prophecy of peace, it reads:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Orson Pratt and subsequent expounders of the Utah Zion concept, of course, interpreted the scripture to mean the building of the Mormon Temple in Salt Lake City surrounded by mountains. The following is from a conference talk by Orson Pratt, delivered August 13, 1848, in England.

We can see the propriety then of Isaiah's calling upon the people of the latter-day Zion to "get up into the high mountain." For

¹Gustive O. Larson, Outline History of Utah and Mormons (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company), p. 58.

²Deseret is the name Mormons gave to their newly claimed territory. The name comes from the Book of Mormon meaning honey bee (Ether 2:3).

³Orson Pratt, Millennial Star, X (1848), 264.
it is there that the "house of the God of Jacob is to be built." It is from the mountains that Zion shall send forth her perfect law to teach the kings of the earth wisdom and the nations afar off a perfect order of government. It is in the house of the God, which shall be in the mountains, and "many nations" shall be taught in the ways of the Lord, and be instructed to "walk in his paths." (Italics in original.)¹

Pratt was not alone in proclaiming that Deseret or what was later to be named "Utah" was Zion. Brigham Young and the other Church leaders were soon referring to "Utah" as Zion. They quoted the same scriptures as Pratt did and referred to the mountains in the same manner. However, Pratt was the Utah Zion's greatest champion.

Other Factors in Making Utah a Sacred Place

Besides scriptural reasoning, other factors were important in making Utah a sacred place. The principle of gathering was very important. Leonard J. Arrington has said that it is the earliest principle established in the Church. The Saints were counseled "to gather out of 'Babylon' to a place called 'Zion' where 'God's people' would build the Kingdom, dwell together in righteousness, and prepare for the Millennium."²

Brigham Young, in a "General Epistle from the Council of the Twelve Apostles to the Church . . . abroad, dispersed throughout the Earth" wrote from Winter Quarters (Figure 4) after his return to that place, December 23, 1847: "We wish the Traveling Elders throughout the world to tell them to flee to Zion. There the servant of God will be ready to wait upon them, and teach them all things that pertain to

¹Ibid.

The elders continually exhorted the European Saints to gather to Zion. Almost every issue of the *Millennial Star* contained supplications of this type:

**EMIGRATION!** - The channel of Saints' emigration to the land of Zion, is now opened. The long-wished for time of gathering has come. Good tidings from Mount Zion! The resting place of Israel, for the last days, has been discovered. Beautiful for situation, and the ultimate joy of the whole earth is the Stake of Zion established in the mountains. In the elevated valley of the Salt and Eutau Lakes, with the beautiful river Jordan running through it, from south to north, is the newly established stake of Zion.2 The Saints did immigrate to Zion by the thousands. With them they brought the idea that it was a sacred place.

There were several attempts to bring the supernatural into Utah. The reception of divine revelation and spiritual gifts was claimed to have occurred there. Brigham Young reported that he had received a vision of the Salt Lake Temple years before the Mormons had entered the valley.3 The event of Young first entering the valley was presented as a prophetic scene of destiny.4 It was claimed that God sent seagulls to save the Mormon crops from a plague of crickets. These stories and others like them had the effect of setting Utah apart from profane space.

Another aspect of making Utah into a sacred place was the early idealization of the area's physical environment. Utah was not pictured

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1Brigham Young, *Millennial Star*, X (1848), 86.

2*Millennial Star*, X (1848), 40-41.

3Brigham Young, *Millennial Star*, XV (1853), 488.

as a desert at first; this concept was developed later.\(^1\) In Brigham Young's letter from Winter Quarters, dated December 23, 1847, he wrote:

We arrived at the Great Basin in the latter part of July, where we found a beautiful valley of some twenty by thirty miles in extent, with a lofty range of mountains on the east, capped by perpetual snow, and a beautiful line of mountains on the west, watered with daily showers . . . . The soil of the valley appeared good, but will require irrigation to promote vegetation, though there are many small streams emptying in from the mountains, and the Western Jordan (Utah Outlet) passes through from south to north. The climate is warm, dry, and healthy.\(^2\)

Orson Pratt, writing in the *Millennial Star*, August 13, 1848, said:

This valley is almost shut up by high and lofty ranges of mountains. . . . [They] are capped with perpetual snow, which glistening in the sunbeams, gives to the scenery the picture of eternal winter, wedded in sweet unison with the gentle, mild, varied, and refreshing seasons of the valley beneath. The mountain scenery of this region represents a beautiful picturesque appearance, awfully grand and imposing. The impress of the power of Divinity seems to be en-stamped in majestic silence on every brow. One would think that sublimity itself had hewn out an everlasting habitation in these wild romantic mountains.\(^3\)

Speaking of the valley, he said:

The nights are cool and refreshing. The mountain breezes gentle. The winters mild and pleasant; the grass remaining green the year round. Cattle, sheep, horses, mules, &c., graze at all seasons. The cutting and laying up of hay is unnecessary. It will be necessary to irrigate the soil, as there is not much rain that descends into the valley.\(^4\)

Numerous descriptions like these are available. Utah was not only portrayed as the region Isaiah prophesied of, the center for gathering, the vale of spiritual, but it was, also, a queen of scenery and a king


\(^3\)Orson Pratt, *Millennial Star*, X (1848), 265.

\(^4\)Ibid.
of agricultural regions.
"Zion" is a name that refers to either a people, a movement, or a place. In Mormonism, members of the Church may be called the "people of Zion"; the movement of Mormonism is often called "Zion"; and the central homelands of Mormonism are referred to as "Zion." Here the major concern is with Zion as a place. When used as a place-name several locations may be referred to. Four locations in America have been singled out and officially from time to time called "Zion": Jackson County, Missouri; the Rocky Mountains; Utah (Figure 2); and, in a more inclusive sense, both of the American continents. As a result, these four locations have been and are still perceived as Zion. We have examined the development of the Mormon perception of Zion through time. We shall now need to examine the way the places of Zion are currently perceived.

