

THE OTHER WITNESS: NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM
AND THE MATERIAL GOSPEL THEOLOGY

By

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To My Parents

And this our life exempt from public haunt
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones and good in everything.
I would not change it.

— William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

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INTRODUCTION

The Gospels are no longer suspended in the air. The study of the land where the Saviour wrought and taught, of the people with whom he mingled, of their customs, habits, and peculiarities, as perpetuated among their descendants to-day, has given the world a 'fifth gospel' outside of the Bible.

— *The Biblical World* (April 1893)¹

There is no doubt about it — *Palestine is the Bible in geography*. ... There is a fifth Gospel, and that is *the Gospel according to Geography*.

— David Gregg, *The Testimony of the Land to the Book: Or, The Evidential Value of Palestine* (1895)²

Infidel. Heretic. Skeptic. Charlatan. Such were the charges that American Protestants routinely made against the French scholar Joseph Ernest Renan (1823-1892) in the second half of the nineteenth century. The basis of these accusations was Renan's *Vie de Jésus* (1863)—a study of Jesus that Renan conceived of as the first book in a series on the origins of Christianity.³ Despite the book's popularity, Renan's critics argued that his depiction of Jesus was flawed and that its dangerous theology represented the insidious creep of European higher criticism onto America's shores.⁴ The popular preacher Thomas DeWitt Talmage compared Renan to that great American skeptic—Thomas Paine. "When the brilliant Renan went to Palestine he was stuffed with enough incredulity to make a dozen Thomas Paines," wrote Talmage.⁵ Church historian Philip Schaff attacked Renan's hostility toward miracles and called Renan's portrayal of Jesus "a religious romance, with Jesus as the hero, adapted to the tastes of the fashionable world."⁶ John William McGarvey, a prominent Disciples of Christ minister, deemed the *Life of Jesus* "the most brilliant and entertaining of all the books that have been written in support of the cause of infidelity."⁷ Distaste for Renan provided even a point for

¹ "[Editorial]," *The Biblical World* 1, no. 4 (April 1893): 247.

² David Gregg, *The Testimony of the Land to the Book: Or, The Evidential Value of Palestine* (New York: Revell, 1895), 30–31, italics original. Page references herein are to the second edition of Gregg's work, published by E.B. Treat of New York in 1896.

³ Ernest Renan, *Vie de Jésus* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1863); Ernest Renan, *The Life of Jesus* (London: Trübner & Co., 1864), 1.

⁴ *Vie de Jésus* sold "like hot cakes," as Renan's publisher wrote to him a month after its publication (as quoted in Jennifer Stevens, *The Historical Jesus and the Literary Imagination, 1860-1920* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 74). Within a year, German, Dutch, Italian, and English translations appeared, as well as more than 50 works in French alone that responded to Renan's book (Francis Espinasse, *Life of Ernest Renan* (London: Walter Scott Limited, 1895), 111).

⁵ Thomas DeWitt Talmage, *The Oriental World: A Graphic Narrative of Inspired Events, Holy Places, Sacred Walks, and Hallowed Scenes amid the People of Promise: Together with Full Historic Incidents of the Master's Life from Bethlehem to Ascension* (Chicago: J.H. Moore & Company, 1897), 95.

⁶ Philip Schaff, *The Person of Christ: The Miracle of History, with a Reply to Strauss and Renan, and a Collection of Testimonies of Unbelievers* (New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1866), 180.

⁷ John William McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible: A Geographical and Topographical Description of Palestine, with Letters of Travel in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Company, 1881), 375.

Protestant and Catholic unity. In a withering attack shortly after Renan's 1892 death, the Catholic magazine *The Month* memorialized Renan as "an imposter in the name of historical criticism" who "proclaimed the divinity of materialism and the infallibility of rationalism."⁸

Despite American Protestants' deep suspicion of Renan, they, however, repeatedly praised one specific passage from his *Life of Jesus*. In it, Renan described the Holy Land:

I have traversed, in all directions, the country of the Gospels; I have visited Jerusalem, Hebron, and Samaria; scarcely any important locality of the history of Jesus has escaped me. All this history, which at a distance seems to float in the clouds of an unreal world, thus took a form, a solidity which astonished me. The striking agreement of the texts with the places, the marvelous harmony of the Gospel ideal with the country which served it as a framework, were like a revelation to me. I had before my eyes a fifth Gospel, torn, but still legible⁹

Those same American Protestants who condemned Renan approvingly cited this passage. Talmage pointed to it as evidence that even unbelievers could be moved by the Holy Land.¹⁰ Schaff, too, in his 1878 Holy Land travelogue quoted Renan's passage in the original French.¹¹ Three years later McGarvey concluded his reflections on the correspondence between Palestine and the Bible with this same quote from that "learned French infidel."¹² And John Martin Philip Otts, a southern Presbyterian minister who described *Life of Jesus* as "a bouquet of beauties and falsities bound together with golden threads of truth and twisted cords of error," nonetheless acknowledged Renan's passage as the inspiration for the title of his own book—*The Fifth Gospel* (1892).¹³ In a book that American Protestants loathed, they found a view of the Holy Land that they loved.

American Protestants in the second half of the nineteenth century praised Renan's passage because it elegantly encapsulated their widespread belief in—and hope for—the Holy Land: namely, that the Holy Land preserved an authoritative and experiential account of sacred history that could be plainly read, interpreted, and reproduced, like the Bible. Protestants heralded the Holy Land as "the 'handwriting of God,'" "a library of revelation engraved on stones," and "one vast tablet whereupon's God's message to men have been drawn."¹⁴ They imagined the Holy Land as another eyewitness that, like the apostles, had seen Jesus. Moreover, they believed the Holy Land's enduring materiality could overcome certain problems afflicting written scripture. "With your scissors of criticism you can clip away everything else. But you cannot clip away the land. ... Prove all the books are forgeries, if you can, still Christ and the land remain" wrote the Reverend Frank L. Goodspeed about the Holy Land in 1901.¹⁵ At the same moment as increasing theological and epistemological challenges regarding the

⁸ J. G. Colclough, "The Writings of Ernest Renan," *The Month* LXXVI, no. 342 (December 1892): 472.

⁹ Renan, *The Life of Jesus*, 31.

¹⁰ Talmage, *The Oriental World*, 96.

¹¹ Philip Schaff, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine* (New York: American Tract Society, 1878), 383.

¹² McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 386.

¹³ John Martin Philip Otts, *The Fifth Gospel: The Land Where Jesus Lived* (New York: Revell, 1892), 25.

¹⁴ David Austin Randall, *The Handwriting of God in Egypt, Sinai, and the Holy Land* (Philadelphia: J.E. Potter, 1862); Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 387; William McClure Thomson, *The Land and the Book: Or, Biblical Illustrations Drawn From the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), I:xv.

¹⁵ Frank Lincoln Goodspeed, *Palestine: "A Fifth Gospel": Four Lectures on the Christian Evidence Borne by the Holy Land as It Is To-Day* (Springfield, Mass.: The F. A. Bassette Company, 1901), 53–54.

material reliability—or unreliability—of the Bible, Protestants embraced the Holy Land as a more infallible, more enduring form of scripture. They saw it as a material gospel.¹⁶

This dissertation traces the rise and decline of what I call the material gospel theology among American Protestants in the second half of the nineteenth century. The material gospel theology defined nineteenth-century American Protestants’ “sacred gaze” toward the Holy Land—David Morgan’s term for a “particular configuration of ideas, attitudes, and customs that informs a religious act of seeing as it occurs within a given cultural and historical setting.”¹⁷ The material gospel theology was the dream of a sacred book that was not a book, a text that was experienced and not read, and a page that was incorruptible. Its rise represented a radical reimagining of scripture and text. It proved to be a remarkably flexible theology, accommodating a variety of views about how the Holy Land preserved another divine record. It also influenced how Protestants believed that landscape should be “read” and propelled a vast profusion of material objects intended to reproduce the Holy Land’s sacred revelation.

The material gospel theology engaged old debates, including what constituted a gospel and how the physical world revealed divine knowledge.¹⁸ Christians had long contemplated the possibility of gospels outside of the Bible or in a non-written form. The writings of early church fathers contained tantalizing references to “lost gospels.”¹⁹ Others argued for the classification of certain canonical books as “fifth gospels”—including Isaiah and the writings of Paul.²⁰ Irenaeus contemplated the possibility of an unwritten gospel—those who came to know Christ “without papyrus or pigment” but because they had “salvation written on their hearts through the spirit.”²¹ Sacred locations sometimes take on the qualities of a living gospel in other early church writings. Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, held holy places in high regard, attributing to them an anthropomorphic power to witness, testify, and correct. Cyril told candidates for baptism that Golgotha—the place where Jesus died—could prove them wrong if they strayed from the faithful path.²²

¹⁶ My use of the term “material gospel,” grounded as it is in spatial theory and studies of material culture, differs from how the term has been used in other contexts. The term “material gospel,” for example, has occasionally been used to refer to an actual, physical copy of the Bible, as the English scholastic theologian John Capgrave (1393-1464) used it (see Karen A. Winstead, *John Capgrave’s Fifteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 58). “Material gospel” has also been used as an equivalent for “prosperity gospel.” The President of the Dairymen’s Association of Quebec used the term in this sense when he told his colleges in 1907, “We are here to preach a material gospel: a gospel which teaches the making of as much money as possible honestly and fairly by reasonable bodily toil and by consistent intellectual effort” (*Twenty-Sixth Report of the Dairymen’s Association of the Province of Quebec* (Quebec: Charles Pageau, 1908), 208). The most common use of “material gospel”—particularly in the twentieth century—has been in opposition to the idea of a spiritual gospel. As will be seen, however, the Protestant material gospel theology did not oppose the spiritual; instead, the material gospel was often seen as a conduit for the spiritual.

¹⁷ David Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze: Religious Visual Culture in Theory and Practice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 3.

¹⁸ On early Christian theological debates over the gospels and books, see Anne Kreps, “The Crucified Book, Textual Authority and the Gospel of Truth” (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2013).

¹⁹ James Keith Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation Based on M. R. James*, Paperback (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2005).

²⁰ John F. A. Sawyer, *The Fifth Gospel: Isaiah in the History of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 2; Charles Roads, *The Fifth Gospel: Or, The Gospel According to Paul*, Revised Version (Cincinnati: Curts & Jennings, 1897).

²¹ As quoted in Kreps, “The Crucified Book,” 155–156.

²² “[Jesus] was truly crucified for our sins. And should you wish to deny this, the visible itself, this blessed Golgotha, refutes you,” wrote Cyril (as quoted in Jan Willem Drijvers, *Cyril Of Jerusalem: Bishop And City* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 157).

There have been other historical periods that have seen a blossoming of the material gospel theology specifically with regards to the Holy Land. Historian Adam Beaver, for example, describes a group of “sacred antiquarians” during the High and Late Renaissance whose Holy Land views strongly resemble those of nineteenth-century American Protestants.²³ Erasmus in 1518 explained how knowledge of the Holy Land could complement and enliven the Bible: “Once we learn from cosmographers about the [biblical] regions, we can follow the shifting scenes of the story in our minds, as if we were being carried along with it, as if we were witnessing the events and not reading about them.”²⁴ Many nineteenth-century American Protestants would have wholeheartedly agreed with Erasmus.

The material gospel theology that conceived of the Holy Land as the “handwriting of God” or “a library of revelation” resonated with the textually-oriented culture of Protestantism.²⁵ Protestants—particularly those of the nineteenth century—have been described as “People of the Book.” The most important book for Protestants was the Bible—but a range of other texts also held a pride of place in Protestant culture, including sermons, tracts, manuals, and hymns.²⁶ Nineteenth-century American Protestants were, though, not *only* People of the Book; their veneration of the book also led them to be People of Place. They had tremendous faith in the possibility that places could serve as infallible records of divine interaction with the world. The potentially heretical nature of this claim should not be overlooked: to insist that the Holy Land itself was another revelation from God struck at the very heart of *sola scriptura*, a central Protestant tenet. American Protestants’ embrace of the Holy Land as a fifth gospel signaled an opening of the supposedly closed canon and a new receptiveness to the material world as a source of revelation and divine truth.²⁷

* * *

The prevalence of the material gospel theology in the second half of the nineteenth century coincided with a period of growing interest in the Holy Land itself. Scholar Hilton Obenzinger has described America as beset by “Holy Land Mania” during this period.²⁸ Several factors motivated this interest in the Holy Land. Among them was the work of nineteenth-century geographers and archaeologists working in the region, including the pioneering work of

²³ Adam G. Beaver, “Scholarly Pilgrims: Antiquarian Visions of the Holy Land,” in *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, ed. Katherine Van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, and Howard Louthan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 268.

²⁴ As quoted in *ibid.*, 270.

²⁵ Randall, *The Handwriting of God*; Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 387.

²⁶ Rodger Milton Payne observes that “Protestants were not only a People of the Book, they were a people of books, and for their personal devotions a variety of devotional manuals, printed sermons, and pious tracts often filled more immediate needs” (*The Self and the Sacred: Conversion and Autobiography in Early American Protestantism* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998), 56). The importance of what Gregory S. Jackson calls “Protestant textual culture” (94) in *The Word and Its Witness: The Spiritualization of American Realism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) has been a focus of scholarly inquiry. See, for example, Matthew Hedstrom’s recent study on the relationship between book culture and the rise of liberal religion in the twentieth century (*The Rise of Liberal Religion: Book Culture and American Spirituality in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2012)).

²⁷ Christian theology and practice has been marked by periodic renewals of interest in materiality. Caroline Walker Bynum describes one such period in the Late Middle Ages in *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books, 2011). Bynum argues that the “Late Middle Ages saw both an intensifying rejection and an intensifying revering of matter as the focus of the divine” (285) and that this paradoxical regard for matter “lies at the heart of late medieval Christianity” (34).

²⁸ Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Edward Robinson (1794-1863). Robinson guided Americans through the Holy Land in his *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Countries* (1841) and his *Physical Geography of the Holy Land* (1865).²⁹ Novels and travelogues, too, introduced Americans to the Holy Land. *Yusef, or, The Journey of the Frangi: A Crusade in the East* (1853) by the Irish-born American writer John Ross Browne was one such popular Holy Land book.³⁰ Millennial expectations also fueled interest in the Holy Land.³¹ And with improvements in transatlantic transportation, a new interest in leisure travel, and changing political circumstances in the region, a growing number of Americans actually made the journey to the Holy Land in the nineteenth century. “It was formerly very difficult, and even dangerous, to go [to the Holy Land]. But now it is safe, easy, and comparatively inexpensive,” wrote the American journalist Charles Dana in 1893.³² Professional tour companies offered organized trips, some designed for specific denominations.³³ Pilgrims, tourists, artists, scholars, missionaries, and businessmen, among others, sought the Holy Land in the nineteenth century.

Both the time required for the journey and its cost continued to put the trip out of reach for the vast majority of ordinary Americans; actual travel to the Holy Land remained a privilege of the few. The journey generally took at least three to four months from departure to return.³⁴ An organized, three-month Holy Land tour in the 1890s could cost \$700³⁵—an amount that far exceeded the annual wages for the average teacher, factory worker, or farm laborer and nearly equaled the annual wages for the average minister in 1890.³⁶ Many ministers who made the trip

²⁹ Edward Robinson, *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai, and Arabia Petraea: A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838*, by E. Robinson and E. Smith. Undertaken in Reference to Biblical Geography, 3 vols. (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1841); Edward Robinson, *Physical Geography of the Holy Land* (London: John Murray, 1865). Robinson based *Biblical Researches* on his first trip to the Holy Land in 1838. He made a second trip in 1852, resulting in *Later Biblical Researches in Palestine, and in the Adjacent Regions: Journal of Travels in the Year 1852* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1856).

