

to dedicate Palestine for the return of the Jews, which he did on October 24, 1841.²⁶ Smith's successors have indicated that the temple itself is to be built for both modern temple work (D&C 124:36–37) and ancient temple sacrificial rituals (Mal. 3:3),²⁷ as well a place from which Christ rules during the Millennium.²⁸ Finally, LDS readings of eschatological wars indicate that Jerusalem will be the target of invading armies (e.g., Ezekiel 38–39). Their defeat will be accomplished by the appearance of Christ on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1–11; in context, YHWH) and after the invaders are defeated, the Jews will recognize Christ as their Messiah (Zech. 12:1–10; D&C 45:48–53).²⁹

More recent use of these chapters in Ezekiel is subdued and pedagogical. The emphasis is on the significance of YHWH's return to his temple for modern temple worship rather than eschatological renewal (Ezek. 43:1–12; 44:6–9). Latter-day Saints are encouraged to read Ezekiel's description as paradigmatic of all temples so no attempt is made to bridge gaps between ancient and modern worship in terms of ritual, cultic purity, or the temple's unique status in Deuteronomistic theology. The restoration provided by the river and trees of Ezekiel 47:6–12 remains vaguely literal, but the focus of contemporary Latter-day Saint interpretation is modern temple worship as a source of individual spiritual health and healing. In the end, the temple, river, and trees all become metaphors for spiritual regeneration to be accessed by worthy church members.³⁰

Daniel 2; 7–12

Although Daniel presents itself as written during the Persian period, it reached final form in the second century BCE. The first six chapters are court tales, that is, stories told to illustrate Jewish success in foreign courts through faithfulness, and may have originated earlier. The final six chapters are apocalyptic narratives, built on *vaticinium ex eventu* (prophecy after the fact) to describe the destruction of God's enemies and Judah's triumph in the second century BCE.

26. *History of the Church*, 4:337.

27. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1956), 3:93–94.

28. Daniel H. Ludlow, "Future of the Holy Land," *Ensign* (May 1972).

29. However, given the complexity of tensions in the Middle East and the potential for anti-Semitic readings, attempts to negotiate the import of Smith's prophecies and Hyde's prayer have proven difficult for many modern Latter-day Saints. See David B. Galbraith, "Orson Hyde's 1841 Mission to Palestine," *Ensign* (October 1991).

30. "Every Living Thing Shall Live Whither the River Cometh," *Old Testament Gospel Doctrine Teachers Manual*, Lesson 44 (2001): 207–10. While Ezekiel and early LDS leaders were interested in the river's literal renewal of the Dead Sea, Latter-day Saints are encouraged to "wade into the 'river' again and again—or, in other words, attend the temple as often as possible."

Among most Latter-day Saints, however, Daniel is considered a sixth century BCE prophet serving in the Babylonian court and his visions are read Christologically and eschatologically. Application to events of the second century BCE is affirmed, but most events and persons are read as multiple fulfillment prophecy or types. Daniel 2 and 7, both historical apocalypses, are by far the most prominent chapters but Daniel 7 has a unique reading among LDS interpreters that shifts the scenario from a judgment scene in the divine throne room to an eschatological gathering to welcome and receive Christ at his Second Coming.

Daniel 7 opens as Daniel sees a succession of grotesque beasts coming out of the sea. The fourth beast is distinguished from the others by ten horns, three of which are pulled up to allow a particularly offensive "little horn" (v8) to grow. The scene then abruptly shifts from earth to the heavenly court room for judgment. God (the Ancient of days; Dan. 7:9 KJV) takes his place on the heavenly throne, destroys the beast and its horn, then renders judgment in favor of a human figure ("one like the Son of man; Dan. 7:12 KJV). In context, the beasts are the ancient kingdoms of Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. The "little horn" is Antiochus Epiphanes IV, whom the Jews had to serve for three and a half years. When God renders judgment, Antiochus Epiphanes IV is destroyed while the Jews prevail over their enemies to receive the lasting kingdom.

Readings of this passage among most LDS leaders follow the common Christological interpretation in some details: the "one like a Son of man" is Christ and the "little horn" is one of many anti-Christ figures in LDS reception (the beast from the sea [Rev. 13:1], Gog [Ezek. 38:14–23], Sherem [Jacob 7:1–24], Korihor [Alma 30:6–60], and possibly the "great and abominable church" [1 Ne. 22:13–18]).³¹ However, Smith's identification of the "Ancient of days" as Adam, rather than God, sets up a radically different scenario in which the heavenly court becomes a culminating reunion.

Smith's reading of Daniel 7:9–14 draws on two other texts. The first is Daniel 12:1–3, in which Michael, identified with Adam in the LDS tradition,³² stands with Israel as its protector. The second is the expanded LDS version of the primeval history (Gen. 1–11) in Moses 3–7, which establishes that Adam presided over a dispensation. In Doctrine and Covenants 107:53–56, Joseph Smith reported that just before Adam's death he summoned his righteous descendants to the "valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman," during which he blessed them and reported his own apocalyptic vision. At the climax of this event, Christ

³¹ Sidney B. Sperry, *The Voice of Israel's Prophets: A Latter-day Interpretation of the Major and Minor Prophets of the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1961), 260–61.

³² Arthur A. Bailey, "Adam: LDS Sources" *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 15–17.

appeared and validated Adam's royal and priestly status. According to Joseph Smith, this family gathering is to be reprised as Adam's righteous descendants, both living and dead, will return to the same location, identified as Spring Hill, near Gallatin, MO.³³ In this reading, Adam (Michael), who is the oldest man (Ancient of days, Dan. 7:9 KJV) functions as a royal priest: seated on a fiery throne, his sons will return their priesthood keys to him, and he will return them to Christ (one like a Son of man; Dan. 7:12 KJV), who holds them by right and will personally rule during the Millennium.³⁴

NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospels. Although the Gospels have their own essay in this volume, two points should be made within this chapter. First, modern scholars remain divided over how Jesus understood the future because of difficulties in assessing whether the present- or future-oriented sayings in the Gospels go back to Jesus himself. Of the various possibilities, the one that most closely coheres with what many members of the LDS community believe asserts that the historical Jesus had an apocalyptic eschatology. However, to scholars this means that Jesus expected God to intervene in the rather near future, while many Latter-day Saints would indicate that Jesus understood that his return was to be preceded by a delay in which the authentic understanding of Jesus' teachings and his church were to be lost through apostasy (e.g., 2 Thess. 2:3).

Second, although this understanding of Jesus goes back to Joseph Smith, the preeminent source of interpretation of the Gospels for many of his followers is James E. Talmage's *Jesus the Christ*, published in 1915.³⁵ Talmage's work is like a "life of Jesus," prominent in Victorian England, and his reading of the so-called "little apocalypses" in the synoptic Gospels reflects similar harmonizing sensibilities: Matthew's version as given in the Authorized Version (KJV) is the base of his reading while information in Mark and Luke and some use of the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) supplements it. In the end, Talmage's reading makes Jesus' eschatological chronology coherent with that of the LDS tradition as he understood it.

33. Jacob W. Olmstead, "Far West and Adam-ondi-Ahman," available at <https://history.lds.org/article/doctrine-and-covenants-far-west?lang=eng>. See the footnotes with this article for detailed citations. Rendered in Hebrew, Spring Hill is Tel Aviv.

34. Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:13-14.

35. See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission According to Holy Scriptures Both Ancient and Modern* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1915), Kindle ed., 450-65.