As we have seen, Jackson County, Missouri, was the first place to be designated as Zion, and Utah was the latest. Between the failure in Missouri and the success in Utah, two other places were called "Zion": the two continents of America and the Rocky Mountains. They were apparently designated as such in order to relieve mounting pressure due to the Missouri expulsion. The Americas were designated as Zion because included within them was most any place the Mormons might have settled. It even included the place where they then were, Nauvoo. The
Rocky Mountains was less inclusive, but it included the most promising places for settlement.

During the preliminary interviews most people expressed that they perceived the Americas as having divine missions. When the Americas were compared with the other continents, most perceived them as having been divinely set apart, reserved as promised lands for those whom God would lead to their shores. There was an expression of some reservation among some of the people about accepting Latin America as having a sacred nature, except in connection with the American Indians who lived there. Because of the freedoms enjoyed in the United States, most agreed that it had the greater mission to perform. The more theologically knowledgeable believed that America had been the site of the Garden of Eden and had housed mankind until the universal flood of Noah's time, an interesting variation of the Biblical story.¹

The inclusion of the Rocky Mountains in an examination of the Mormon perception of Zion is essential. Joseph Smith, having prophesied that the Saints would be driven to the Rocky Mountains, established the place in Mormon prophecy. The "Rocky Mountains" to him included much more than the geological province. Likewise, when the Saints first settled in the Salt Lake Valley, they were surrounded by mountains, and they assumed they were surrounded by the Rocky Mountains. To Smith and the Salt Lake Saints the "Rocky Mountains" included what we would now call the "Mountain West" or the "Mountain States." A perception similar to this is what many Mormons today generally have of the Rocky Mountains

¹Several explanations of this belief are available. See for example: George Q. Cannon, Journal of Discourses, XI (1867), 336-37.
when they consider the western Zion and the prophecies connected to it. To others, the majority, the western Zion is limited to the modern state of Utah. To them the surrounding regions are considered Gentile country, and not part of Zion. Both Utah and the Rocky Mountains need to be included in the list of perceived Mormon Zions, even though one is part of the other. In this same manner are these two places part of the larger Zion of America.

**The Ranking of Sacred Homelands**

In order to compare the perception of the American Zions and other possible homelands, the questionnaire used in the nation-wide interviews asked the respondents to rank seven places in terms of their perceived sacredness (Table 2). The two continents of America were not included because of the vast difference in scale. The "Rocky Mountains" was divided into Utah and the "regions surrounding Utah" in order to better define this elusive place-name. Jackson County, Missouri, was divided in time rather than space into "present-day Jackson County" and the "future city of Zion in Jackson County." Three places were added to the list which are not directly associated with the Mormon concept of Zion in America. They were the Holy Land (present Israel), "early Mormon historical areas" (Palmyra, New York; Kirtland, Ohio; Nauvoo, Illinois), and the respondent's present state of residence. Most of the people sampled perceived these three non-Zion homelands as less sacred than future Jackson County and Utah, but more sacred than the regions surrounding Utah and present-day Jackson County. The Holy Land was perceived as the third most sacred place. The early Mormon historical areas were ranked as the fourth most sacred, and the
respondent's present state of residence as the fifth.

TABLE 2
TOTAL RESPONSES ON THE RANKING OF SACRED HOMELANDS
(NATION-WIDE SAMPLE)

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<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
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<td>39</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Jackson County, Missouri, was perceived as both the most sacred and the least sacred place in this comparison (Table 2). It was perceived as the most sacred homeland when its believed future condition was considered. Fifty-nine per cent of the respondents chose it as first place, even though it exists only in the mind of believers. Most still believe that the Saints will return to receive an inheritance in Missouri and to build a New Jerusalem in Jackson County. Opinion seems to vary as to when and how this will come about, and a large proportion seem to have no fixed opinions.

Jackson County was perceived as the least sacred place when it
was considered as it really exists today. It offers little opportunity as a homeland today and it appears to have little appeal to most Mormons except perhaps for those few who live or have lived there. This is evident both from oral interviews and the last place "present-day Jackson County, Missouri" received in the nation-wide survey. Four factors appear to be causing this perception. The first is that it is Gentile country; few Mormons live there. Secondly, cruel stories of the Missouri Expulsion are still commonly heard; bad memories persist for several generations. Thirdly, many perceive it as a "cursed land" because of and since the expulsion. Fourthly, Jackson County is a center of the Reorganized L.D.S. Church, the major counter-claim to succession in the priesthood after Joseph Smith.

In examining the responses from the independent variable groups, several patterns emerge. Future Jackson County remained the most sacred place in all subgroups except among the inactive Mormons and in two of the regions. Responses from those who attend church meetings only occasionally were significantly different than responses from those who are active in their church attendance. Inactive Mormons perceived Utah, the Holy Land, and other "early Mormon historical areas" (in that order) as being more sacred than future Jackson County. Present-day Jackson County was generally perceived as the least sacred place in this comparison, except among the subgroups made up of converts. Converts with less than five years in the Church tended to view present-day Jackson County as significantly more sacred than lifetime members. The mean perception for the subgroup placed it as the fifth most sacred place rather than the seventh. This pattern persisted with an increase with time in the Church, but present-day Jackson County gradually lost
strength in its perceived sacredness. Eventually it stabilized near the same perception as that held by lifetime members.

Utah received an over-all ranking as the second most sacred homeland, while the regions surrounding Utah were ranked as the sixth. It is evident that to most the Zion in the West is limited to the modern state of Utah. However, about 15 per cent of the respondents ranked the regions surrounding Utah in terms of perceived sacredness next in importance to Utah itself. Most of that 15 per cent would probably believe that Zion was the "Rocky Mountains" and that Utah was its core, or else they reside in the area surrounding Utah.