³⁰ J. Ross Browne, *Yusef, Or, The Journey of the Frangi: A Crusade in the East* (New York: Harper, 1853).

³¹ Stephanie Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant Pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865-1941* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2011), 3–4.

³² Charles Dana, “Jerusalem: Some Notes of a Recent Journey,” *McClure’s Magazine* II, no. 1 (December 1893): 86.

³³ Henry Gaze & Sons, for example, a tour operator offering international trips, organized Holy Land tours of various denominations—including trips for Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Congregationalists. Even if the itineraries for such trips were substantially the same, Gaze & Sons differentiated its tours through marketing: the Presbyterian trip was a “Tour to the Orient,” while the Methodist trip was a “Pilgrimage,” and the Baptist trip a “Baptist Party to the Orient” (“A Baptist Pilgrimage,” *Gaze’s Tourist Gazette* 12, no. 8 (October 1896): 12). Gaze & Sons also sought to differentiate the trips by recruiting leading denominational figures to serve as guides—often selecting guides with ties to publishing. Gaze & Sons, for example, selected the Reverend T. T. Eaton, editor of *The Western Recorder*, to lead a February 1896 Baptist Holy Land tour. An advertisement referred to Eaton as “the learned doctor” and promised that “a goodly number of distinguished Southern residents are already beginning to signify their intentions” to join the tour (Ibid.). The mass commercialization of Holy Land travel, thus, resulted in American travelers increasingly visiting the Holy Land in the company of individuals with similar theological and social backgrounds.

³⁴ The Oriental Tour offered by *The Congregationalist* in 1895, for example, spent four months in Europe and the Holy Land—with 1 month in Palestine and Syria (“The Congregationalist’s Oriental Tour: Palestine and the Nile,” *The Congregationalist* LXXX, no. 1 (January 3, 1895): 2).

³⁵ Rates, for example, for Gaze & Sons three-month “Popular Tour Through Bible Lands” in April 1897 began at \$690 (“Season—1896-1897: Further Testimony to the Excellence of Gaze’s Oriental Escorted Parties’ Arrangements,” *Gaze’s Tourist Gazette* 8, no. 12 (October 1896): 8).

³⁶ James Hudnut-Beumler, *In Pursuit of the Almighty’s Dollar: A History of Money and American Protestantism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 88.

depended upon the financial support of their congregations and other benefactors, as discussed in chapter 5.

Those who did travel to the Holy Land produced a tremendous wealth of objects related to their travels, including theological tracts, hymns, travelogues, Sunday school literature, atlases, maps, newspaper articles, novels, poetry, illustrations, and photographs. These materials belong to what Gregory Jackson describes as “homiletic works”—that “broad spectrum of parabiblical materials that sprang up despite the commitment of American Protestants ... to the principle of *sola scriptura*.”³⁷ The glut of Holy Land materials was not lost on the creators of these objects: authors could not avoid saying a word or two as to why yet another work on the Holy Land was needed. In 1862 the Baptist minister David Austin Randall asked, “Has not the ground been traveled over, again and again, and book after book been written? What new, interesting, or instructive, can be presented?”³⁸ Randall, of course, thought that there was something new to be said and proceeded to write his own Holy Land book.

Producers of these objects marketed them as a way for Americans to imaginatively experience the Holy Land. One 1894 Holy Land book claimed to make possible “a delightful tour of Palestine and the countries adjacent to it without leaving home.”³⁹ This dissertation draws from this tremendous wealth of nineteenth-century Holy Land objects—with particular attention to published travelogues. Travelogues took the form of narratives and/or illustrations; many were non-fiction, although fictional accounts also existed; and they varied in length, from full-length books to newspaper columns or magazine articles. The decision to focus on published works—as opposed to private letters or journals—comes with drawbacks. Writers carefully crafted their published narratives, filtering their appraisals of the Holy Land to meet social, cultural, and theological expectations. Ministers may have, for example, felt pressure to avoid expressions of doubt about the Holy Land, Jesus, or the Bible—though, as will be seen, many did, nonetheless, find much to doubt. Published travelogues, though, do offer advantages over unpublished works in revealing how Protestants perceived the Holy Land. In particular, writers often sought to convince readers that the Holy Land could serve as another gospel. The polemical aspects of published works, thus, reveal a great deal about the spatial ideologies Protestants adopted toward the Holy Land and how they understood it to function as a material gospel.

The sources for this dissertation represent a broad spectrum of denominations—Protestant and otherwise. Accounts appear from Methodists, Baptists, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Unitarians, Anglicans, Catholics, Transcendentalists, and others. A denomination having a Holy Land account written by one of its own was a point of pride. Amos Daniel Wenger, a Mennonite pastor whose congregation sent him on a trip to the Holy Land and around the world in 1899, felt compelled to write an account because “no orthodox Mennonite had ever written a work of the kind.”⁴⁰ Denominational differences do matter in these accounts. Travelers experienced the Holy Land through particular denominational viewpoints and used what they saw to bolster their specific doctrinal positions. At the same time, one of the most striking aspects of nineteenth-century Holy Land materials is their near universal agreement on the Holy Land being a material gospel. While the Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey, for example, railed against “destructive criticism” and

³⁷ Jackson, *The Word and Its Witness*, 4.

³⁸ Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, v.

³⁹ John Heyl Vincent, James Wideman Lee, and Robert Edward Mather Bain, *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee: Being Four Hundred Original Photographic Views and Descriptions of the Places Connected with the Earthly Life of Our Lord and His Apostles, Traced with Notebook and Camera* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Company, 1894), Lee’s Introduction.

⁴⁰ Amos Daniel Wenger, *Six Months in Bible Lands and around the World in Fourteen Months: With Fifty Illustrations* (Doylestown, Pa.: J.B. Steiner Printing House, 1902), iv.

the Congregationalist pastor Lyman Abbott, both he and Abbott agreed on the potential of the Holy Land as another gospel.⁴¹ Seeing the Holy Land as a material gospel was a point of Protestant unity even in the face of growing theological fragmentation.

While this dissertation focuses on American Protestants, it, at times, draws upon sources that are neither American nor Protestant. The history that unfolds encompasses German scholastic developments, British clergymen, French artists, and Roman Catholic periodicals, among other things. The story of American Protestants and the Holy Land is quite literally a transatlantic story, as Protestants crossed the Atlantic and traveled through Europe to reach the Holy Land. But it is also a transatlantic story in other respects. The Holy Land in the mid- to late-nineteenth-century was a point of vibrant Euro-American cultural exchange. The Biblically-inspired works of European painters such as Gustave Doré and J. James Tissot, whose work is discussed in chapter 4, attracted large American audiences. Moreover, the most popular Holy Land books were published by printing houses on both sides of the Atlantic.⁴² This dissertation follows the organic, transatlantic contours of the material gospel theology, drawing upon sources that exceed the boundaries of American Protestantism where it illuminates the discussion at hand.

My interpretation of my sources reflects my training in the history of American religions, as well as my interest in critical theories of space, material and visual culture, and ritual. This dissertation reflects what Manuel A. Vásquez calls the “materialist turn in religious study”—characterized by a greater attention to the relationship of bodies, objects, practices, and virtual and physical worlds.⁴³ Vásquez contrasts this materialist approach with “textualism”—an approach that monopolized previous studies of religion with a focus on scripture, theology, private belief, and Protestantism. Imagining these materialist and textualist approaches in opposition to one another should not, however, imply that Protestant culture—even if heavily textual—does not warrant evaluation from a materialist perspective. The Bible was both text and object for nineteenth-century Protestants—an all *too* material object, in fact, for Protestants like the Reverend Goodspeed who worried about the scissors of criticism clipping away at the Bible. The American Protestant encounter with the Holy Land, thus, offers a rich site to consider the interdependency of textualism and materialism in religious experience, as nineteenth-century American Protestant esteem for the material was ultimately deeply rooted in their textual worldview.

⁴¹ For McGarvey on “destructive criticism,” see John William McGarvey, *Short Essays in Biblical Criticism, Reprinted from The Christian Standard, 1893-1904* (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Company, 1910), 1–3. McGarvey’s 1881 Holy Land work was titled *Lands of the Bible*. Abbott’s *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life and Teachings* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1869), like many nineteenth-century “Lives of Christ,” incorporated substantial discussion of the Holy Land.

⁴² The wealth of nineteenth-century American Holy Land sources is matched by an abundance of British accounts. Scholars David Gange and Michael Ledger-Lomas note the mutual influence of nineteenth-century British and American interests in the Holy Land in *Cities of God: The Bible and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12–13. A cursory survey of British sources reveals a similar material gospel theology at operation. The British minister Andrew Thomson (1814-1901), for example, cited geographer Carl Ritter on the correspondence between Palestine and the Bible: “the geography of the country, as we find it to-day, is the strongest testimony of the truth of that history which purports to emanate thence. The natural scenery of Palestine speaks with but one voice in favour of the Bible; every word of the sacred narrative receives its best interpretation by being studied in connection with the place where it was recorded. No one can trace, without joy and wonder, the verification which geography pays to the history of the Holy Land” (as quoted in *In the Holy Land* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1874), 50).

⁴³ Manuel A. Vásquez, *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 10.

Due in part to an unusual wealth of primary sources, the topic of nineteenth-century America and the Holy Land has received significant attention from scholars across many fields, including archaeology, art history, and literature. Rabbi and scholar of American Jewish history Moshe Davis (1916-1996) is credited with the creation of the area of “America-Holy Land Studies” in the 1970s—which he described as dedicated “to study [of] the nature and continuity of the relationship between the American people and the Holy Land in historical context.”⁴⁴ Within the study of America and the Holy Land during the nineteenth century, a few specific areas have received the greatest attention: geographic and archaeologic explorations of the Holy Land, as considered in the work of Edwin Aiken, Rachel Hallote, and Neil Asher Silberman; Holy Land travel writings, as explored by Stephanie Stidham Rogers and Brian Yothers; and Holy Land representations, as documented in the work of John Davis and Burke O. Long.⁴⁵

Many of these works explore the question of how and why Americans imagined the Holy Land as they did. Rogers, for example, describes how Protestants “often experienced profound disappointment” and “felt shame, shock, and insult” upon seeing the Holy Land, and, thus, through print media created a Holy Land more acceptable to Protestant sensibilities.⁴⁶ Long takes a similar approach. Holy Land representations—be it books, images, replicas, or other objects—naturally invite comparative analysis: the juxtaposition of the “real” original and the representation produces a series of differences that can be read as indicative of social, cultural, political, and religious forces. Long ultimately argues that the “exclusions and inclusions” of Holy Land representations particularly reveal the influence of nationalism and politics on American perceptions of the Holy Land.⁴⁷

In both their attention to the re-creation of the Holy Land and the consequences of its re-creation, the long shadow of Edward Said’s landmark study *Orientalism* (1978) continues to be evident.⁴⁸ With attention to ideology, colonialism, imperialism, and nationalism, scholars have documented how Americans—sometimes quite forcefully—fashioned the Holy Land in their own image.⁴⁹ What falls out of focus in many Holy Land studies, however, is American Protestantism itself. The context of American Protestant theology and culture in the burgeoning nineteenth-century interest in the Holy Land has received considerably less attention.⁵⁰ The

⁴⁴ As quoted in Michael Brown, “Moshe Davis and the New Field of America-Holy Land Studies,” in *America and Zion: Essays and Papers in Memory of Moshe Davis*, ed. Eli Lederhendler and Jonathan D. Sarna (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 44.

⁴⁵ Edwin J. Aiken, *Scriptural Geography: Portraying the Holy Land* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2009); Rachel Hallote, *Bible, Map, and Spade: The American Palestine Exploration Society, Frederick Jones Bliss, and the Forgotten Story of Early American Biblical Archaeology* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006); Neil Asher Silberman, *Digging for God and Country: Exploration, Archeology, and the Secret Struggle for the Holy Land, 1799-1917* (New York: Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1982); Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land*; Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing, 1790-1876* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007); John Davis, *The Landscape of Belief: Encountering the Holy Land in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Burke O. Long, *Imagining the Holy Land: Maps, Models, and Fantasy Travels* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

⁴⁶ Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land*, 2.

⁴⁷ Long, *Imagining the Holy Land*, 5.

⁴⁸ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

⁴⁹ Davis argues, for example, that “the Holy Land went through a process of localization and became American” in nineteenth-century visual culture (*The Landscape of Belief*, 5, italics original).

⁵⁰ Margarita Díaz-Andreu García notes that this lack of interest in Protestant theology extends also to histories of archaeology. García writes that “the main connections between all the wide range of religious debates and developments in the field of archaeology are still to be investigated” (*A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (New York: Oxford

American fascination with the Holy Land is, however, intimately connected with debates over the Bible and its authority. The Holy Land was not only a key site in the transformation of American identity in the nineteenth century; it was a critical site in American Protestants' ongoing negotiation of the authority of the material world, scripture, and experience. If Americans Protestants created the Holy Land in their image, they were also created by it.

This dissertation, thus, makes two primary contributions to the study of American Protestantism and the Holy Land. The first is to situate the so-called nineteenth-century "Holy Land Mania" in both a theological and lived religion light. Scholars have long characterized the late nineteenth century as a period of crisis for American Protestantism, following, in particular, Arthur Schlesinger's short but influential essay "A Critical Period in American Religion, 1875-1900" (1930).⁵¹ The late nineteenth century ushered in the disappearance of what historian George Marsden calls the "old order of American Protestantism." This old order was "based on the interrelationship of faith, science, the Bible, morality, and civilization," according to Marsden—a consanguinity that disappeared in the late nineteenth century.⁵² Scholars have linked a waning of the Bible's religious and cultural authority with several developments in the second half of the nineteenth century, including the influence of the Civil War, an exploding print market, and foreign missions.⁵³ The increasingly professionalized field of archaeology, while regarded by many Protestants as a handmaiden of religion, also threatened to uncover facts that might conflict with the Bible. And intellectual and theological currents, including the rise of rationalism, evolution, historicism, and higher criticism, also raised questions about the Bible.

These nineteenth-century crises have been seen by historians as setting the stage for the eventual fracturing of twentieth-century American Protestantism, symbolized by the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy. This crisis-and-response interpretation has strongly negative overtones—it is a story of doubt, decline, and rupture. The rise of the material gospel theology both fits and resists this crisis-and-response model. On the one hand, the material gospel theology responded to and engaged with the pressures of historicism and higher criticism—but it was an optimistic, imaginative response that played out at the level of material and popular culture. The material gospel theology was hopeful, positive, and productive. It represented American Protestants' confidence that though crises loomed, they could be managed.

Scholars have long debated when and the extent to which higher criticism was felt in the pews as opposed to just in the pulpits. One scholar dates the origins of the "great debate" on

University Press, 2007), 132). The recent edited volume *Cities of God* by Michael Ledger-Lomas and David Gange makes important contributions to understanding the relationship between Protestantism and archaeology in the context of nineteenth-century Britain.

⁵¹ Arthur M. Schlesinger, "A Critical Period in American Religion, 1875-1900," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 64 (October 1930): 523–47. Schlesinger's essay would be more appropriately titled "A Critical Period in American Protestantism." Nonetheless, his brief essay continues to offer a remarkable inventory of the challenges facing American Protestantism in the late nineteenth century, including new conditions brought on by urbanization, industrialization, immigration, science, historicism, and higher criticism. Though it has since fallen out of fashion among historians, Henry Commager's *The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character since the 1880's* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950) similarly describes the tremendous flux of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries. See, also, Paul A. Carter, *The Spiritual Crisis of the Gilded Age* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971).

⁵² George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2006), 17.

