
One Word

D&C 68:1

At the close of the November 1831 conference of elders in Hiram, Ohio, Orson Hyde, Luke Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellin asked the Prophet Joseph Smith to seek “the will of the Lord concerning themselves, and their ministry” (D&C 68: Introduction). In response to their request, the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord in behalf of these brethren. Through revelation Luke Johnson, Lyman Johnson, and William E. McLellin were told, “Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, acting in the authority which [the Lord has] given you, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (v. 8). Orson Hyde was called “to proclaim the everlasting gospel, by the Spirit of the living God, from people to people, and from land to land, in the congregations of the wicked, in their synagogues” (v. 1).

The use of the word *synagogues*, meaning “buildings where the Jews assemble for religious worship and instruction,” foreshadowed a future call for Orson Hyde. Also foreshadowing that call was a blessing given by the Prophet to him: “In due time thou shalt go to Jerusalem, the land of thy fathers, and be a watchman unto the house of Israel; and by thy hands shall the Most High do a great work, which shall prepare the way and greatly facilitate the gathering together of that people.”¹ When Orson was ordained an apostle, he was further told to “go forth according to the commandment, both to Jew and Gentile, and to all nations, kingdoms and tongues.”² In March 1840 as Orson lay in bed pondering—

The vision of the Lord, like clouds of light, burst into my view. ... The cities of London, Amsterdam, Constantinople and Jerusalem, all appeared in succession before me, and the Spirit said unto me, “Here

¹ History, 1838–1856, volume C-1, [2 November 1838–31 July 1842]. Joseph Smith Papers.

² Blessing to Orson Hyde, 15 February 1835, Document Transcript. Joseph Smith Papers.

are many of the children of Abraham whom I will gather to the land that I gave to their fathers; and here also is the field of your labors.³

According to the minutes of the general conference held on April 6, 1840, Orson was called—

to visit the cities of London, Amsterdam, Constantinople, and Jerusalem; and also other places that he may deem expedient; and converse with the priests, rulers, and elders of the Jews, and obtain from them all the information possible, and communicate the same to some principal paper for publication, that it may have a general circulation throughout the United States.⁴

In fulfillment of that calling, Orson journeyed to Europe and the Middle East. He wrote,

On Sunday morning, October 24, a good while before day, I arose from sleep, and went out of the city [Jerusalem] as soon as the gates were opened, crossed the brook Kedron, and went upon the Mount of Olives, and there, in solemn silence, with pen, ink, and paper, just as I saw in the vision, offered up the following prayer to Him who lives forever and ever.

O Thou! who art from everlasting to everlasting, eternally and unchangeably the same, even the God who rules in the heavens above, and controls the destinies of men on the earth, wilt Thou not condescend, through thine infinite goodness and royal favor, to listen to the prayer of Thy servant which he this day offers up unto Thee in the name of Thy holy child Jesus, upon this land, where the Son of Righteousness set in blood, and thine Anointed One expired.⁵

As the dedicatory prayer continued, Orson asked the Lord to bless the Holy Land for the gathering of the Jews who were now scattered throughout the world. He prayed that the land would be fruitful and that Jerusalem would again be built up and a temple reared. He then asked for a blessing upon the First Presidency and the Twelve—

Let a peculiar blessing rest upon the Presidency of Thy Church, for at them are the arrows of the enemy directed. Be Thou to them a sun and a shield, their strong tower and hiding place; and in the time of distress

³ Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:375–376.

⁴ Recommendation for Orson Hyde, 6 April 1840, Document Transcript. Joseph Smith Papers.

⁵ Prayer of Orson Hyde on the Mount of Olives, Sunday morning October 28, 1841, in Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:456–459.

or danger be Thou near to deliver. Also the quorum of the Twelve, do Thou be pleased to stand by them for Thou knowest the obstacles which they have to encounter, the temptations to which they are exposed, and the privations which they must suffer. Give us, [the Twelve] therefore, strength according to our day, and help us to bear a faithful testimony of Jesus and His Gospel, to finish with fidelity and honor the work which Thou hast given us to do, and then give us a place in Thy glorious kingdom. And let this blessing rest upon every faithful officer and member in Thy Church. And all the glory and honor will we ascribe unto God and the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.⁶

On October 24, 1979, the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden on the Mount of Olives was dedicated by President Spencer W. Kimball, 138 years after Orson offered the dedicatory prayer.

⁶ Prayer of Orson Hyde, 4:456–459.