Variation from the general mean of Utah being perceived as the second most sacred homeland occurred in two cases. When the extensiveness of the individual respondent's visits to Utah were differentiated, it was revealed that with an increase in the frequency of visits to the state there is an increase in its perceived sacredness (Table 3). Those who have never visited the state tend to perceive the Holy Land and the "early Mormon historical areas" as more sacred. Those who have visited Utah or have lived there more commonly perceive Utah as the most or second most sacred place. When the age of the respondents is examined, Mormons under twenty years old were significant in that they were the only age group whose mean response placed Utah below the Holy Land and the other historical areas.

When the over-all perception of sacred homelands is considered, the patterns of regional variation are simple, but contain a few exceptions which are difficult to explain. In most of the regions, "future" Jackson County was perceived as the most sacred and Utah as the second. Rural Utah tended to rank Utah and "future" Jackson County
as about equal in sacredness, while urban Utah perceived Utah as less sacred. Respondents in Northern California and the Great Lakes region generally perceived Utah as more sacred than "future" Jackson County. Most of the regions perceived the areas surrounding Utah as the second to the least most sacred and present-day Jackson County as the least. Variation occurred again from the responses from Northern California and the Great Lakes region, where the respondents generally perceived their present state of residence as the least sacred. In the Northeast the areas surrounding Utah were generally perceived as the least sacred.

**TABLE 3**

**MEAN RANKING OF SACRED PLACES ACCORDING TO EXTENSIVENESS IN VISITS TO UTAH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Place</th>
<th>Visited Utah</th>
<th>Live in Utah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Briefly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Jackson County</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Land</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical areas</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of residence</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions surrounding Utah</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present-day Jackson County</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These mean responses are based on a scale of 1 through 7. A sacred place with a ranking of 1 would be the most sacred, and a place with a ranking of 7 would be the least sacred. As a result, places with the lowest means are perceived as the most sacred.*
The Perception of Utah as a Sacred Place

When compared with the other homelands, Utah was generally perceived as the most sacred one presently being used. That comparison indicated that Mormons generally have strong feelings about the state. In order to more accurately determine the perception of Utah as a sacred place and the variation of views among independent-variable groups, respondents were asked their feelings of it. They were given a choice of ten possible responses ranging from 0 as a definite "no" through 9 as a positive "yes," depending on the strength of their convictions. In response to the question, "Do you have special feelings of Utah being a sacred place?" the mean response was a relatively high 6.79. Responses were clustered on the positive "yes," receiving 47 per cent of the responses, and tapered down to the definite "no," which received only 8 per cent. This indicates the strength of the perception of Utah as a place with sacred connotations.

There is general agreement among sample subgroups about Utah being a sacred place. A significant difference existed only among the independent variable of the frequency of visits to Utah and the regions (Table 4). The first case supports the earlier statement that an increase in the frequency of visits to Utah tends to increase its perceived sacredness. There is, however, the important exception that the most positive responses came from those who had visited Utah briefly. This indicates that a common pattern occurs in people's perception of Utah and perhaps people's view of sacred places. Even though their perception of Utah as a sacred place is significantly high, Mormons

1These differences were significant at the .01 level.
who have never visited the state perceive it as less sacred than those who have. When they have briefly visited the state and seen briefly Salt Lake City, the temples, and the mountains, they are highly impressed with its sacred nature. With more extensive visits and more familiarity, there is a waning of perceived sacredness. Then with extended time in the state, living there, truly making it one's home, there is a return in its perceived sacred nature, but generally not to the height as with the brief visit. This indicates the importance of personal experience in affecting perception. The pilgrim who visits Mecca only once may come away profoundly moved by his association with the sacred site. The pilgrim who visits often may very well lose his awe and notice the squalor and poverty of the city.

**TABLE 4**

**MEAN RESPONSES TO QUESTION #3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Utah</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>Pacific Northwest</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Utah</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>Plain States</td>
<td>6.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Idaho</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>Southern States</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>Great Lakes Region</td>
<td>6.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>7.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern California</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visits to Utah</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefly</td>
<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensively</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live there</td>
<td>6.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Question three reads: "Do you have special feelings of Utah being a sacred place (by sacred we mean a place for which you feel either emotional respect or religious reverence)?

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

yes  partially  no*
Regional variation patterns are more complex (Figure 3). Mormons living in rural Utah were the most positive in their perception of Utah as a sacred place, while the residents of urban Utah were significantly lower. This difference seems to be expressing a type of rural fundamentalism. The greater percentage of Mormons in rural Utah must be a factor. Even though the questionnaire was administered only to Mormons, in rural Utah the social environment is more strongly Mormon than in urban Utah.

Mormons from southern Idaho were lowest in their perception of Utah as a sacred place. This finding is supplemented by the responses from the ranking examined earlier. Although this is largely a rural area, the low response is probably an expression of rivalry toward its neighboring state with which it shares a history of Mormon occupancy almost as long as the former. The Southwest (Arizona and New Mexico) has a similar low perception of Utah and a similar history of Mormon occupancy. Yet, it is interesting to note that usually people from these bordering areas did not perceive their own regions as being sacred or part of the western Zion.

The reason responses from northern California were significantly higher than those from southern California is difficult to formulate (Figures 2 and 3). Both populations are largely urban, are prosperous, and have a temple within their area. People in southern California answered this question (as is the case with most questions considered to this point) in a manner similar to those from urban Utah, while those from northern California made responses similar to those from rural Utah.