⁵³ Paul Gutjahr, *An American Bible: A History of the Good Book in the United States, 1777-1880* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999); Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

higher criticism in America to after 1880.⁵⁴ By the 1890s the appearance of books like Washington Gladden's *Who Wrote the Bible? A Book for the People* (1891)⁵⁵ and the widely-reported heresy trial of Charles Augustus Briggs in 1893 likely indicate a broader popular consciousness of higher criticism.⁵⁶ What is clear, though, is that Holy Land works produced for lay audiences throughout the second half of the nineteenth century engaged a constellation of debates about the nature of sacred text and the reliability of the Bible. Lay readers were not shielded from questions about the "truth" of the Bible. Moreover, both producers of Holy Land works and their readers regarded them as means to shore up the Bible against the encroachments of higher criticism and historicism. The story of the material gospel theology, thus, adds a popular, material dimension to the history of nineteenth-century biblical interpretation.

This dissertation also documents the rich diversity of nineteenth-century Protestant views about the Holy Land. There is a stereotype of American Protestants as romanticizers of the Holy Land who believed it to be unchanged since the time of Jesus—a stereotype prevalent even in the nineteenth century, most notably as popularized by Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* (1869). This image persists in scholarly interpretations, such as archaeologist Margarita Díaz-Andreu García's assertion that nineteenth-century archaeologists working in the region—the vast majority of whom were Protestants—"were not interested in any period dated either before or after the events related in the Holy Book."⁵⁷ Some American Protestants did romanticize and idealize the Holy Land—but far more often they had less sentimentalized views than might be expected. Many saw the Holy Land as a modernizing landscape permanently changed since the time of Christ. Many also expressed interest in the history of the land between biblical times and the present day. And a number of Holy Land travelogues from the period have a distinctly anthropological air, with an interest in describing contemporary life in the Holy Land—and not simply because they believed that this contemporary life could be equated with the biblical past.

Holy Land travelogues reveal the tremendous diversity of spatial and material ideologies through which Protestants encountered the Holy Land. They espoused radically diverse views about the boundaries of the Holy Land, what remained from the time of Christ, and how a physical place could preserve a record of divine revelation. These spatial and material ideologies offered differing takes on age-old questions about the impressionability of matter, its resistance to corruption, and how the divine interacted with and transformed the material world. One particular aspect of American Protestant views of the Holy Land that has been under recognized is the influence of spiritualism. Many nineteenth-century American Protestants saw

⁵⁴ Ira V. Brown, "The Higher Criticism Comes to America, 1880-1900," *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 38, no. 4 (December 1960): 197.

⁵⁵ Washington Gladden, *Who Wrote the Bible? A Book for the People* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891).

⁵⁶ Ira Brown in "The Higher Criticism Comes to America" argues that the Briggs trial was largely responsible for introducing Americans to higher criticism (198). Other scholars have dated the arrival of higher criticism earlier. Jerry Brown, for one, rejects the idea that "Briggs was the first to introduce higher criticism to America" (180) in his *The Rise of Biblical Criticism in America, 1800-1870: The New England Scholars* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1969). In contrast to scholars who emphasize the post-1880 period as the high watermark for higher critical debates in America, Jerry Brown explores an earlier period of debate that he argues had been "almost entirely forgotten" by historians (180). This earlier period had been located primarily in New England, with a conservative center of activity at Andover Seminary and a liberal center at Harvard; by 1870, this tradition had largely disappeared. Brown suggests several reasons for this disappearance, including the disruptions of the Civil War, a clergy more committed to "activist concerns" than doctrinal matters, and the location of biblical studies primarily in seminaries and not universities (180-181).

⁵⁷ García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology*, 132.

the Holy Land as a spiritually powerful landscape—rooted, in particular, in its unique claim to being the place where Jesus once walked. Protestant Holy Land accounts frequently record spiritual encounters, be it with biblical figures or deceased family members. The idea of the Holy Land as a spiritually robust landscape also influenced reproductions of the landscape. For some Protestants, the photograph, for example, captured not simply an image of a place but its spirit—transforming what otherwise look like typical landscape photographs into something more akin to an icon. These dissertation at several points, particularly in chapters 2 and 4, documents the strong presence of spiritualism within the material gospel theology.

The experiences of nineteenth-century American Protestants and the Holy Land, in many ways, defy expectations. Protestants venerated the Holy Land as an object comparable to the Bible, stressing its superior experiential value over simply reading a text. They saw it as both an ancient and modern place. They believed it was a place where Jesus walked long ago—but also where ancient spirits and deceased friends still wandered. The Holy Land—both real and imagined—offered a robust landscape for nineteenth-century American Protestants to negotiate fundamental questions of practice and belief.

* * *

A few critical definitions are needed at the outset of this dissertation. The first of these is “Holy Land.” The motto of the Jerusalem YMCA has been cited as a quintessential definition of the Holy Land: “Where the feet of Jesus have trod is the Holy Land.”⁵⁸ Nineteenth-century American Protestants routinely operated, however, with far more expansive definitions than this. For many, the identity of the Holy Land was connected with the Bible; any geographical place associated with the Bible—and not simply the life of Jesus—was considered part of the Holy Land. Protestants frequently used the term “Bible lands” alongside “Holy Land” to reflect this association of the book and the land.⁵⁹ Robert Morris, a Presbyterian minister, called the Holy Land “the Land of Inspired Truth” and “Bible-hallowed land”; for Morris, as for many other Protestants, the holiness of the Holy Land was rooted in its association with the sacred text.

These Bible-centered definitions extended the conceptual boundaries of the Holy Land far beyond the walls of Jerusalem or the land of Palestine; the Holy Land, instead, came to encompass a broad swath of the Mediterranean world, from Egypt to Jerusalem, Damascus to Ephesus, and Athens to Rome. Egypt was regarded as part of the Holy Land because of its connection to Old Testament history, as well as the flight of the holy family into Egypt, recounted in Matthew 2:13-23.⁶⁰ Locations in Greece and Turkey routinely appeared in

⁵⁸ As quoted in Davis, *The Landscape of Belief*, 9–10; and Frederick Quinn, *The Sum of All Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 163. Davis is critical of this “sectarian” definition of the Holy Land, writing that he hopes “it will be remembered that the land remains holy to many peoples and many faiths, no one of which ... can claim fully to ‘possess’ it” (10).

⁵⁹ Examples of books that use the term “Bible Lands” include Robert Morris, *Youthful Explorers in Bible Lands: A Faithful Account of the Scenery, Ruins, Productions, Customs, Antiquities and Traditions of Scriptural Countries; as Youthful Pens Would Describe Them. Joppa and Jerusalem*. (Chicago: Hazlitt & Reed, 1870); Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*; McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*; Thomas DeWitt Talmage, *Story of Bible Land: A Graphic Narrative of Inspired Events, Holy Places, Sacred Walks, and Hallowed Scenes amid The People of Promise: Together with Full Incidents of the Master’s Life from Bethlehem to Ascension* (Philadelphia: People’s Publishing Company, 1897); and Hermann Volrath Hilprecht et al., *Explorations in Bible Lands during the 19th Century* (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman, 1903).

⁶⁰ Philip Schaff in his *Through Bible Lands* notes the importance of the nineteenth-century German scholars Ernst Wilhelm Theodor Herrmann Hengstenberg (1802-1869) and Georg Moritz Ebers (1837-1898) in igniting new interest in Egypt and its relationship to the Old Testament (86).

Protestant Holy Land itineraries, particularly those associated with the apostle Paul and the early church.⁶¹ The Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey emphasized apostolic history in his definition of Christianity's sacred lands: the "Lands of the Bible," according to McGarvey, were those places "made sacred by the feet of an Apostle"—not only the feet of Jesus.⁶² McGarvey described being on "the verge of the Bible lands" when he reached the supposed site of Paul's imprisonment at the base of the Capitoline Hill in Rome.⁶³

At the same time, while the boundaries of the Holy Land may have been quite expansive for American Protestants, there remained a spatial hierarchy. As had been the case for millennia, the spatial center for American Protestants continued to be Palestine and, more specifically, Jerusalem. The nineteenth-century American photographer Robert E. M. Bain called the 150-mile stretch between Bethlehem and Damascus—the region that encompassed the majority of sites associated with the life of Jesus, including Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Lake Galilee—"the Mecca of Bible students."⁶⁴ The biblical scholar Edward Robinson described Palestine as the "central point and nucleus of all Biblical Geography."⁶⁵ Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria constituted what Robinson deemed the "Central Region"⁶⁶; this "Central Region" was surrounded by what he called "Outlying Regions," including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy, among other locations.⁶⁷

The term "Holy Land" is used throughout this dissertation with some reservation. The singularity of "the Holy Land" and the assumption that it equates with the region defined by nineteenth-century Palestine or twentieth-century Israel obscures the plurality of places drawn together in the nineteenth-century Protestant use of this term. The Holy Land was anything but singular for these Protestants. Travelers to the Holy Land crossed international borders; encountered countless ethnicities, languages, and religions; experienced both modern and underdeveloped lands; and saw tremendously diverse physical landscapes. With these cautions in mind, my use of the term "Holy Land" aligns most closely with nineteenth-century Protestant use of the term "Bible Lands": namely, the Holy Land was a network of places, both real and imagined, linked together through their association with the Bible.

The terms pilgrim/tourist and pilgrimage/tourism are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation, which, again, reflects the use of these terms by nineteenth-century American Protestants. The identities of pilgrims and tourists became increasingly intermeshed in the late nineteenth century—reflecting Victor and Edith Turner's classic observation that "a pilgrim is half a tourist if a tourist is half a pilgrim."⁶⁸ Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab suggest that a new form of pilgrimage, in fact, emerged in nineteenth-century Palestine—that of the "modern tourist pilgrimage."⁶⁹ This enmeshment of pilgrim and tourist reflects, among other things, the growth of leisure travel in the nineteenth century. Picturesque sites like Niagara Falls, the

⁶¹ Talmage, *The Oriental World*, 96.

⁶² McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 607.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 413.

⁶⁴ Robert E. M. Bain, "Palestine Photographically Considered," *The Photographic Times* XXX, no. 3 (March 1898): 108.

⁶⁵ Robinson, *Physical Geography of the Holy Land*, 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, v.

⁶⁸ Victor Witter Turner and Edith L. B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 20.

⁶⁹ Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage: The Modern Tourist Pilgrim of Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 2 (April 1, 2003): 131. Bar and Cohen-Hattab describe five factors to distinguish "modern tourist pilgrims" from traditional pilgrims: (1) their motives; (2) timing and duration of travel; (3) religious affiliation and social background; (4) reactions to sites; and (5) travel services used.

Connecticut and Hudson Valleys, and Yellowstone attracted increasing numbers of tourists.⁷⁰ Americans enjoyed virtual travel through books, panoramas, and photographs. John L. Stoddard, for example, drew large crowds in the 1880s and 1890s with his illustrated travel lectures that transported audiences to European cities, through the streets of Jerusalem, and around Mexico, India, and beyond.⁷¹ The term “pilgrimage” often appeared in connection with this burgeoning interest in leisure travel, tourism, and the picturesque. In Twain’s *The Innocents Abroad*, Twain describes the “exquisite dream” of Versailles as “worth a pilgrimage to see.”⁷² In 1899 when the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church met in Washington, DC, conference attendees went on a “pious pilgrimage” to Jamestown and the tomb of George Washington.⁷³ A similar expansion of the term “pilgrimage” to largely secular pursuits is evident in the novelist Charles Dudley Warner’s *Their Pilgrimage* (1886).⁷⁴ In Warner’s modern pilgrimage story, his “pilgrims” do not travel abroad, and religion is far from their minds. The plot of the novel unfolds as the characters tour some of America’s most affluent and popular tourist destinations, including the Catskills, Newport, Bar Harbor, Ocean Grove, and Niagara Falls. Warner’s pilgrims were not the pilgrims of old.

Warner used the term “pilgrimage” to conjure romantic and not necessarily religious visions—but the term also appeared in popular culture in ways that capitalized on its religious connotations. Such was the case for Burton Holmes, another well-known travel lecturer following in the tradition of Stoddard who authored a series of successful, illustrated travel books.⁷⁵ Holmes claimed to have coined the term “travelogue,” and he toured the country for an astonishingly long period, from the 1890s through the 1950s.⁷⁶ In Holmes’s very first illustrated travel talk—delivered before the Chicago Camera Club in 1890—he alluded to the idea of pilgrimage: “To-night we are to travel in the Paradise of the Amateur Photographer, in Europe, that continent where, apparently, man made the cities and God made the country just to provide the modern camerist with a field worthy of his best efforts.” Holmes traveled across Europe for six months, making “a Photographic Pilgrimage,” he told his audience.⁷⁷ Holmes used the term “pilgrimage” to give a seriousness and purpose to his project; the relics he brought home from his pilgrimage were his photographs.

The growth of leisure travel helped secularize the idea of pilgrimage, while associating tourism with pilgrimage sacralized the burgeoning tourism industry. The boundaries between religiously-motivated travel and leisure travel were fluid. American Protestants embraced the

⁷⁰ On the development of these and other nineteenth-century American tourist destinations, see John F. Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998).

⁷¹ X. Theodore Barber, “The Roots of Travel Cinema: John L. Stoddard, E. Burton Holmes and the Nineteenth-Century Illustrated Travel Lecture,” *Film History* 5, no. 1 (March 1, 1993): 68–84.

⁷² Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad, Or, The New Pilgrims’ Progress: Being Some Account of the Steamship Quaker City’s Pleasure Excursion to Europe and the Holy Land: With Descriptions of Countries, Nations, Incidents, and Adventures as They Appeared to the Author* (Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Company, 1869), 153–154.

⁷³ Episcopal Church General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (General Convention of the Episcopal Church, 1899), 233.

⁷⁴ Charles Dudley Warner, *Their Pilgrimage* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1886). Warner was best known as the co-author with Twain of the novel *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* (Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Company, 1873).

⁷⁵ Burton Holmes, *The Burton Holmes Lectures: With Illustrations from Photographs by the Author*, 10 vols. (Battle Creek, Michigan: The Little-Preston Company, Limited, 1901).

⁷⁶ Jennifer Lynn Peterson, *Education in the School of Dreams: Travelogues and Early Nonfiction Film* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 23.

⁷⁷ Burton Holmes, *Burton Holmes Travelogues: With Illustrations from Photographs by the Author*, vol. 7 (New York: The McClure Company, 1910), 5.

dual pilgrim-and-tourist identity, as seen in the *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee* (1894), a photographic volume discussed in detail in chapter 4. The authors of this volume are presented in the guise of both tourists and pilgrims. A montage of photographs opposite the book's title page shows the book's authors with the caption "Our Tourists" (Figure 0.0). A few pages later appears a photograph of a Holy Land campsite of the book's creators with the title "The Pilgrims" (Figure 0.1).⁷⁸ The "Our Tourists" image shows modern, well-dressed men; the photograph of "The Pilgrims," that of a traditional tent. A quintessential aspect of nineteenth-century American Protestant Holy Land pilgrimage was Protestants' forthright embrace of oscillating between the identities of both pilgrims and tourists.