Respondents from the Northeast and from the Southern States
QUESTION RESPONDED TO: "DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL FEELINGS OF UTAH BEING A SACRED PLACE? BY SACRED WE MEAN A PLACE FOR WHICH YOU FEEL EITHER EMOTIONAL RESPECT OR RELIGIOUS REVERENCE?"

yes  partially  no
were very high in their perception of Utah as a sacred place (Table 4). These regions are the two most distant from Utah. There appears to be a distance factor influencing the perception, although its role is complex. It does not explain the complete difference, nor can the proportion this factor would explain in a complete explanation be determined. Mormons living in the Pacific Northwest, the Great Lakes Region, and the Plain States were also strong in their perception of Utah, which reinforces the idea that distance affects perception.

**Conclusion**

Utah is a sacred place. Only 8 per cent of the Mormons sampled stated that it definitely was not, while 44 per cent said it positively was sacred. Forty-seven per cent responded with a partial "yes" answer. If the sample was representative of the Mormon population, then 92 per cent of the Mormons perceive Utah as having a sacred connotation. Utah is the most sacred homeland in Mormonism. The prophesied future Jackson County, Missouri, is perceived as the most sacred, but that place does not exist in the real world. It exists only in the minds of believers. The present county is low on the scale of perceived sacredness. Those factors which are viewed as affecting Utah's sacredness will now need to be examined.
CHAPTER VII

PERCEIVED CAUSAL FACTORS IN MAKING UTAH
A SACRED PLACE AND POSSIBLE RESULTS

It has been established earlier that Utah is a sacred place to the Mormons. It is unique in Mormonism in that it is perceived as a sacred homeland and actually functions as such today. The question of what makes Utah sacred is complex. It is partially explained by the historical development of the Mormon concept of Zion, discussed earlier. Utah became sacred because of a need to find a homeland in the West after expulsion from Nauvoo. It was felt necessary to establish the new homeland as a place of divine destiny, suitable for a people of destiny. It came to be perceived as a land of promise. Prophecy, both ancient and modern, was associated with Utah, and the spiritual and supernatural were manifested there in numerous ways. Utah became Zion through hard work and constant rhetoric. In order to explain further the question of why, causal factors as they are perceived to exist by those who believe that it is sacred will be examined in the succeeding pages. Although other factors exist causing Utah to be so perceived (historical, cultural, social, psychological, and environmental), it was explained earlier that a complete explanation of causal relationships would be impossible at the present. The best that can be done here is to discuss the most apparent reasons.
Perceived Causal Factors

During the preliminary interviews several possible causes and results were discussed, and the most important were placed on the questionnaire for the nation-wide sample. From the responses from that sample, five major causes are perceived by a large proportion of the people to be involved in making Utah a sacred place (Table 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Utah Being a Sacred Place</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land of promise for the Mormon Pioneers</td>
<td>8.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present headquarters of the L.D.S. Church</td>
<td>7.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountains adding to the sacred nature</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative isolation of Utah</td>
<td>4.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah to become a future retreat</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These means were based on a response scale of 0 through 9. A response of 0 was interpreted as the complete absence of the proposed "reason" as a cause. A response of 9 was interpreted as the maximum effect of that "reason."

The strongest perceived causal factor is the belief that Utah was provided by God as a land of promise for the Mormon Pioneers. The over-all mean response to this belief was 8.44 (with a highest possible of 9.0). This is the highest positive response from all of the interviews. Eighty-three per cent of the responses were marked positive "yes" and only 2 per cent were marked below 5 on the answer scale. There existed no significant difference among responses from the independent-variable groups. This response is understandable when
one realizes the importance of the pioneer story to the Mormon consciousness.

The second most important perceived reason for Utah being a sacred place is that the headquarters of the L.D.S. Church are located there. The over-all mean response was 7.88. Only 14 per cent responded with the definite "no" answer. This high response comes as no surprise. Utah is sometimes referred to as the "home of the prophets" due to the church authorities living there. It is the place where members come to transact church business. The inactive members were significantly lower in their perception of this factor (church headquarters site) than were the active members. Inactive Mormons responded with a mean response of 6.43, compared with a 7.95 from those who were active. This lower response would probably be expected since inactive members have less to do with the church and its authorities.

The mountains of Utah are important in the development of the Utah perception. Hastings said, speaking of the role of mountains in religion, "There are few people who have not looked upon mountains with awe and reverence. Their height, their vastness, the mystery of their recesses easily inspire an attitude of reverence."1 The Mormons do not perceive the mountains of Utah, themselves, as being sacred, but they are perceived as adding to the sacred nature of the state. We have already discussed the perception Orson Pratt and other early Utah leaders had of the mountains: "One would think that sublimity itself had hewn out an everlasting habitation in these wild romantic mountains."2 We have examined the way they interpreted Old Testament

1Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, 1951, VIII, 863.
2Orson Pratt, Millennial Star, X (1848), 265.
prophecies, applying them to the mountains of Utah. It is interesting to note that the Utah mountains are perceived as the third major factor in making Utah sacred.

A mean response of 5.58 was received, which was significantly lower than the first two factors, but also significantly higher than the lowest two, on the role of the mountains. Mormons who were actively involved in church activities perceived the mountains as a less important factor than did those who were inactive (Table 6). The stronger response from inactive Mormons reflects both spiritual consciousness and their view of recreational possibilities in the mountains. Many expressed that they felt closer to God in the mountains. One Manti farmer said that he attended church only rarely, but he felt nearer to God in his fields or in the mountains than he did in church.

Regional variation on this issue is again very complex (Figure 4). Rural Utah responded higher than urban Utah. Southern Idaho and the Southwest responded low, and the Northeast responded high, as has been the case with most of the questions asked them. Northern California again responded higher than Southern California. The pattern is complex and is not quite consistent with the earlier regional patterns. There appears to be an overriding factor of whether there are many mountains in the region where the respondents live. The factor, however, appears to be weakly expressed in some regions. The Plain States and the Southwest responded with the lowest mean responses. As their boundaries are drawn for this paper, some mountains are included in these two regions, but plains certainly dominate the region.

Isolation, like mountains, is viewed as a causal factor related
FIGURE 4
SPATIAL VARIATION OF THE PERCEPTION
OF THE MOUNTAINS IN UTAH ADDING
TO ITS SACRED NATURE
QUESTION RESPONDED TO: "IF UTAH IS A
SACRED PLACE TO YOU, DO THE MOUNTAINS
IN UTAH ADD TO ITS SACRED NATURE?"
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
yes partially no
R. Harris
to the physical environment. Utah is often perceived as a relatively isolated state. Certainly some areas in the state are very isolated. Isolation, both physical and social, is a factor perceived by many that adds to the sacred nature of the state. The over-all mean response for this factor was 4.98, which was a little over one-half what it could have been. Mormons living in the isolated rural Utah responded the highest. Those living in the equally isolated Southwest, but outside Utah, responded the lowest.

**TABLE 6**

**MEAN RESPONSES TO THE CAUSAL FACTORS OF THE "UTAH MOUNTAINS" AND THE "RELATIVE ISOLATION OF UTAH"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&quot;Utah Mountains&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Relative Isolation&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Church Meetings:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often (active)</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>4.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally (inactive)</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Utah</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Utah</td>
<td>7.34</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Idaho</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>2.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern California</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>6.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Northwest</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain States</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern States</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Region</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>7.48</td>
<td>5.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Means are based on a response scale of 0 through 9, 0 as the strongest "no" and 9 as the strongest "yes."

The fifth currently perceived reason for Utah being a sacred place pertains to a belief in prophecy about Utah in the future becoming a place of refuge for the Mormons. Many such prophecies have been
recorded. Our purpose here is not to examine the prophecies as such, but only to see whether Mormons believe that Utah will become a refuge in the future. An acceptance of this belief would by its nature cause Utah to be perceived as a place with a divine mission, separated from profane space, and, as a result, a sacred place.

The respondents were asked to answer the question: "Do you believe that Utah will in the future become a retreat, a refuge, or a gathering place for most Mormons in the nation?" The mean response was 4.49, about one-half as high as was possible. Nineteen per cent of those responding answered with a positive "yes," and 26 per cent answered with a definite "no." The distribution was widespread over the scale. It is interesting to note that there was no significant regional variation.

We have examined the five most important reasons, as they are perceived to exist, why Utah is a sacred place. Other factors are involved such as the irrigated valleys which help Utah to "blossom as a rose" and fulfill Biblical prophecy, the wide open spaces, and the large Mormon population living there. Some people feel that the general citizen in Utah lives according to the Mormon ethics better than the average citizen in out-of-state areas. Utah is a sacred homeland, but it is also sacred because it has a rich historical legacy; it has important prophecies recorded about it; it serves religious functions; and it houses many places of mystical manifestations. Utah is perceived as a sacred place because of historical, cultural, social,

1Several compilations of Mormon prophecies are available. See for example: Duane S. Crowther, Prophecy: Key to the Future (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1962).

2Isaiah 35:1.
psychological, and environmental reasons.

**Possible Results**

Before we conclude this study, we should examine some of the possible results that may occur because of this perception of Utah. Many results are possible; but only three will be examined because they developed directly out of the survey: tourism, migration, and out-of-state support. Tourism is presently associated with the perception. A large proportion of the tourists to the state are out-of-state Mormons coming to visit the temples, attend conferences, and transact church business. Many Mormons grew up in the state, migrated out to find employment, and often return for visits to their home. No pilgrimage to Utah is required by Mormons, as with Moslems to Mecca, but emotional ties are strong enough that many feel a need to visit the Mormon homeland. Tourism to Utah by Mormons will probably increase with increases in wealth, leisure, and population.

Migration or return-migration to Utah by Mormons is another possibility that could result from the perception of Utah as a sacred place. We have already examined that many believe that Utah will become a refuge in the future for Mormons. Non-Utah Mormons were asked the question: "If disaster should come to our nation, would you consider Utah as a place of refuge?" The mean response was 5.67 (Table 7). This mean response was higher than the mean response of 4.49 from the earlier question about whether they believed Utah would become a retreat for most Mormons in the nation. The people who answered this question usually felt that Utah could become a retreat for them, but would not necessarily become a retreat for most Mormons in the nation.
TABLE 7
RESPONSES TO QUESTION #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers:</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of responses:</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The problem of limited resources in Utah was considered. Many felt that the resources of Utah could support the complete Mormon population presently living in the United States. The insufficiency of water was seen as the major problem.

A slightly lower response came from non-Utah Mormons when they were asked the question: "If you had a home and a job or business equal to what you presently have, would you prefer living in Utah?" The mean response was 5.43 (Table 8). Those respondents who had migrated from Utah expressed a significantly larger desire to live in Utah than those who had never lived there.