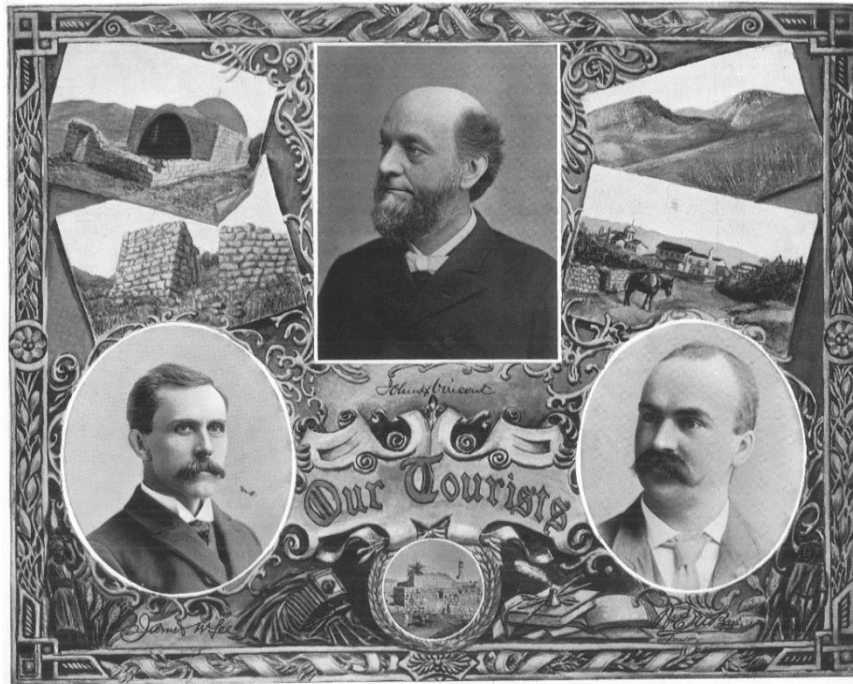


Figure 0.0. Montage of illustrations and photographs titled "Our Tourists" (1894). From *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee: Being Four Hundred Original Photographic Views and Descriptions of the Places Connected with the Earthly Life of Our Lord and His Apostles, Traced with Notebook and Camera* (1894).

⁷⁸ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 11.



Figure 0.1. Photograph titled “The Pilgrims” (1894) by Robert E. M. Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 11.

Finally, spatial theory informs my use of the terms “space,” “place,” and “landscape”—particularly the work of Henri Lefebvre, Ed Relph, Edward Soja, and Yi-Fu Tuan.⁷⁹ Spatial theorists have documented how space, place, and landscape are not universal categories but rather are historically-specific and socially constructed. Places are sites of complex interaction between matter and mind, nature and culture, the physical world and human bodies. Soja captured the multi-dimensional quality of places with the compound term “real-and-imagined” places. Spatial theory, as seen in Soja’s “real-and-imagined,” is anti-dualistic and aligns, in many ways, with the interdisciplinary New Materialism movement.⁸⁰ The fundamental observation of spatial theory that space and place are not universal categories is critical to my

⁷⁹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991); Edward Charles Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976); Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1996); Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, Second Edition (New York: Verso, 2011); Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974); Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

⁸⁰ New Materialism, described as a “cultural theory,” champions the idea of relational networks and critiques familiar dualities like mind/matter, nature/culture, and the external world/human bodies. New Materialism scholars have also questioned the predominance of humans or minds in critical thought through their call for renewed attention to matter itself, including the potential agency of non-human objects (Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin, *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012), 93–94). See also Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, eds., *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2010). For recent considerations of the agency of matter and objects, see Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2010); and Levi R. Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2011).

conceptualization of the material gospel theology. The material gospel theology was a historically-specific, spatial and materialist ideology that influenced how Protestants saw the Holy Land. It also proved flexible enough to encompass a host of different spatial ideologies, as American Protestants arrived in the Holy Land with very different assumptions about the nature of its space, how it preserved divine revelation, and how the Holy Land could be reproduced through word and image.

* * *

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century American Protestants exhibited a remarkable unity about the possibility of the Holy Land serving as a material gospel. The chapters of this dissertation trace an arc—beginning with the rise of the material gospel theology around the mid-point of the nineteenth century and ending with its subsequent weakening around the turn of the twentieth. Chapter one documents the historical and theological roots of the material gospel theology. The belief in the Holy Land as a true and faithful record coincided with increasing questions about the history, truth, and reliability of the Bible itself. Chapter one traces how the rise of historicism and, particularly, the quest for the historical Jesus fueled widespread interest in the Holy Land. It also highlights the role of geography and archaeology in the rise of the material gospel theology, with specific attention to the work of Edward Robinson.

While Protestants across theological and denominational boundaries characterized the Holy Land as a material gospel with a remarkable consistency, their understandings of how it recorded sacred revelation varied considerably. Chapter two delineates different spatial ideologies operating within the material gospel theology, taking particular note of the varied understandings of space, place, and landscape implicit within Protestants' view of the Holy Land as a fifth gospel. Chapter three explores the ritual practices that Protestants developed to discern the Holy Land's material gospel, with a specific focus on the embodied practice of walking. The practice of walking reinforced the text-like perception of the Holy Land, transforming it into an object that could be serially read, transcribed, and reproduced. Chapter four, thus, turns to how the material gospel theology spurred a profusion of Holy Land reproductions in the second half of the nineteenth century and examines how Protestants regarded three different mediums—word, illustration, and photograph—as peculiarly suited to reproducing the Holy Land.

The final two chapters of this dissertation document a weakening of the material gospel theology as the nineteenth century came to a close. Chapter five explores this weakening through the growing presence of non-Holy Land material within Holy Land travelogues at the end of the nineteenth century. Holy Land writers often sought to relay the whole of their travel experiences—from the moment they left home until their return. The juxtaposition of the non-Holy Land and Holy Land within these works had some peculiar outcomes—including, in some cases, undermining the Holy Land's unique claim to being a material gospel. Finally, chapter six describes a fracturing of the Protestant consensus about the possibility of the Holy Land as a fifth gospel. For most of the second half of the nineteenth century, few had questioned the unique and unparalleled value of the Holy Land as a material gospel. As the century drew to a close, however, critics, both from the centers and margins of American Protestantism, increasingly found reason to question the dream of the Holy Land as a fifth gospel.

* * *

For Renan's critics, his *Life of Jesus* represented the threats of historicism, rationality, and abject materialism. They believed Renan would be satisfied only once the divine and miraculous had been stripped from the Bible—a triumph of disenchantment. The material

gospel theology allowed Protestants to stand with and against Renan's onslaught on the Bible. They claimed his rationalism, empiricism, and historicism—progressive values that motivated them to map and measure the Holy Land, describe it in minute detail, and adopt new, modern technologies to reproduce it. But Protestants rejected Renan's disenchantment. Christ had touched the material world—and the material world recorded his presence. Matter did not oppose the spirit; it sustained it.⁸¹ The material gospel theology transformed American Protestant thought and culture by renewing the value of experience, the authority of scripture outside of the Bible, and faith in the material world. Through the material gospel theology, American Protestants fused matter and belief.

⁸¹ This amalgam of radical empiricism and metaphysical romanticism at the heart of the material gospel theology recalls what Jackson Lears calls the “vitalist” impulse in his *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009). Lears describes the “vitalist impulse” in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century America as “a broad revolt against positivism, a rejection of a barren universe governed by inexorable laws, where everything was measurable and nothing was mysterious” (237).

CHAPTER I

BIBLE PROBLEMS, WORLDLY SOLUTIONS

The Land and the Book—with reverence be it said—constitute the ENTIRE and ALL-PERFECT TEXT, and should be read together.

— William McClure Thomson, *The Land and the Book: or, Biblical Illustrations Drawn From the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land* (1859)⁸²

Now as a divine revelation implies a history, a history in turn implies a locality. Yonder is the locality, and we possess it. *It is Palestine*. We go to that locality and study it and interrogate it, and by it prove the history, and by the history prove the revelation.

— David Gregg, *The Testimony of the Land to the Book: Or, The Evidential Value of Palestine* (1895)⁸³

In October 1889 the Reverend Thomas DeWitt Talmage departed New York City for a three-month trip to the Holy Land. As one of America's most popular preachers, newspapers across the country reported on his journey.⁸⁴ The purpose of Talmage's trip was to gather material for a new biography of Christ. While countless "Lives of Christ" already saturated the late nineteenth-century book market, Talmage planned to write an account designed for two specific audiences. The first of these was the general public. He would write his life of Christ in a plain, accessible style, without theological encumbrances, for those "nine hundred and ninety-nine out of the thousand" who were not specialists in the Bible and knew no Greek or Latin.⁸⁵ He also, though, imagined his life of Christ as designed for the businessman. Talmage overheard another passenger on his transatlantic crossing wishing that Talmage would "write a Life of Christ which a business man, getting home at eight o'clock at night and starting from home next morning at seven o'clock, may profitably take up, and in a few minutes before he starts and after he returns, read in snatches and understand."⁸⁶ Talmage's "Life of Christ" for both the general public and the businessman would appear four years later, under the title *From Manger to Throne* (1893).

⁸² Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, I:xv.

⁸³ David Gregg, *The Testimony of the Land to the Book: Or, The Evidential Value of Palestine*, Second edition (New York: E.B. Treat, 1896), 11, italics original. Gregg may have been paraphrasing Selah Merrill's *Galilee in the Time of Christ* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1885), which contains a strikingly similar passage: "The fact is sometimes overlooked that a Divine revelation implies history, and that history implies locality. Hence a familiar acquaintance with its locality and history would seem to be necessary, if one would fully appreciate and understand such a revelation, whether it comprises a series of events extending over many centuries, or is embodied in the person and life of a single individual" (7).

⁸⁴ "Off for Europe: Dr. Talmage and John W. Mackay Sail on the City of Paris," *The New York Times*, October 31, 1889, 9; "At the Tabernacle: Dr. Talmage's Second Day in Palestine: Every Step of His Journey Is Amid Scenes Sanctified by the Holiest Associations: Words Cannot Set Forth the Emotions Excited," *The Wisconsin State Register*, October 11, 1890, 1.

⁸⁵ Thomas DeWitt Talmage, *From Manger to Throne: Embracing a New Life of Jesus the Christ and a History of Palestine and Its People* (Philadelphia: Historical Pub. Co., 1893), preface.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

In the pages of *From Manger to Throne*, Talmage reported a fairly astonishing discovery during the course of his travels—he had found “a new Bible.” He wrote:

Indeed, I have found a new Bible. I found it in the Holy Land and the Grecian Archipelago. A new book of Genesis, since I saw where Abraham and Lot separated, and Joseph was buried. A new Book of Exodus, since I saw where the Israelites crossed the desert. A new Book of Revelation, since I read the Divine message to Smyrna at Smyrna, and to Ephesus at Ephesus. A new book of John, since I saw Jacob’s well and Sychar and Samaria. A new Book of Luke, since I read its twenty-third chapter on the bluff of Golgotha, at the place where there is room for but three crosses. The Bible can never be to me what it was.⁸⁷

The heretical undertones of Talmage’s contention to have discovered “a new Bible” must not have escaped him. Similar claims had, for most of Christian history, provoked whispers—if not charges—of heresy. Talmage, thus, carefully noted that his discovery had not diminished his faith. Instead, with his trademark enthusiasm, he proclaimed that the Holy Land had made the Bible “fresher, truer, lovelier, grander, mightier!”⁸⁸

Talmage’s description of the Holy Land as rewriting the Bible for him points to important theological, intellectual, and historical contexts for the rise of the material gospel theology in the second half of the nineteenth century. Chief among them was concerns about the Bible itself. Talmage’s positive appraisal of the Holy Land stands in contrast with his assessment of the Bible. Talmage presented the Bible as a book in need—one that needed to be made “fresher, truer, lovelier, grander, mightier” for contemporary American audiences. The first section of this chapter describes broad intellectual and theological developments that contributed to this sense that the Bible was a book in need of revitalization. As will be seen, many of these developments simultaneously fostered interest in Palestine. Talmage’s heralding of “a new Bible,” thus, also speaks to a second important context for the rise of the material gospel theology: an American culture increasingly taken with dreams of ancient, hidden treasures awaiting discovery. The second section of this chapter documents how the growth of archaeology and geography in the nineteenth century encouraged the image of the Holy Land as a rediscovered lost record, with specific focus on the role of the biblical scholar Edward Robinson. The final section of this chapter, then, traces the merging of these two contexts in the nineteenth-century material gospel theology: American Protestants who saw the Bible, on the one hand, as a troubled book, while the Holy Land, by comparison, was alive, vivacious, and engaging. By recovering the Holy Land’s material gospel, American Protestants hoped to renew the Bible.

Problems of the Book

As the Civil War drew to a close in 1865, the Methodist minister John Fletcher Hurst (1834-1903) urged Americans to re-arm themselves for battle. America was under attack—this time from an enemy abroad. Originating in Germany, this enemy had “crossed the Rhine into France and the Netherlands, invaded England, and now threatens the integrity of the domain of Anglo-Saxon theology.”⁸⁹ The foe was “Rationalism,” which Hurst described as “the most recent,

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁸⁸ Talmage, *The Oriental World*, 96.

⁸⁹ John Fletcher Hurst, *History of Rationalism: Embracing a Survey of the Present State of Protestant Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1865), 1–2.

but not the least violent and insidious, of all the developments of skepticism.”⁹⁰ Hurst detailed this threat in his *History of Rationalism* (1865), a 600-page critique of European philosophical and theological developments, with discussions of Kant, Schelling, Hegel, Schleiermacher, De Wette, and Strauss, among others. Hurst urged his fellow Christians to recognize the urgency of the threat. “Posterity will not hesitate to charge us with gross negligence if we fail to appreciate the magnitude of Rationalism, and only deal with it as a growth of a day,” he wrote.⁹¹ Lest Americans remain unmoved, Hurst, in his closing chapters, pointed to where rationalism had already taken root in America: within the Unitarian Church.⁹² Hurst maintained that Theodore Parker was the “complete personification” of “American Rationalism.”⁹³

While clearly hyperbolic, Hurst’s account captures a common refrain in the second half of the nineteenth century: the notion that the Bible was under attack, particularly from theological, philosophical, and intellectual developments originating in Europe. Critics variously described these threats—most commonly identified as “Rationalism,” “Skepticism,” “Higher Criticism,” “Negative Criticism,” and “Destructive Criticism.” In 1894 Theodore Schmauk (1860-1920), a prominent Lutheran minister, wrote that America had been swept up by “a general critical movement caused by a vast breaking up of the waters of human thought, through the introduction of certain modern principles.” A “tidal wave of criticism” had “reached the doors of the loftiest and most sacred citadel of Christendom, and is rushing through its portals,” Schmauk wrote.⁹⁴

Scholars have generally agreed with Schmauk’s observation that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw radical shifts in thought that impacted Christian theology and biblical interpretation. The biblical scholar and theologian Hans Frei argued that during the eighteenth century the so-called pre-critical hermeneutic “broke down with increasing rapidity.”⁹⁵ The Bible, seen through this precritical lens, was believed to record “real events and real truths”; its books were taken as a “single, unitary canon” that created “a common narrative.”⁹⁶ This pre-critical hermeneutic privileged “literal-realistic interpretation” of the Bible.⁹⁷ By contrast, the post-critical hermeneutic that Frei suggests replaced this earlier mode of biblical interpretation saw the Bible in a radically different light. This later hermeneutic posited “a logical distinction and a reflective distance between the stories and the ‘reality’ they depict” and was “not concerned with the unity of the canon.”⁹⁸ The post-critical hermeneutic “separated” the stories contained in the Bible from “the real historical world.”⁹⁹ Historian Jonathan Sheehan, similarly, describes the emergence of a “new constellation of practices and institutions” to read and understand the Bible emerging from the Enlightenment.¹⁰⁰ The Bible was increasingly subjected to sophisticated philological, literary, and historical modes of interpretation.¹⁰¹ Sheehan argues that this adoption of Enlightenment practices with respect to the Bible marked an important shift: the Bible’s legitimacy and authority no longer rested solely upon theology

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*, 537.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 564.

⁹⁴ Theodore E. Schmauk, *The Negative Criticism and the Old Testament* (Lebanon, Pa.: Aldus Company, Publishers, 1894), 17.

⁹⁵ Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 4.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1–2.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5, 7.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), xi.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, xii.

but “by virtue of [the Bible’s] connection and relevance to human morality, aesthetics, and history.”¹⁰² The Bible, in sum, became an object subject to rational investigation.