Regional variation of the responses from this question formed a somewhat different pattern than on previous questions. Lowest desires for migration to Utah were expressed from Mormons living in the North east and the Southern States. The responses from the Pacific Coast States were also high. The distance from Utah does not explain this pattern, but it seems to be an important factor. Utahns were asked if they preferred living in Utah over any other place. High mean responses of 6.34 for urban Utah and 8.73 for rural Utah were received. An extremely high satisfaction with living in Utah was expressed by the rural Utah sample. No one answered below an 8 on the nine-point answer scale.
TABLE 8
RESPONSES TO QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Responses</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answers:</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of responses:</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Responses Differentiated by Whether Respondents Have Lived in Utah

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Responses Differentiated by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Idaho</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California</td>
<td>6.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern California</td>
<td>5.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Northwest</td>
<td>5.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain States</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern States</td>
<td>6.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Region</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>6.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Mean</td>
<td>5.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All Mormons would not prefer to live in Utah since many are committed to homes outside the state. However, there is an appeal, expressed by many, to living in Utah. Almost all who live in rural Utah want to continue living there. The majority in urban Utah prefer their state. A large proportion (39 per cent) of the Mormons living outside the state would prefer to live in Utah if they had homes and jobs equal to what they are currently enjoying. Another group of Mormons of the same proportion (39 per cent) with varying amounts of reservation expressed that they would prefer Utah. Only 26 per cent
said they would prefer to live outside Utah. If enough jobs were available, there would probably be a heavy return-migration to Utah by Mormons who have moved away, as well as a migration to Utah by many who had never lived there. If disaster should come to the nation, there may well be an even greater inward migration. Utah as a sacred homeland appears to have magnetic appeal, at least to the desires of many.

Another interesting probable result of the perception of Utah as a sacred place by non-Utah Mormons is that of out-of-state support on religious as well as economic and political issues. The questionnaire contained this question: "If Utah and Utahns were being persecuted for maintaining a religious principle, such as in the earlier case of polygamy in the 1880's, would you support Utah even at the detriment of your present state of residence?" The mean response was a very high 7.62, the third highest response from any question on the questionnaire (Table 9). Only 4 per cent of the respondents replied that they definitely would not support Utah on a religious issue.

TABLE 9
RESPONSES TO QUESTION #7

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<th>Answers:</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partially</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of responses:</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A question was asked non-Utah Mormons regarding support on more basic issues: "Which state would you most likely support over a political or financial issue, such as receiving a huge grant of money?"
a. Utah; b. your present state of residence; c. both states about equally." Twenty-four per cent chose their present state of residence. Sixteen per cent chose Utah, and 60 per cent chose the answer "both states about equally." It is important to note that 16 per cent would support Utah above their present state of residence, where they needed to make a living. There was a very significant difference in responses from those who had migrated from Utah and from those who had not (Table 10). As one would expect, those who had lived in Utah would have given the most support to Utah.

TABLE 10
RESPONSES TO QUESTION #8 DIFFERENTIATED BY WHETHER OR NOT RESPONDENTS HAD MIGRATED FROM UTAH

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Support Utah</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support both states equally</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support present state</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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</table>

Because Utah is perceived by many non-Utah Mormons as a sacred place, it would probably receive out-of-state support by many of them. On a religious issue the support would be higher, and on a political or economic issue the support, although lower, is still high. Migrants from Utah would provide the most support, but many who have never lived in the state would even support Utah at the detriment of their home state. Important associated developments can result from the perception of sacred homelands.
CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The recognition of sacred space is a cultural phenomenon. Each cultural group structures space according to its desires and needs, according to its social organization, its stage of technology, and its ideology. Sacred space is structured and delimited because of its awe-inspiring nature. Sacred space is conceived when the sacred (something wholly different than the profane and mundane) is manifested in part of the culture region. This study has dealt with one religious group and sub-culture (the Mormons) and with its culture region (Mormondom, found in America).

The actual existence of sacred space is essentially a cognitive phenomenon. Sacred space may include naturally existing phenomenon in the environment, such as mountains, groves, or other physical elements. Recognition of a place or physical element as sacred, however, is the result of an individual's or cultural group's experiences and expectations which endow it with sacredness. An individual may sense a place as sacred to either a greater or lesser degree than the norm of his culture, or he may even possess feelings completely reversed from those of his norm. The culture provides an individual with a framework for an acceptable interpretation of the environment and adjustment to it. The psyche or individual moves with some freedom within that framework,
rejecting, adding, and modifying according to his own needs and desires. A group's conception of sacred space is the total or mean of the perception of its members. The cultural group's view of sacred space is composed of elements of the past perception and present modifications of this past by individual members and group consensus. This study has sought the perception of sacred places in Mormondom by examining the way members perceive those elements which the group formally or informally recognizes as sacred space. This study has been more concerned with personal perception of sacred space than with earthly space per se. It is earthly space that has traditionally been the major interest of geographers. However, a knowledge of perception of space is essential to the complete explanation science seeks.

Sacred, cognitive manifestations are essential to the development of a conception of sacred space. These manifestations result mainly from the human need to bring order and meaning to the surrounding environmental chaos. Without the ordering and structuring of the environment, the delimiting and defining of space, and the naive philosophy a culture provides for its members, the realities of existence would probably be sensed as too chaotic for the healthy existence of the human organism. The designation of part of the culture region (and in some cases the whole of it) as sacred is an important expression of the need to bring order to the chaos. The sacred manifestation may be subtly expressed, as in the case of Utah; or it may be profoundly expressed, as in the case of the Mormon temples. It may invoke religious reverence or nonreligious emotional respect.

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Places may be designated as sacred because of their mystical nature, as in the case with the Mormon temples. The temples were perceived as the most sacred of sacred places. They are places in which communication with the Eternal is least impeded. The Salt Lake Temple is accepted as a symbol of Mormonism and is viewed as the most sacred of the temples, hence, the most sacred place in Mormondom. The majority of the Mormons felt that the temples provided protection and security to the surrounding areas, provided the people live "worthy" of that protection. These sites and buildings are sensed as sacred by many who are "unworthy" to enter them. Places of mystical manifestations are viewed as highly sacred because they call for spiritual communication of the highest order.

Some places are believed to be sacred because of the exceptional events that are attributed to have occurred there. In Mormondom, with its rich historical legacy, these places are important. The Sacred Grove was the most sacred site of this category, more sacred than Bethlehem or the Carthage Jail. Salt Lake City was perceived as sacred because of its historical connotations and its present function as the religious capital. Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri, is sensed as sacred because of the important prophecies that are believed will be fulfilled there.