Samuel June Barrows (1845-1909), a U.S. Representative from Massachusetts, evocatively described this sea change in perspective on the Bible: “Once it was sufficient to assume that this foundation stone”—referring to the Bible—“descended from heaven; now it is very evident that it is not a meteorolite but that it shows a definite historic and human stratification,” wrote Barrows for a Unitarian periodical in 1879.¹⁰³ Seeing the Bible as an object with “a definite historic and human stratification” opened a range of potential questions about it: Who wrote the Bible? How had the contexts of its authors influenced their reporting of events? Who had decided what was, or was not, part of the Bible? How had translation and reproduction influenced the text? Moreover, how did the Bible comport—or not—with scientific and historical knowledge?

Some nineteenth-century scholastics, theologians, and ministers pursued these questions with a vigorous intensity. The extent to which these questions concerned ordinary Christians divided commentators at the time. Some like Ramsden Balmforth (1861-1941), a Unitarian minister based in Cape Town, South Africa, believed that these theological and historical debates had made little impression on those in the pews even into the twentieth century. Balmforth published extensively for both English and American audiences, including on the topic of higher criticism. As late as 1904—more than a decade after the infamous Charles Augustus Briggs trial—he estimated that the findings of higher criticism remained “virtually unknown” among “the great mass of the people.” He based this low estimation of higher criticism’s diffusion into the general populace, somewhat ironically, on his perception of widespread biblical illiteracy. “The vast majority of the people seldom open the Bible,” wrote Balmforth.¹⁰⁴

The historical record, though, also suggests that lay Christians in the second half of the nineteenth century did have increasing questions about the Bible—even if they would not have described those questions as a result of the destabilizing effects of rationalism or higher criticism. The experience of the Baptist minister Daniel Worcester Faunce (1829-1911) provides one account of a minister who found his congregation increasingly “unsettled” about the Bible. Born in Plymouth, Massachusetts, Faunce was educated at Amherst and Newton Theological Seminary and ordained as a Baptist minister in 1853. He spent the next two decades serving a number of New England congregations, including in industrial centers like the mill town of Lawrence, Massachusetts and the shoemaking city of Lynn, Massachusetts.¹⁰⁵ By the mid-1870s Faunce noticed “a large number” of the young men in his New England congregation were “not exactly sceptical [sic] but a good deal unsettled in their views of religion.” He described the typical young man troubled by doubts: he had some education—a graduate of high school, perhaps—and worked as a clerk or apprentice. His work afforded him some leisure time for reading newspapers, magazines, or “occasionally a book.” Reading, Faunce suggested, exposed this young man to ideas that unsettled his faith. He then came to Faunce with his questions about the Bible. Based on these questions, Faunce delivered a series of lectures on Sunday

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁰³ S. J. Barrows, “Assyriology and the Bible,” *The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine* 12, no. 1 (July 1879): 22–23.

¹⁰⁴ Ramsden Balmforth, *The Bible from the Standpoint of the Higher Criticism: The Old Testament* (London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., Lim., 1904), vi. The New York publisher E.P. Dutton & Co. issued an American edition of Balmforth’s work the following year. For more on Balmforth, see Frederick Hale, “A Cape Town Minister Contra Orthodoxy: Ramsden Balmforth’s Evaluation as a Religious Liberal,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* XXXV, no. 1 (2009): 223–41.

¹⁰⁵ Rossiter Johnson and John Howard Brown, eds., “Faunce, Daniel Worcester,” *The Twentieth Century Biographical Dictionary of Notable Americans* (Boston: The Biographical Society, 1904).

evenings to “crowded houses” on “Difficulties” in the Bible.¹⁰⁶ His lectures addressed topics including “Is the Bible true,” “Difficulties as to Miracles and Teachings,” and “Difficulties about Historical Facts.”¹⁰⁷ Faunce sought to shepherd the young men in his congregation through their own personal biblical crises.

Faunce laid blame on print materials—books, newspapers, magazines—as the source of disquieting ideas that weakened the faith of his congregation’s young men. Ministers frequently singled out print materials as the pathway by which higher criticism and the questions it raised about the Bible became known to their congregants. Theodore Schmauk, the Lutheran minister who described the “tidal wave of criticism” overtaking American Christianity, for example, did not believe that his church had been “seriously affected” by higher criticism, but he, nonetheless, warned that the Lutheran Church remained “universally surrounded by an atmosphere that is filled with the germs of contagion and her laymen particularly are not immune from the same.”¹⁰⁸ For Schmauk, this contagious atmosphere included popular books. He attacked some of America’s largest publishing houses—including Houghton Mifflin, Scribner, and Macmillan—for publishing works that, in his view, supported higher criticism.¹⁰⁹ Schmauk also warned of the dissemination of skeptical sentiments via newspapers. He cited an article in a “widely-read household paper that is found in many of our high school libraries” that claimed “there is not a competent educated professor of biology or geology in the obscurest Presbyterian college in the United States who believes that Adam and Eve of Genesis were historical characters.” Young people would not remain shielded from such sentiments. “Our boys will read,” wrote Schmauk.¹¹⁰

Among the books that undoubtedly worried ministers like Faunce and Schmauk was a veritable explosion of accounts of “Lives of Christ” in the nineteenth century.¹¹¹ These accounts sought to present more nuanced, detailed, and relatable profiles of Jesus than available through the Bible alone. Leading figures on both sides of the Atlantic—including Andrew Martin Fairbairn, Samuel J. Andrews, Henry Ward Beecher, and Frederic W. Farrar—wrote Lives of Christ that stayed in print for decades.¹¹² Many were richly illustrated and produced with specific audiences in mind—including children, students, or, in the case of Talmage’s book, businessmen.¹¹³ One author at the end of the nineteenth century estimated that between 1840

¹⁰⁶ Faunce’s lectures were subsequently published in a book titled *A Young Man’s Difficulties with His Bible* (New York: Sheldon & Company, 1876).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 5. After its initial publication by the New York firm Sheldon & Company, the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia issued Faunce’s book and continued to reprint it into the early 1900s. Three decades after the initial appearance of *A Young Man’s Difficulties with His Bible*, Faunce wrote a similar work aimed at an older audience: *The Mature Man’s Difficulties with His Bible* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1908). Faunce does not directly reference higher criticism by name in his 1876 work; by 1908 he does. See *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁰⁸ Theodore E. Schmauk, “Some Results of the Higher Criticism, with the Liberal Theology, in America,” *The Lutheran Church Review* XXI, no. 3 (July 1902): 347.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 355–356.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 350.

¹¹¹ On nineteenth-century Lives of Christ, see Stevens, *The Historical Jesus and the Literary Imagination, 1860-1920*, particularly chapters 2 and 3.

¹¹² Andrew Martin Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ* (Chicago: Blessing, 1880); Samuel J. Andrews, *The Life of Our Lord upon the Earth: Considered in Its Historical, Chronological, and Geographical Relations* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1863); Henry Ward Beecher, *The Life of Jesus, the Christ* (New York: J. B. Ford and Company, 1871); Frederic W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1874).

¹¹³ Oscar M. Dunham, *The Child’s Life of Christ: With Original Illustrations* (St. Louis: Holloway & Co., 1889); George Holley Gilbert, *The Student’s Life of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1896).

and 1890 at least 300 lives of Christ had been published but that “the demand for new treasures out of the old mine still continues with unabated eagerness.”¹¹⁴

Both supporters and critics of historical critical methods wrote “Lives of Christ.” Some of the best-known and most controversial of these books, including David Friedrich Strauss’s *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) and Ernest Renan’s *Vie de Jésus* (1863), were written by European scholars associated with the new critical methods. But those wishing to defend the Bible against the so-called skeptical attacks of Strauss and Renan also adopted the form. The aim of *The Life of Our Lord Upon the Earth* (1863) by the Irvingite divine Samuel James Andrews (1817-1906), for example, was to defend the Bible against charges made by modern critics of “alleged discrepancies and contradictions” in the sacred book.¹¹⁵ Andrews remained committed to the gospels as “genuine historical documents, and statements of facts.”¹¹⁶ In his 600-page chronological account of Jesus’ life that was reprinted and revised for more than four decades, Andrews sought to demonstrate “how few are the points of real difficulty, and how often these are exaggerated by the misinterpretation of the critic himself.”¹¹⁷ Christianity had nothing to fear, maintained Andrews.

Andrews did not take up the most controversial topics of higher criticism in *The Life of Our Lord upon the Earth*—including the authorship and dating of the gospels.¹¹⁸ But, in many ways, Andrews’s methods, nonetheless, resembled those of his opponents. While committed to defending the authority of the Bible, Andrews’s book likely contained those “germs of contagion” that worried ministers like Schmauk. One of the first issues Andrews addressed, for example, was how to date Christ’s birth. In a 22-page essay he considered evidence from the gospels, astronomical calculations, the writings of church fathers, ancient Roman sources, and recovered antiquities. Andrews interwove the gospels with secular, historical, and scientific data. The message of his methods was clear: one could remain committed to the genuineness of the gospel’s testimony while still enlarging and enriching that testimony with evidences from outside of the Bible.

The superabundance of nineteenth-century “Lives of Christ” illustrates what the Scottish theologian Alexander Balmain Bruce (1831-1899) deemed the “chief occupation of theology” during the nineteenth century: “the quest of a lost Christ.”¹¹⁹ The Scottish theologian Andrew Martin Fairbairn (1838-1912), similarly, described a “new feeling for Christ” as the “most distinctive and determinative element in modern theology.”¹²⁰ “[T]he most significant and assured result of the critical process is, that [the Christian theologian] can now stand face to face with the historical Christ, and conceive God as He conceived Him,” Fairbairn wrote.¹²¹ Through historical inquiry, Christ has “become to us a new and more actual Being,” he concluded.¹²²

This quest for a lost Christ proved, though, a serious historical challenge. After nearly two millennia, what new evidences could actually be recovered about Jesus? Thornton Whaling (1858-1938), a Presbyterian minister and later president of Columbia Theological Seminary,

¹¹⁴ Dunham, *The Child’s Life of Christ*, vii.

¹¹⁵ Andrews, *The Life of Our Lord*, viii.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vi.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, viii–ix.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vi.

¹¹⁹ Alexander Balmain Bruce, “Christ in Modern Theology,” *The Contemporary Review* 63, no. 5 (May 1893): 682.

¹²⁰ Andrew Martin Fairbairn, *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1893), 3, viii.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, viii.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 3. Fairbairn gave the Morse Lecture at Union Theological Seminary in 1891 and the Lyman Beecher Lecture at Yale for 1891-1892. These lectures formed the basis of Fairbairn’s *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*.

charged proponents of historicism with vastly overstating their successes in bringing to light new information about Jesus. In Whaling's review of Fairbairn's *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology* (1893), Whaling argued that Fairbairn "greatly exaggerates the increased knowledge of the historical Christ possessed by the present period." Whaling found it "a gross exaggeration to ascribe to the historical and literary criticism of the Scriptures ... both the 'discovery' and the 'recovery' of the historical Christ." The historical Christ, Whaling maintained, had always been available through assiduous study of the Gospels that, as "artless as they seem to be," nonetheless "present the real, historic Christ." Nineteenth-century biblical scholarship could claim many triumphs, concluded Whaling, but the recovery of an unknown Christ was not among them.¹²³

Whaling did believe that biblical scholars could reasonably claim success at vastly expanding knowledge of Christ's historical setting. Whaling's observation has important consequences for the developing material gospel theology: the nineteenth-century desire to recover a "lost Christ" produced a relentless focus on the historical, physical setting of the Bible. "Lives of Christ" were equally "Histories of Palestine." Many were densely illustrated with images of the Holy Land's landscapes and peoples—these pictures substituting for the unknowable image of Jesus. Christ and the Holy Land took on a virtually interchangeable quality in many books. The Reverend Talmage, for example, parlayed his 1889 Holy Land trip into three separate books. The books were virtually identical—but their titles reframed their primary focus. The earliest title, *From Manger to Throne*, emphasized the life story of Jesus, with its subtitle presenting the book as a "New Life of Jesus the Christ." In the two later publications—*Story of Bible Land* (1897) and *The Oriental World* (1897)—the Holy Land displaced Jesus from center stage.¹²⁴ Talmage achieved this substitution of the Holy Land for Jesus by leaving the text of his book virtually unchanged, page for page.

For higher critics, the Holy Land could provide historical information about the Bible and Jesus, as Renan saw it when he declared Palestine a "fifth gospel." But Palestine was equally beloved by those who sought to shore up the Bible against attacks from higher critics. "Our Lord lived not in fabulous, but in historical times," wrote Scottish philosopher and later president of Princeton University James McCosh (1811-1894) in response to attacks on "the reality of our Lord's life," including those made by Renan. The life of Christ was "a reality, and not a romance," wrote McCosh.¹²⁵ The Holy Land would become central in demonstrating this "reality" of Christ.

Nineteenth-century intellectual, philosophical, and theological currents, thus, set the stage for the growth of the material gospel theology in two important ways: at a broad level, the Bible as a book came under increasing scrutiny with questions about its reliability and accuracy. The medium of text became a liability for the Bible—and Protestants dreamed of a medium less subject to the problems of the book. At a more specific level, these currents ignited interest in recovering the historical setting of Christ's life. These factors fused in another important context for situating the rise of the material gospel theology in the nineteenth century: geographic and archaeological explorations of the Holy Land. A cadre of specialists, foremost among them the biblical scholar Edward Robinson, made recovering a "lost Christ" a real possibility in the eyes of many Protestants.

¹²³ Thornton Whaling, "Fairbairn's Place of Christ in Modern Theology," *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 8, no. 27 (January 1894): 129–130.

¹²⁴ Talmage, *From Manger to Throne*; Talmage, *Story of Bible Land*; Talmage, *The Oriental World*.

¹²⁵ James McCosh, "The Life of Our Lord a Reality, Not a Romance," *The Living Age* 84, no. 1076 (January 14, 1865): 81. McCosh's essay was later reprinted in James McCosh et al., *Questions of Modern Thought, Or, Lectures on the Bible and Infidelity* (Philadelphia: Ziegler & McCurdy, 1871).

The Legacies of Edward Robinson

Archaeology and geography emerged as professionalized disciplines in the nineteenth century.¹²⁶ The discovery of ancient civilizations and the mapping of the world had long been sources of allure and fascination—particularly during the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods¹²⁷—but during the nineteenth century amateur antiquarians became increasingly distinguishable from professional archaeologists.¹²⁸ Numerous professional organizations came into being to support archaeological and geographic explorations around the world. 1830, for example, saw the founding of the British Royal Geographical Society, which took over the earlier Palestine Association.¹²⁹ The society publicized and supported what they called its “travellers” and their expeditions around the globe—from Greenland to Bolivia, Afghanistan to the Sinai.¹³⁰

For nineteenth-century archaeologists and geographers, the Holy Land was a prime area of focus.¹³¹ Among the many specialists studying the Holy Land, the best known of these was arguably Edward Robinson (1794-1863). It is difficult to overstate Robinson’s influence within his nineteenth-century context. Charles Augustus Briggs (1841-1913) called Robinson “the father of modern Biblical geography” and “the greatest name on the roll of Biblical scholars of America, the most widely known and honored of her professors.”¹³² The German scholar Carl Ritter (1779-1859), a founder of the modern study of geography and himself the author of a seminal study of Palestine and Syria, declared that Robinson’s “classic” three-volume *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Countries* (1841) had “ushered in a new epoch not only for the study of the whole land of Palestine but for that of the geography and history of Jerusalem.”¹³³ Contemporary scholars have concurred with Briggs’s and Ritter’s high

¹²⁶ On the nineteenth-century development of archaeology, see García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology*.

¹²⁷ On Renaissance interest in the Holy Land, see Beaver, “Scholarly Pilgrims.”