The homelands of Mormondom are sacred and are referred to as "Zion." The most sacred homeland is the wholly psychological place of the "future" City of Zion in Jackson County, Missouri. Present-day Jackson County was perceived as very low in sacredness. Utah was the most sacred homeland that actually exists. There was almost a universal concensus among Mormons that Utah was provided as a land of promise for
the Mormon Pioneers. The fact that the headquarters of the Mormon Church are located there is the second major reason for Utah being perceived as sacred. Other interesting reasons, as they were perceived to be, are the mountains of the state, the relative isolation, and the belief that Utah will become a retreat for Mormons from throughout the nation.

Conclusion

Hypotheses

In the first half of this conclusion the hypotheses which were made at the beginning of this thesis will be examined to see if they held true. Five hypotheses were made. The proving of them is possible only if the most basic assumption of this study is accepted, which is that the sample is representative of the Mormon population within the defined boundaries.

It was hypothesized that (1) most Mormons would perceive some of the earth's space as sacred, and that (2) although personal differences may exist, there would be general agreement as to what places were sacred. Approximately 99 per cent of the Mormons felt that the temples were sacred. Even those who were unable to enter the temples were strong in their expressions of the sanctity of those edifices. A similarly strong perception existed in regard to the Sacred Grove. Only 8 per cent did not perceive that Utah was at least in part a sacred place. Over 90 per cent of the Mormons agreed that the Holy Land was sacred. These few examples illustrate that most Mormons sense certain places as being at least partly different than the profane space of the earth.
It was further hypothesized that (3) trends in degree and kind would exist among sub-groups. In eleven cases significant differences existed between the responses from independent-variable groups. Significant trends existed, for example, among active and inactive Mormons and among converts and lifetime members on the issue of the protective nature of temples. Other interesting examples of trend existing among sub-groups are illustrated by the regional variations in the perception of Utah as a sacred place (Figure 3) and the effects of the mountains on Utah's perceived sacredness (Figure 4).

It was also hypothesized (4) that the state of Utah was one of the most sacred places to Mormons and that as a result, (5) this perception would have important effects upon the future economic and political aspects of the state. As noted, Utah was perceived to be the most sacred homeland that presently exists and the third most sacred place, following the temples and the Sacred Grove. Because of this perception of Utah important effects are presently taking place and will probably develop further. Tourism is presently a result. A large proportion of the tourists to the state are out-of-state Mormons, visiting this central homeland. Mormons who had migrated from Utah return to their old homes for visits. Mormon who have never lived there visit it almost as pilgrims to see what it is like. This tourism will probably increase with time. Migration and return migration is a second result. Since 1847, Mormons have been moving to the Utah Zion. If economic opportunities became available in Utah, many more would migrate. If disaster should come to the nation, many felt that Utah would be a place of refuge. Out-of-state support for Utah and Utahns is a third result. On a religious issue most out-of-state Mormons would support
Utah even at the detriment of their own state. On a political or economic issue a large percentage would support Utah.

Factors in Perception

In the second half of this conclusion, some of the factors or variables of the perception of sacred space that were revealed by the study will be examined and challenges for future research will be made to see if universals applicable to all cultures can be formulated. The factor of distance is one of the most important. There seems to be a direct relationship between an increase in distance from a place and the strength of the perceived sacredness of that place. The highest responses in regard to the sacredness of Utah were from the distant Northeast and the South. The lowest responses were from the neighboring regions. However, distance is not a factor that can explain everything. Very high expressions of sacredness for Utah came from rural Utah, with a distance factor of zero. Further research is needed to determine if distance is a factor affecting sacred space in other cultures. Rural fundamentalism appears to be an important factor, also. The responses from rural Utah were high on all questions. Research is needed to determine the variation in fundamentalism among urban and rural dwellers.

Familiarity is a factor closely related to distance. The perception of Utah as a sacred place was highest among those who had visited the state briefly. It was lowest among those who had never visited it extensively. There appears to be a definite optimum with the factor of familiarity. Variation either with greater or lesser familiarity decreases the sacredness. Among historical sacred places the time of the occurrence of the events which made them sacred is
also important. Places associated with Joseph Smith were closer in
time and were perceived as more sacred than those associated with Jesus
Christ which were more distant in time. The factor of time probably
also reaches an optimum where it is most powerful. Research is needed
to determine the functions of time and familiarity in other cultures.

The factors of distance, rural fundamentalism, familiarity, and
time were all active factors in the perception of sacred space among the
Mormons. They are probably important in other religious cultures. The
education and age of the respondents were only minor factors with the
Mormons. The importance of these two factors in other cultures needs
to be discovered. Other factors and variables are probably important
and likewise need to be explored.

Theories or laws on the perception of sacred space cannot now
be formulated. However, it is hoped that this study has shown that such
universals are desirable. It is further hoped that one possible direc-
tion for future research has been demonstrated here that will aid in the
formation of theory. It is especially hoped that it has been shown that
there is a need for further research in the fascinating study of sacred
space. Remember that the profane ground you travel over and take so
matter-of-factly may be sacred, holy land to others. Tread with
respect!
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN INTERVIEWING

Since the feelings many people have for a place are not necessarily completely positive or negative, but vary between the two, possible answers to the following questions range from 10 to 1. 10 is a positive yes, 1 is a definite no. 2-9 are partially true with varying degrees of truthfulness. Please circle the number which best corresponds to your feelings about the following questions.

1. Do you feel that Utah was provided by God as a land of promise for the Mormon Pioneers?
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   
   
   
   yes partially no

2. Do you believe that Utah will in the future become a retreat, a refuge, or a gathering place for most Mormons in the nation?