¹²⁸ García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology*, 3. García describes the development of archeology as a professionalized, scientific discipline as an emergence from “a very amorphous community that gradually become more finite in its boundaries” (3). On the growing distinction between antiquarians and archaeologists in the nineteenth century, see also P. J. A. Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England 1838-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹²⁹ Clements R. Markham, *The Fifty Years’ Work of the Royal Geographical Society* (London: John Murray, 1881), 32.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 150–152.

¹³¹ On the emergence of American biblical archaeology, see Hallote, *Bible, Map, and Spade*. On British exploration, see John James Moscrop, *Measuring Jerusalem: The Palestine Exploration Fund and British Interests in the Holy Land* (New York: Leicester University Press, 2000); and Gange and Ledger-Lomas, *Cities of God*. An older yet still important work is Silberman, *Digging for God*.

¹³² Charles Augustus Briggs, *The Authority of Holy Scripture: An Inaugural Address* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891), 19, 7. Briggs’s remarks on Robinson come from his 1891 address upon his appointment to the newly-established Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology—the speech that was one of several factors that precipitated Briggs’s subsequent heresy trial (*Ibid.*, 1–3). For a biography of Robinson, see Jay G. Williams, *The Times and Life of Edward Robinson: Connecticut Yankee in King Solomon’s Court* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999).

¹³³ Carl Ritter, *The Comparative Geography of Palestine and the Sinaitic Peninsula*, trans. William L. Gage (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1866), 9. The admiration between Robinson and Ritter was mutual. Robinson called Ritter’s 4-volume *Comparative Geography of the Sinai Peninsula, of Palestine, and Syria* (1848-1855) a “vast storehouse” of facts that inaugurated a new era of biblical geography (Robinson, *Physical Geography of the Holy Land*, 9). Ritter exactly described Palestine’s walls, pillars, passages, arches, gates, towers, and temples—many long disappeared or in ruins. Remarkably, Ritter based his work entirely on secondary sources; he never personally saw Palestine. When asked why he had never visited, Ritter reportedly answered, “What new information ... could I derive from a visit to

estimations of Robinson, citing his *Biblical Researches* as “the most significant piece of American Biblical scholarship before the Civil War”¹³⁴ and deeming Robinson a progenitor of biblical archaeology.¹³⁵

For nineteenth-century American Protestants, Robinson was an authoritative, trusted Holy Land guide. Travelers, like Christian pilgrims for centuries, relied upon Holy Land guidebooks.¹³⁶ By the mid-1870s, pilgrims had their choice of new, professionally-produced guidebooks. Both the Leipzig-based publishing house of Karl Baedeker and the British firm Thomas Cook & Son released guidebooks to Palestine in English in 1876.¹³⁷ These guidebooks promised to be the only book a traveler needed, even incorporating relevant biblical passages so that tourists would be spared the “inconvenience” of needing “to carry a guide-book in one hand and a Bible in the other.”¹³⁸ By the late nineteenth century, Robinson stood alongside the Bible, Baedeker, and Cook as the most trusted Holy Land guides. It is the rare Protestant Holy Land travelogue that does not refer to the venerable “Dr. Robinson.”

Robinson’s first trip to the Holy Land occurred in 1838. The year prior he had been appointed Union Theological Seminary’s first Professor of Sacred Literature.¹³⁹ The seminary, then a very young institution founded in 1836, afforded Robinson leave to visit the Holy Land and foster connections with academic colleagues in Germany.¹⁴⁰ Robinson claimed this initial Holy Land trip was motivated not by scholarly interest but a personal desire to see the Holy Land. The “first motive had been simply the gratification of personal feelings,” he wrote.¹⁴¹ He did not anticipate advancing knowledge about Palestine nor “dreamed of any thing like discoveries in this field”—especially since so many before him had visited the region.¹⁴² When he arrived in the Holy Land, however, Robinson found “how much former travelers had left undescribed” and saw rich possibilities for new scholarship.¹⁴³ The Holy Land appeared to Robinson as a treasure awaiting rediscovery. “Treasures” have “lain for ages unexplored, and had become so covered with the dust and rubbish of many centuries, that their very existence

Palestine? I know every corner of it” (as quoted in Arnold Guyot, *Carl Ritter: An Address to the American Geographical and Statistical Society* (Princeton, N.J.: [Amer. Geographical Soc.], 1860), 40). William Leonard Gage, the editor of Ritter’s *Sinaitic Peninsula and Palestine*, published an account of Ritter’s life for American audiences in 1867: William Leonard Gage, *The Life of Carl Ritter: Late Professor of Geography in the University of Berlin* (New York: C. Scribner and Co., 1867). For a more contemporary biography, see Hanno Beck, *Carl Ritter, Genius of Geography: On His Life and Work* (Bonn-Bad Godesburg: Inter Nationes, 1979).

¹³⁴ Brown, *The Rise of Biblical Criticism*, 118.

¹³⁵ Rachel Hallote, “Photography and the American Contribution to Early ‘Biblical’ Archaeology, 1870-1920,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 70, no. 1 (March 2007): 26.

¹³⁶ Authors of Holy Land travelogues often listed the books with which they traveled, discussing their relative utility in light of a traveler’s limited luggage space. See, for example, Robinson’s description of the books and maps with which his group traveled in *Biblical Researches*, 48.

¹³⁷ Karl Baedeker and Albert Socin, *Palestine and Syria: Handbook for Travellers* (Leipsic: K. Baedeker, 1876); Thomas Cook, *Cook’s Tourists’ Handbook for Palestine and Syria* (London: Thomas Cook & Son, 1876). One American Protestant minister described the Baedeker as “indispensable” for “the tourist who wishes to explore the country intelligently and independently” (McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 14).

¹³⁸ Cook, *Cook’s Tourists’ Handbook for Palestine and Syria*, iv.

¹³⁹ Robinson served in this position until his death in 1863 (Briggs, *The Authority of Holy Scripture*, 9).

¹⁴⁰ Roswell Dwight Hitchcock and Henry Boynton Smith, *The Life, Writings and Character of Edward Robinson: Read before the N. Y. Historical Society* (New York: A. D. F. Randolph, 1863), 67, 71.

¹⁴¹ Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, 46.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 46–47.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 47.

was forgotten,” wrote Robinson.¹⁴⁴ In the Holy Land “the light of truth” had long “been quenched in darkness.”¹⁴⁵ The time was ripe, according to Robinson, for the land’s re-discovery.

Robinson described *Biblical Researches* as a “systematic work on the physical and historical geography of the Holy Land” and a “first attempt to lay open the treasures of Biblical Geography and History still remaining” there.¹⁴⁶ Robinson appears in *Biblical Researches* as a measured, scientific man. His scholarship, according to his colleagues, was “methodical” and “perfected with elaborate care.”¹⁴⁷ Phonemes, latitudes, weights, and measures are the language of *Biblical Researches*. Robinson gave tips on the pronunciation of foreign terms, currency equivalents, and a handy table to convert a given distance from hours via camel, horse, or mule into miles.¹⁴⁸ He took measurements at many of the biblical sites. He synthesized a tremendous range of primary and secondary sources, effectively writing a history of Christianity from the vantage point of the Holy Land; readers learned not just about Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth but the Council of Nicaea, Constantine, Helena, Eusebius, Jerome, Cyril, Peter the Hermit, and Saladin. *Physical Geography of the Holy Land* (1865)—Robinson’s later, more abbreviated work—has a similar scientific air, dedicating whole chapters to enumerating the region’s mountains, valleys, plains, rivers, lakes, fountains, and wells.¹⁴⁹

Robinson’s scholarly approach to the Holy Land reflected the influence of new historical, critical methods. Robinson had been exposed to these methods—and the debates surrounding them—as a young student at Andover Theological Seminary, where he arrived to study in 1821.¹⁵⁰ He came to Andover planning to translate a portion of Homer’s *Iliad*—and it was there that he entered the orbit of the influential nineteenth-century philologist and grammarian, the Reverend Moses Stuart (1780-1852).¹⁵¹ Stuart was a towering figure at Andover—known for his stalwart defense of the Bible, including its Mosaic authorship and the unity of scripture. Stuart, though, also embraced and introduced his students to the new methods of biblical criticism.¹⁵² Under Stuart’s influence, Robinson spent nine years studying at Andover and in Germany.¹⁵³

While Robinson was a trained biblical scholar when he arrived in the Holy Land, the personal, relatable tone of *Biblical Researches* made it of interest to a broader audience. Robinson’s book was, in fact, published by the English firm John Murray, especially known for travel accounts.¹⁵⁴ Like many popular travelogues, the organization of *Biblical Researches* followed Robinson’s itinerary through the Holy Land so that readers might see “the manner in which the Promised Land unfolded itself to our eyes,” as Robinson wrote.¹⁵⁵ This first-person approach was not Robinson’s original plan. He had planned to write about “only the results of our researches in Palestine, without any reference to personal incidents.” Friends, however,

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., xiii.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., viii.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., xii–xiii.

¹⁴⁷ Hitchcock and Smith, *The Life, Writings and Character of Edward Robinson*, 5.

¹⁴⁸ Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, xv–xvi.

¹⁴⁹ Robinson, *Physical Geography of the Holy Land*, vi–xiv.

¹⁵⁰ “Death of Professor Edward Robinson,” *Circular*, February 5, 1863, 206.

¹⁵¹ “Early Life of the Late Rev. Edward Robinson, D.D., LL.D.,” *New York Evangelist* 47, no. 2 (January 13, 1876): 6; “Death of Professor Edward Robinson,” 206.

¹⁵² Brown, *The Rise of Biblical Criticism*, 48–59. On Moses Stuart, see also John H. Giltner, *Moses Stuart: The Father of Biblical Science in America* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988). A collection of letters between Robinson and Stuart are printed in *Letters from Edward Robinson to Moses Stuart, 1826-1830*, ed. Hermine Weigel Williams (Clinton, N.Y.: Gwensfreni Santes Press, 2003).

¹⁵³ Hitchcock and Smith, *The Life, Writings and Character of Edward Robinson*, 3.

¹⁵⁴ For a history of John Murray and a consideration of how the publishing firm influenced Robinson’s *Biblical Researches*, see Innes M. Keighren and Charles W. J. Withers, “The Spectacular and the Sacred: Narrating Landscape in Works of Travel,” *Cultural Geographies* 19, no. 1 (2012): 11–30.

¹⁵⁵ Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, v.

persuaded Robinson to adopt a more relatable approach.¹⁵⁶ Robinson incorporated references to himself and his experiences—though he never fully gives himself over to the subjective. His narration oscillates between an objective, critical voice and a familiar, personal voice. He relates his personal experiences and emotional reactions with reserve. When journeying near Mount Sinai, for example, Robinson reported becoming “strongly affected”—but still a far distance from his Arab guide, whom he stated became “evidently quite excited.”¹⁵⁷ Shedding tears was left to others.

Robinson’s more personal approach also put his Christian faith on full display. Robinson was a believing Christian who saw the Holy Land to be “the original seat and source of all true religion.”¹⁵⁸ He ascribed power to providence, singling out, for example, aspects of Palestine’s geography that were auspicious for the gospel’s dissemination: he speculated that it was perhaps only from Palestine’s unique position in the ancient world that Christianity could have “spread abroad, in all directions, so widely, so constantly, and for so long a series of ages.”¹⁵⁹ The Bible also held a preeminent place in Robinson’s work. He claimed it as his first source of information. The “outline” for Biblical geography, wrote Robinson, “must be drawn wholly from the pages of sacred writ.”¹⁶⁰ Only then should that outline “be filled up” with information from other sources.¹⁶¹ For Robinson, the Bible’s testimony took precedence over what insight the landscape or other historical sources might offer.

Robinson’s faithfulness did not, however, keep him from questioning what he saw in the Holy Land. Robinson critiqued and commented on biblical, historical, and geographical controversies, weighing and adjudicating between the Bible, historical accounts, and what he personally observed. Like many nineteenth-century Protestants, he expressed pointed skepticism about the authenticity of certain sites like the Holy Sepulchre. He found Jerusalem’s Holy Sepulchre to be “painful and revolting,” questioning whether the monks there even believed the stories they told visitors.¹⁶² Robinson’s colleagues regarded his incredulity toward oral testimony a distinguishing mark of his work. The German-American Assyriologist and archaeologist Hermann Vollrath Hilprecht (1859-1925) later wrote that Robinson regarded only that ecclesiastical tradition that could be “authenticated by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures” to be of value.¹⁶³

Robinson cast a long shadow over American Protestants’ later encounters with the Holy Land. One of his most significant legacies was encouraging the idea of the Holy Land as a rediscovered lost record that could throw new light on the Bible. Later works like Frank DeHass’s *Buried Cities Recovered* (1882) trafficked in this romanticized image of the Holy Land.¹⁶⁴ “Recent explorations in the East have resulted in the recovery of many places in sacred

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 131–132.

¹⁵⁸ Robinson, *Physical Geography of the Holy Land*, 14.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, 331.

¹⁶³ Hilprecht in his 1903 historical survey of nineteenth-century Bible lands explorations argues that Robinson’s distrust of oral testimony—particularly that of local guides—distinguished him from previous Holy Land explorers. Hilprecht suggests that the majority of Holy Land travelers were “rather credulous as regards the things that were told them,” producing significant similarities across travel accounts (*Explorations in Bible Lands*, 585–586).

¹⁶⁴ Frank S. DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered, Or, Explorations in Bible Lands, Giving the Results of Recent Researches in the Orient, and Recovery of Many Places in Sacred and Profane History Long Considered Lost*, 5th Edition, with Appendix (Philadelphia: J. W. Bradley & Company, 1882). *Buried Cities Recovered* was originally published under the title *Recent Travels and Explorations in Bible Lands: Consisting of Sketches Written from Personal Observations, Giving Results of Recent Researches in the*

history long regarded as lost,” wrote DeHass.¹⁶⁵ Though the dividing line between amateur and professional archaeologists crystallized in the nineteenth century, perhaps nowhere did it continue to be as blurred as with respect to the Holy Land. Popular works introduced recent archaeological discoveries to ordinary Christians. DeHass’s *Buried Cities Recovered* incorporated findings from recent archaeological expeditions.¹⁶⁶ Periodicals such as *The Biblical World* and the *Christian Standard* also helped popularize the archaeological view of the Holy Land. The Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey, for example, wrote columns for the *Christian Standard* titled “Lessons from the Monuments,” in which he reported new archaeological findings that supported Old Testament history.¹⁶⁷

Later American Protestants also imitated Robinson’s systematic, scientific, empiricist approach to the Holy Land. His exacting, exhaustive catalogue of Palestine’s topography and its history contributed to an expectation and desire to quantify Palestine. His systematic approach would become *de rigueur* in the second half of the nineteenth century, as discussed in chapter 4. Protestants would paint, illustrate, map, photograph, and describe the Holy Land at an astounding pace, rushing to do so before they believed its treasures would be lost because of the destructive influences of modernity. Cataloguing and documenting became the means by which Protestants transformed the Holy Land from a place into objects, including books, images, and replicas.

Finally, Robinson modeled faithful skepticism for many later Protestants. Upon Robinson’s death, a colleague praised him as a man who “had no sympathy with either mysticism or rationalism,” who “accepted revealed mysteries without being a mystic” and, simultaneously, “used all the lights of reason without being a rationalist.”¹⁶⁸ Robinson’s reputation as both a measured, scientific man and faithful Christian made his skeptical assessments of many biblical sites acceptable to fellow Protestants. Later American Protestants turned to Robinson when weighing the authenticity of sites like Mount Sinai, Bethlehem, or the Holy Sepulchre.¹⁶⁹ Robinson represented the faithful doubter—an identity many Protestants would later adopt in their encounters with the Holy Land.

A Lost Record, Rediscovered

The stage was, thus, set for a blossoming of the material gospel theology in the second half of the nineteenth century. Historical critical methods placed a new emphasis on recovering Christ in his context—with Palestine regarded as an inordinately valuable resource for carrying out this task. Both those who embraced historical critical inquiry and those who rejected it saw Palestine as the key to resolving questions about the Christian past. Scholarly explorations of the Holy Land by prominent figures such as Robinson also popularized the vision of the Holy Land as an object newly uncovered in the modern, scientific age. The threat of crisis and the promise of discovery galvanized the material gospel theology, as seen in the range of examples that follow of Protestants who enthusiastically endorsed the Holy Land as another gospel.

Holy Land travelers often saw themselves as active discoverers of the Holy Land. Such was the case for the Baptist minister David Austin Randall (1813-1884), who went to the Holy

East, and the Recovery of Many Places in Sacred History Long Considered Lost (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1880).

¹⁶⁵ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 9.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 7–11.

¹⁶⁷ McGarvey, *Short Essays in Biblical Criticism*, 133.

¹⁶⁸ Hitchcock and Smith, *The Life, Writings and Character of Edward Robinson*, 7.

¹⁶⁹ Robinson’s skepticism about the Holy Sepulchre as the true site of Calvary was still cited in Holy Land books fifty years later. See, for example, Elizabeth W. Champney, *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1892), 154.

Land in 1861. Randall had grown up in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, where he was baptized in the waters of Lake Canandaigua after attending a revival led by a Free Will Baptist minister in 1826.¹⁷⁰ Later he joined the regular Baptists and had a long and varied ministerial career centered largely in Ohio.¹⁷¹ He was known for his plainspoken preaching style, his zealous commitment to the temperance movement, and his skill with the pen, perhaps even more so than in the pulpit.¹⁷² Randall was a minister-author, that compound breed so common on the nineteenth-century American religious landscape. He regarded writing as part of his pastoral calling and, for a time, left full-time ministry to become the associate editor of the Baptist periodical the *Cross and Journal*, published weekly in Columbus.¹⁷³ Upon assuming the editorship of the journal, Randall wrote, “I am now to use the pen and speak to my brethren through the press”—the written word being “a powerful instrument in battering down the strong walls of Satan’s kingdom, and a useful auxiliary in building up the cause of Christ.”¹⁷⁴ Randall would turn this power of the pen toward the Holy Land.

Randall departed for the Holy Land on January 3, 1861. He was 47 years old and pastor of the First Baptist Church in Columbus.¹⁷⁵ He was torn by the prospect of his departure. He had long dreamed of a trip to the Holy Land, but portends of a fractious civil war worried him.¹⁷⁶ Nonetheless, Randall felt compelled onward by the importance of his journey: using the power of the pen, he would transcribe another record of God’s revelation to man. God had written, according to Randall, “two copies of his historic records of our race.” The Bible was one copy, the Holy Land the other. While the Bible’s record was written on paper, the Holy Land’s copy “was on monumental records, the sculpted tablets of now extinct nations, and buried beneath the crumbling piles and moss-grown mounds of ruined cities.” This record had remained hidden, through ages of tumult and destruction. Only now had God revealed this second copy: “[L]o! in his own appointed time he lifts the veil [sic], and page after page comes up from the disinterred cities of antiquity—from Babylon, and Nineveh, and Egypt, and Syria.” Comparing the testimony of these “two books”—the Bible and the Holy Land—Christians would find that “both conspire to establish the testimony of God.”¹⁷⁷ The Holy Land was *The Handwriting of God*, as Randall would title his travelogue, published the year after his journey.¹⁷⁸

Palestine, for Randall, provided evidences that supported the Bible’s testimony. This conceptualization of the Holy Land as “evidence” is a persistent theme in nineteenth-century Protestant descriptions of the Holy Land. They often connected the idea of Palestine as evidence with the findings of recent archaeological explorations. Daniel Worcester Faunce, the Baptist minister who sought to head off the skeptical drift of the young men in his Massachusetts congregation, pointed to “the evidence accumulating every year from Assyrian, Babylonian, Judean and Egyptian tombs and monuments” that affirmed scripture. The Holy Land was a “vast mass of corroboration” and a “field of unspeakable richness and of unfailing interest,”

¹⁷⁰ David Austin Randall, *Ham-Mishkan, the Wonderful Tent* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke, 1886), viii, xi–xii.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, xii.

¹⁷² On Randall’s involvement in the temperance movement, see *Ibid.*, xv, xvii–xix.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

¹⁷⁴ As quoted in *Ibid.*, xxiv.

¹⁷⁵ Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, xxxii.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vii.

¹⁷⁸ *The Handwriting of God* was distributed nationally, with publishers in Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, Connecticut, Ohio, and Tennessee. Like many nineteenth-century books, Randall’s book was sold by subscription (“[Review of *The Handwriting of God* in Egypt, Sinai, and the Holy Land],” *The Baptist Quarterly* 1 (July 1, 1867): 377).

wrote Faunce.¹⁷⁹ Similarly, the Reverend Frank Goodspeed of Springfield, Massachusetts, described the Holy Land as containing “external proofs” that had great “evidential value.”¹⁸⁰ Recent archaeological discoveries had “vindicated [the Bible] at every point.”¹⁸¹ “The evidence accumulates and piles up,” wrote Goodspeed.¹⁸² In a passage on how recent Egyptian archaeological finds could confirm the Old Testament, Goodspeed wrote, “[A]ncient kings have been compelled to testify in court—and they bring their unwilling evidence.”¹⁸³ Through Palestine, the modern age was now “confronted by the ages that were thought to be dead.”¹⁸⁴ The distant past testified that the Bible was true, according to Goodspeed.

Descriptions of the Holy Land as a “vast mass of corroboration” and containing “external proofs” points to how the material gospel theology resonated with American Protestants’ commitment to evidentialism. Historian Brooks Holifield describes evidentialism as a “preoccupation with the reasonableness of Christianity” and a hallmark of early American theology.¹⁸⁵ Many of the Protestants who most aggressively promoted the material gospel theology were also classic evidentialists. Consider, for example, the Southern Presbyterian minister John Martin Philip Otts (1837-1901). Otts was born in South Carolina in 1838 and attended Davidson College and the Theological Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina.¹⁸⁶ He served as a pastor throughout the South and Midcoast region, including in pulpits in Alabama, Tennessee, Delaware, and Philadelphia,¹⁸⁷ and he published widely on both religious and non-religious topics.¹⁸⁸ By the last decades of the nineteenth century, Otts was an established voice on contemporary religious issues, including the push for the reunification of Presbyterians after the Civil War.¹⁸⁹

By the 1890s, Otts increasingly worried about the state of Christianity in America. This was an “age when the faith learned at mother’s knee is unsettled in so many minds,” he wrote.¹⁹⁰ In 1893 Otts endowed a lectureship at Davidson College, his alma mater, for “the defence [sic] of the faith against such heresies as might arise from time to time seeking to put in jeopardy the fundamentals of Christianity.”¹⁹¹ The inaugural address, given by Otts himself, was titled the “Evidences of Christianity.” In a subsequent book based on his address, Otts

¹⁷⁹ Faunce, *A Young Man’s Difficulties*, 42.

¹⁸⁰ Goodspeed, *Palestine*, 8.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁸⁵ E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology In America: Christian Thought From The Age Of The Puritans To The Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 4–5.

¹⁸⁶ A. Davis Smith and T. A. DeLand, *Northern Alabama: Historical and Biographical* (Chicago: Donohue & Henneberry, Printers and Binders, 1888), 454.

¹⁸⁷ “The Rev. Dr. John M. P. Otts,” *The New York Times*, June 3, 1901, 7.

¹⁸⁸ John Martin Philip Otts, *Nicodemus with Jesus: Or, Light and Life for the Dark and Dead World* (Philadelphia: James S. Claxton, 1867); John Martin Philip Otts, *At Mother’s Knee: The Mother’s Holy Ministry with Her Children in the Home* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1894); John Martin Philip Otts, *Christ and the Cherubim: Or, The Ark of the Covenant a Type of Christ Our Saviour* (Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1896). Otts’s eclectic range of interests is seen in his *Laconisms: The Wisdom of Many in the Words of One* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1888), a collection of aphoristic reflections on topics as varied as parenting, books, love, London, and dyspepsia.

¹⁸⁹ Smith and DeLand, *Northern Alabama*, 454.

¹⁹⁰ John Martin Philip Otts, *Unsettled Questions: Touching the Foundations of Christianity: A Book for Thoughtful Young Men*, The Davidson College Divinity Lectures for the Year MDCCCXCIII (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1893), v.

¹⁹¹ Robert Lewis Dabney, *Christ Our Penal Substitute*, Davidson College Divinity Lectures, Otts Foundation, Second Series, MDCCCXCVII (Richmond, Va.: The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1898).

advocated for a common sense, rational approach to Christianity.¹⁹² He included a lengthy prolegomenon on the philosophical roots of thought,¹⁹³ and his foreword engaged in Cartesian ruminations, holding, for example, that “self-consciousness is the beginning of all human knowledge.”¹⁹⁴ The law of causation, logic, and Locke all appeared in the pages that followed.¹⁹⁵ Otts was confident that Christianity would remain secure through a commitment to rational and logical scientific, philosophical, and even mathematical methodologies. One Presbyterian reviewer suggested that Otts’s unwavering faith in Christianity’s ability to overcome any “unsettled” questions would have been better served by an alternative title for his book—that of *Settled Questions*.¹⁹⁶

At the same time that Otts was extolling a rational, philosophical approach to the pressing theological challenges of his day, he also released a quite different book: *The Fifth Gospel* (1892). Otts described this book—a series of meditations on the sites of Christ’s life, beginning with his birth in Bethlehem and ending with his ascension into heaven from the Mount of Olives—as “the result of the careful reading of the Gospels in the lights and shades of the land where Jesus lived and taught.”¹⁹⁷ The book is a characteristic example of the Holy Land seen through the material gospel theology. Palestine, as the historical home of Jesus, “so harmonizes with the four written Gospels, and so unfolds and enlarges their meaning, that it forms around them a Fifth Gospel,” Otts wrote.¹⁹⁸ The “well-informed and observant traveler” would find more in the Holy Land to confirm the truth of the Bible than “whole acres of printed matter, on the abstract question of the evidences of Christianity.”¹⁹⁹ On its own *The Fifth Gospel*, might appear a dreamy, sentimental text—but Otts remained committed to a scientific, rational approach to faith. American Protestants’ evidentialism worked hand-in-hand with their love of the Holy Land. A sentimental fondness for the lands of the Bible did not preclude an admiration for Lockean rationalism; it, for many, in fact, complemented it.

Another common refrain among American Protestants was that the Holy Land not only offered evidences in support of the Bible but potentially more compelling evidences than the Bible itself. Such was the case made by the Reverend John Heyl Vincent (1832-1920) in his introduction for the Rand, McNally and Company’s *Manual of Biblical Geography* (1884).²⁰⁰ The Chicago firm marketed its illustrated volume as a biblical history textbook for use in Sunday schools. Filled with maps, charts, and engravings—many of them in color—it offered American readers a new, visually powerful encounter with the Holy Land. A tinted map traced the scattering of Noah’s descendants across the ancient world (Figure 1.0).²⁰¹ A pie graph illustrated the relative populations of the twelve tribes of Israel (Figure 1.1).²⁰² Maps of the Biblical world superimposed upon those of the United States relativized the foreign lands of the Bible for an American audience (Figures 1.2 and 1.3).²⁰³ Rand McNally’s volume earned widespread praise. A venerable list of educational and religious leaders, including the presidents of Union Theological Seminary, Boston University, and Wesleyan University, testified to its value;

¹⁹² Otts, *Unsettled Questions*.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 3–27.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, vii.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 21, 37.

¹⁹⁶ R. A. Webb, “Otts’s ‘Unsettled Questions,’” *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 8, no. 26 (October 1893): 623.

¹⁹⁷ Otts, *The Fifth Gospel*, 5.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

²⁰⁰ Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography: A Text-Book on Bible History* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Company, 1884).

²⁰¹ Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography: A Text-Book on Bible History*, 1887, 24.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 57.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 17, 118.

Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregationalist, and Episcopalian clergy all endorsed it. A “magnificent,” “fresh,” and “splendid thing” opined its recommenders.²⁰⁴ “Altogether this book is by far the best thing of the kind that we have ever seen,” wrote a reviewer for the *Old Testament Student*.²⁰⁵ Rand McNally’s audience embraced its new book as lucid, innovative, and engaging.

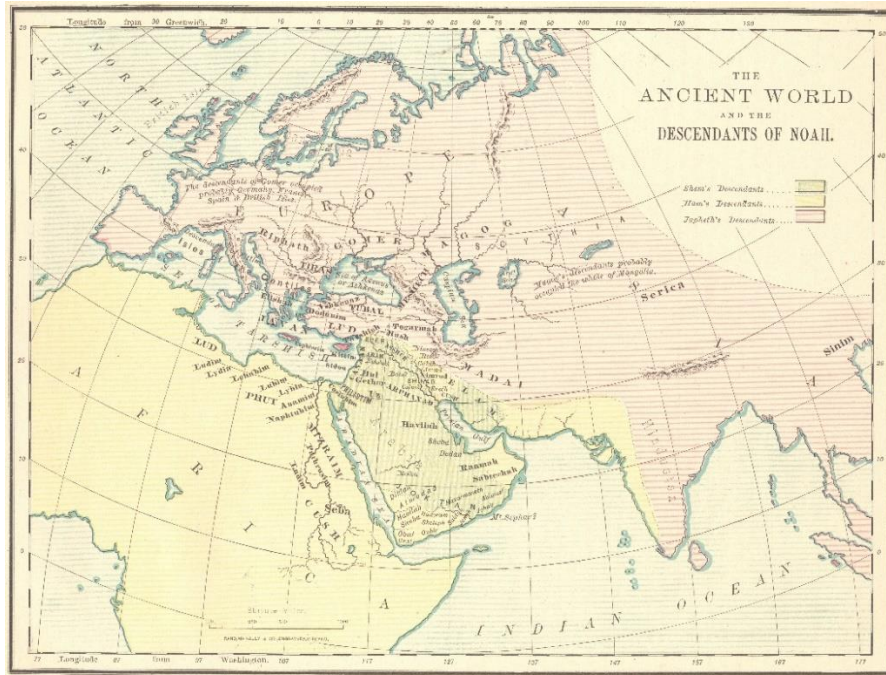


Figure 1.0. Map titled “The Ancient World and the Descendants of Noah.” From *Manual of Biblical Geography: A Text-Book on Bible History* (1884), page 24.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

²⁰⁵ “Book Notices: Manual of Biblical Geography,” *The Old Testament Student* 4, no. 6 (February 1885): 286. At the time of its publication, many reviewers praised the comprehensiveness and accuracy of Rand McNally’s book. By 1899, when Rand McNally reissued the volume, some reviewers questioned its accuracy. For a critical review of the reissued volume, see, for example, C. W. V, “Book Reviews: Bible Atlas: A Manual of Biblical Geography and History,” *The Biblical World* 14, no. 3 (September 1899): 220.