   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   yes partially no

3. Do you have special feelings of Utah being a sacred place (by sacred we mean a place for which you feel either emotional respect or religious reverence)?

   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   yes partially no

   If Utah is a special or a sacred place to you,
   (a) Does the presence of the headquarters of the LDS Church aid in making it so?

   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   yes partially no

   (b) Do the mountains in Utah add to its sacred nature?

   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   yes partially no

   (c) Does the relative isolation of Utah add to its sacred nature?

   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   yes partially no

4. Do you believe that the area surrounding a Mormon temple, which is being presently used, is more secure from disaster than an area without a Mormon temple?

   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   
   yes partially no
5. If disaster should come to our nation, would you consider Utah as a place of refuge?
   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   yes partially no

6. If you had a home and a job or business equal to what you presently have, would you prefer living in Utah?
   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   yes partially no

7. If Utah and Utahns were being persecuted for maintaining a religious principle, such as in the earlier case of polygamy in the 1880's, would you support Utah even at the detriment of your present state of residence?
   10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   yes partially no

8. Which state would you most likely support over a political or financial issue, such as receiving a huge grant of money?
   a. Utah
   b. Your present state of residence
   c. Both states about equally

9. Please rank the following places according to your feelings about them being sacred to you. By sacred we mean places for which you feel religious reverence, or non-religious emotional respect. Number 1 in your ranking should be the most sacred place to you, number 2 being the second most sacred place, continuing through to number 7 which should be the least sacred place to you. Each of the following places should be included in your ranking.

   _____ Present-day Jackson County, Missouri
   _____ Future city of Zion in Jackson County, Missouri
   _____ Utah
   _____ Regions surrounding Utah (southern Idaho, Arizona, etc.)
   _____ The Holy Land (present Israel)
   _____ Early Mormon historical areas (Palmyra, New York; Kirtland, Ohio; Nauvoo, Illinois)
   _____ Your present state of residence

10. Sex:
    a. Male
    b. Female

11. Age:
    a. 19 and under
    b. 20-29
    c. 30-39
d. 40-49  
e. 50-59  
f. 60-69  
g. 70-74  
h. 75 and over

12. What is your present city and state of residence: ________________________________

13. Highest level of education completed:  
a. Less than high school graduate  
b. High school graduation  
c. College: 1 to 3 years  
d. College: 4 years  
e. College: 5 years or more

14. Religion:  
a. LDS  
b. Other ________________________

15. Do you attend church meetings often or occasionally?  
a. Often  
b. Occasionally

16. Which statement is most correct about your life?  
a. I have never been in Utah.  
b. I have visited Utah briefly.  
c. I have visited Utah extensively.

17. Length of time in LDS church:  
a. Lifetime member  
   If convert, how many years have you been in the Church?  
b. Less than 2 years  
c. 2-5  
d. 5-10  
e. 10-20  
f. Over 20

18. Have you ever lived in Utah?  
a. Yes  
b. No

19. Did you or your family migrate from Utah?  
a. Yes  
b. No

20. Do you have relatives living in Utah at the present? Who?  
a. No  
b. Yes, including parents  
c. Yes, not including parents
ADDITIONAL RANKING GROUPS USED WITH 
THE SACRAMENTO SAMPLE ONLY

Group Two

Rank from 1-7:

_____ Building in which your ward meetings are held
_____ Salt Lake Temple
_____ Other presently used LDS Temples
_____ Temple in your region (Oakland Temple)
_____ Historic temples (Nauvoo, Kirtland)
_____ Your present home
_____ Your childhood home

Group Three

Rank from 1-7:

_____ The Sacred Grove
_____ The Salt Lake Temple
_____ Utah's mountains
_____ Your home town
_____ Bethlehem (birthplace of Jesus)
_____ Carthage Jail (site where Joseph Smith was martyred)
_____ Lincoln Memorial
APPENDIX B

TABLE 1
MEANS OF SACRED PLACE RANKINGS: NATION-WIDE SAMPLE (RANKING GROUP ONE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Future City of Zion</th>
<th>Utah</th>
<th>Holy Land</th>
<th>Early Mormon Historical Areas</th>
<th>Present State of Residence</th>
<th>Regions Surrounding Utah</th>
<th>Present-day Jackson County, Missouri</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>2.85</td>
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<td>3.71</td>
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<td>5.03</td>
<td>5.42</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>4.51</td>
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<td>19 and under</td>
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<td>2.79</td>
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<td>70 and over</td>
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<td>2.21</td>
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<td>Early Mormon Historical Areas</td>
<td>Present State of Residence</td>
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</table>

**Education:**

Less than high school graduation: 2.51 2.94 3.58 3.71 5.15 4.92 5.38

High school graduation: 2.26 2.48 3.72 3.29 4.48 4.50 4.61

**College:**

1 to 3 years: 2.43 2.42 3.42 3.98 4.58 4.94 5.64

4 years: 1.81 3.48 2.60 3.63 6.12 5.34 5.24

5 years or more: 1.40 3.00 3.68 3.91 4.63 5.19 4.85

**Church Activity:**

Active people: 1.99 2.70 3.51 3.66 4.77 4.92 5.30

Inactive people: 3.62 3.50 3.62 3.93 5.50 4.93 6.75

**Time in LDS Church:**

Lifetime member: 2.08 2.68 3.62 3.67 4.34 4.90 5.38
TABLE 1—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convert:</th>
<th>Future City of Zion</th>
<th>Utah</th>
<th>Holy Land</th>
<th>Early Mormon Historical Area</th>
<th>Present State of Residence</th>
<th>Regions Surrounding Utah</th>
<th>Present-day Jackson County, Missouri</th>
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<td>4 years or less</td>
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(RANKING GROUP TWO)

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"Places (Sacred)." Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. 1951. X.


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