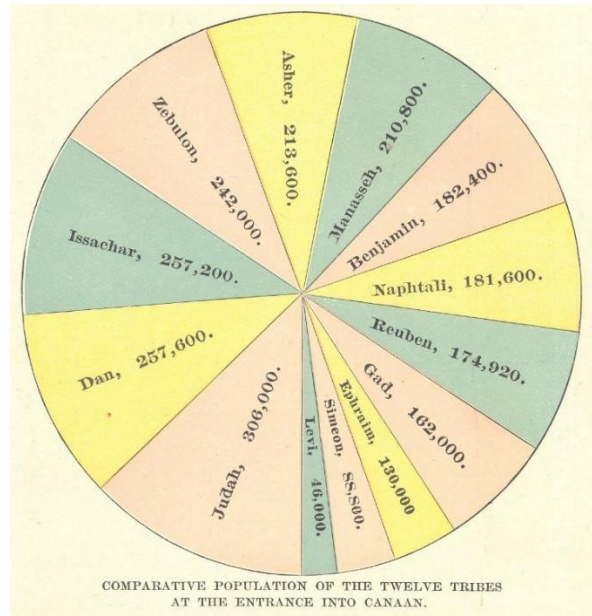
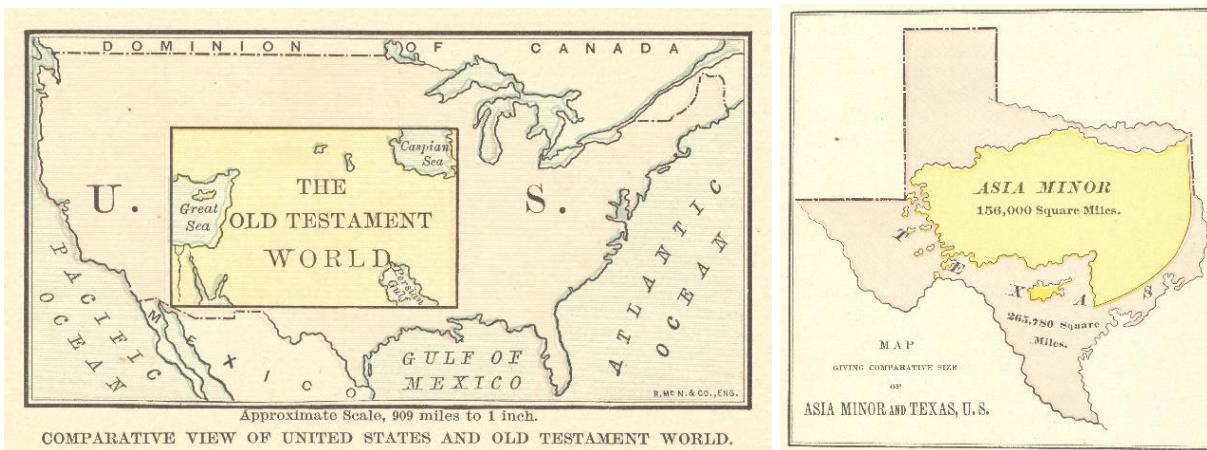


Figure 1.1. Pie graph titled “Comparative Population of the Twelve Tribes at the Entrance into Canaan.” From *Manual of Biblical Geography*, page 57.



Figures 1.2 and 1.3. Comparative maps titled “View of United States and Old Testament World” and “Map Giving Comparative Size of Asia Minor and Texas, U.S.” From *Manual of Biblical Geography*, pages 57 and 118.

With the lavish praise of Rand McNally’s colorful and engaging book, the Bible looked rather drab by comparison—a point Vincent himself made in his introduction to the volume. Vincent, then a prominent Methodist minister known for his involvement with the Chautauqua Institution in upstate New York, painted a fairly ominous picture of the Bible in contemporary American culture. He enumerated the substantial distances that separated modern Christians

from their beloved Bible.²⁰⁶ “On this side of the sea we sit down with a big book in our hands,” he wrote. The first separation identified by Vincent between American Christians and the Bible was, thus, physical: the sacred book spoke of places on the other side of the sea, foreign and unknown to most Christians. Vincent’s description of how Christians experienced the Bible—sitting with a “big book in [their] hands”—implied physical passivity and isolation. The fact that the Bible was a “big book” also posed another potential impediment to Christians reading and mastering the text. Most critically, Vincent saw a seemingly insurmountable chasm between the realities of the ancient biblical world and those of modern American life. “The greatest contrast exists,” he wrote, “between the age and land in which we live and the age and lands in which [the Bible] found its beginning, its material, and its ending.”²⁰⁷ Differences of dress, custom, language, politics, weights and measures—all alienated contemporary American readers from the reality and truth of the Bible.²⁰⁸ Though Vincent remained a vehement defender of the Bible as the “Book of books,” his introduction to Rand McNally’s illustrated geography painted a picture of crisis in the Bible’s accessibility, liveliness, and interpretability.²⁰⁹

This crisis, though, had a solution, in Vincent’s mind. If the Bible was an old book in trouble, new books like Rand McNally’s illustrated geography might save it. The Bible could be “made real by the Land,” wrote Vincent.²¹⁰ He hoped that the study of the history and geography of the Bible—topics he felt had previously been “studied with anything like thoroughness” only at “theological seminaries and Biblical institutes”—might impart “an air of reality” to the Bible, giving its “wonderful transactions an actual locality among hills, valleys, and cities which may still be found and visited.”²¹¹ Vincent saw the Holy Land as an ideal pedagogical tool. “Our Sunday School libraries should contain the many books of travel through the far East which are published these days. And our ministers should enlist young people, through special classes, in the study of Bible history and geography,” he wrote. Scheduled on days other than Sunday, such Holy Land classes might help churches secure a “week-day hold’ upon our young people” and not just a tenuous Sunday connection.²¹² For Vincent, the Holy Land promised to update the Bible for modern American sensibilities.

The views of the Baptist minister David Austin Randall, the Congregational minister Frank Goodspeed, the Presbyterian minister James Martin Philip Otts, and the Methodist minister John Heyl Vincent sketch the broad contours of the American Protestant material gospel theology in the second half of the nineteenth century. They also indicate some important ways that these later advocates differed from earlier Holy Land scholars like Robinson. First,

²⁰⁶ Vincent was an eminent choice to write an introduction for Rand McNally’s new book. Vincent had achieved considerable prominence for his leadership in Sunday School education and as co-founder of the Chautauqua Institute, which brought 100,000 Americans into its popular reading circles by 1891 (Leon H. Vincent, *John Heyl Vincent: A Biographical Sketch* (New York: Macmillan, 1925), 137). There are no contemporary biographies of Vincent. The most comprehensive source for information on Vincent continues to be the 1925 biography by Leon H. Vincent (*John Heyl Vincent*). Several dissertations and theses have considered Vincent from an educational perspective, including Evelyn Karm Martin, “A View of the Philosophical Development of Adult Education as Influenced by Vincent, Lindeman, and Knowles” (Ph.D., Texas A & M University, 1982); Sonja Marie Stewart, “John Heyl Vincent: His Theory and Practice of Protestant Religious Education from 1855-1920” (University of Notre Dame, 1977); and Edward Albert Trimmer, “John Heyl Vincent: An Evangelist for Education” (Ed. D., Columbia University, 1986).

²⁰⁷ Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, v.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vii.

²¹¹ John Heyl Vincent, *The Modern Sunday-School* (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1887), 320.

²¹² Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, vii.

Robinson's scholarly expertise distinguished him. Robinson was a trained biblical scholar when he first arrived in the Holy Land. It is the rare—if any—late nineteenth-century commentator that appealed to the masses while matching Robinson's mastery of historical sources. While a number of nineteenth-century biblical scholars—including prominent ones like Philip Schaff—wrote Holy Land travelogues, theological and academic credentials were by no means required. The Holy Land attracted a tremendous variety of nineteenth-century commentators—well-known ministers to the virtually unknown, lay men and women, the religiously orthodox to the heretical, as some would claim of Mark Twain.

Second, later Protestants, as a whole, were more anthropologically-minded than Robinson or other earlier Holy Land scholars. Robinson included remarks on the people of the Holy Land in *Biblical Researches*, but the majority of his efforts were dedicated to cataloging geographic features and built environments. The peoples and cultures of the Holy Land, however, would take center stage in later works like the Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey's *Lands of the Bible* (1881). McGarvey divided and described people of the Holy Land—its Turks, Jews, Arabs, native Christians, and Europeans, as he classified them.²¹³ He described practices of marriage and divorce, the care of children, systems of education, food preparation, household furnishings, forms of entertainment, and burial practices.²¹⁴ McGarvey's anthropological focus resembled that of some of the new, modern guidebooks. The Palestine Baedeker addressed topics such as how to silence begging “crowds of ragged, half-naked children,” where to buy cigars, and other “Rules for Intercourse with Orientals.”²¹⁵ In McGarvey's book and many others of the second half of the nineteenth century, anthropology displaced topography in terms of prominence.

Finally, rationalism and empiricism motivated Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, creating a measured, calculated, and careful text. Robinson had to be cajoled into including his first-person reflections in *Biblical Researches*. Later Protestants, however, showed no such hesitation. They fully embraced the first-person narrative so that readers might experience the Holy Land through their eyes—taking them along on virtual journeys. Their accounts did not shy from emotion. The subjective, mystical, and intuitive stood side-by-side with the impulse to quantify and objectify the Holy Land. Later Protestants looked back admiringly to Robinson, but they were of a decidedly different breed.

Conclusion

The perspicuity of scripture, long a core theological commitment of Protestantism, came into question in the nineteenth century. Closely related to *sola scriptura*, the perspicuity of scripture insisted upon the clarity and intelligibility of the Bible for ordinary readers. Scripture did not require a human interpreter, rather *scriptura sacra sui ipsius interpres*: sacred scripture interprets itself.²¹⁶ “[E]very Protestant must allow the Scripture itself to be its best own interpreter,” wrote the Scottish theologian John Brown in his transatlantic success *The Self-Interpreting Bible* (1778).²¹⁷ The revolution in biblical interpretation in the eighteenth and

²¹³ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 76–92.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 111–134.

²¹⁵ Karl Baedeker and Socin, *Palestine and Syria*, 27, 36–48.

²¹⁶ See Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), 68–70 for a discussion of *scriptura sacra sui ipsius interpres* in Martin Luther's theology.

²¹⁷ John Brown and Henry Cooke, *The Self-Interpreting Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments, Together with the Apocrypha, Concordance and Marginal References* (New York: American Publishing Company, 1873). Brown's annotated Bible was first published in 1778 and continued to be published on both side of the Atlantic for more than 100 years.

nineteenth centuries undermined the perspicuity of scripture. Scripture did appear to need interpreters—specialists who could inquire into its origins and investigate its stratifications, as Representative Barrows would have described it.

For nineteenth-century American Protestants, the Holy Land assumed the perspicuity that they had once attributed to the Bible. They regarded its gospel as clear, evident, and lively. They believed the Holy Land could make the Bible anew, giving it a historical weight, a materiality, a reality. Despite Protestants' insistence on the self-evident nature of the Holy Land's revelation, its gospel would, nonetheless, ultimately require interpreters. Those interpreters, in the end, would offer radically different explanations of how the Holy Land recorded a divine message, as discussed in chapter two.

CHAPTER II

RECORDED IN STONE AND SPIRIT: WRITING A MATERIAL GOSPEL

I needed not to be told that the garden in the valley of Kidron was Gethsemane. The line of aged olives and tall, tapering cedars, is a sentence clear as the plainest handwriting, spelling out Gethsemane ...

— Beverly Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine* (1892)²¹⁸

... I discover the strange blending of the natural and supernatural in the Land and the Book—in the Land as to-day hallowed by the Book,—in the Book as to-day supported and made real by the Land.

— John Heyl Vincent, introduction to *Manual of Biblical Geography* (1887)²¹⁹

In 1894 the Thompson Publishing Company of St. Louis released *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee*—an expensively produced volume containing reproductions of several hundred original Holy Land photographs. The book was impressive: when opened it spanned more than two feet, with each interior page dedicated to a single photograph and a descriptive caption. John Heyl Vincent, bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, wrote an introduction for the volume and explained its value to contemporary Christians: “The manners and customs of this Eastern country have not changed,” he wrote. “People dress and eat and sleep and live and labor as they did two thousand years ago. ... The old customs and costumes remain,” he concluded. This unusual constancy of the Holy Land allowed it to “shed light upon difficulties” in the Bible,” argued Vincent.²²⁰ The Holy Land’s unique status as a material gospel, in Vincent’s eyes, depended upon its unbroken continuation of ancient, biblical life.

Even a quick perusal of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs reveal, though, that not all of the Holy Land remained as it did in Bible times. Many of the photographs show a modernizing Holy Land—including images of new houses in an early Zionist settlement (Figure 2.0) and modern infrastructure (Figure 2.1). Other photographs depict the destruction of the Holy Land, showing, for example, ancient biblical sites in ruins (Figures 2.2. and 2.3). While Vincent insisted that customs and manners had not changed since the time of Christ, the Holy Land’s physical locations clearly had. Vincent’s argument for the Holy Land’s “startling fidelity to the old record” required careful and creative interpretation.

²¹⁸ Beverly Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine* (Syracuse: A.W. Hall, 1892), 279.

²¹⁹ From Vincent’s introduction to Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, vii.

²²⁰ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, Vincent’s Introduction.



Figure 2.0. Photograph titled “Roshpina” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 267.



Figure 2.1. Photograph titled “Bridge at Dummar” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 288.



Figure 2.2. Photograph titled “Church of St. John, Samaria” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 168.



Figure 2.3. Photograph titled “Forum and Prison of St. Paul, Ephesus” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 324.

The tension between Vincent's imagining of the Holy Land as unchanged and the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs that clearly showed an evolving and changing landscape capture some of the hermeneutical challenges that Protestants faced when seeing the Holy Land as a material gospel. American Protestants held intensely conflicted views about the nature of the Holy Land and what it could tell contemporary Christians about the biblical past. Protestants claimed that the Holy Land was unchanged since the time of Christ and that it had been completely destroyed—that it was sacred and special, while also forsaken and cursed. The material gospel theology, nonetheless, accommodated these different visions of the Holy Land. This chapter describes three different spatial ideologies that operated within the material gospel theology. They can be differentiated by their different views of the Holy Land: namely, that the Holy Land was a destroyed land, a timeless land, and a spiritual land. American Protestants saw the Holy Land's material gospel written in many different ways.

A Destroyed Land

The Holy Land held a special place in the hearts of American Protestants as the setting of what they regarded as the most important events of history. Minister Frank S. DeHass, the U.S. Consul in Jerusalem from 1873-1877, compared visiting the Holy Land to touring the location of a great battle—such as Marathon in Greece or America's Bunker Hill. According to DeHass, American visitors to the Holy Land would see where another great battle had transpired. Just as Marathon or Bunker Hill might inspire visitors with "patriotic ardor," so might "the scene of our Lord's great triumph over death and hell" inspire Christians, DeHass hoped.²²¹

The question remained, though, what actually endured of this so-called ancient battlefield. While some Protestants insisted that the Holy Land had remained virtually unchanged since the time of Christ—as John Heyl Vincent did in the *Earthly Footsteps* introduction—the vast majority of Protestants did not hold such a view. By far, American Protestants' most common reaction to seeing the Holy Land was disappointment at how much it had changed. They lamented what they perceived as its sad, degraded state.²²² "The land where Jesus lived, once so great and so glorious, is now a destroyed land," wrote the Southern Presbyterian minister John Martin Philip Otts in 1892.²²³ Otts described the Holy Land as "one immense cemetery" where the "tombstones are broken down, their fragments lying around in scattered confusion, or in moldering heaps, with their inscriptions so defaced that but few of them can now be deciphered."²²⁴ This was the land most American Protestants found: a land ravaged, destroyed, and desolate—a great battlefield that was a shadow of its former self.

²²¹ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 123. The American consular presence in Jerusalem and Consul DeHass are discussed in Ruth Kark, *American Consuls in the Holy Land, 1832-1914* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1994); and Lester I. Vogel, *To See a Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 177–80.

²²² The National Library of Israel hosted an exhibition titled *Dreamland: American Travelers to the Holy Land in the 19th Century* in 2012-13. *The Times of Israel*, an English-language news website, succinctly summarized the sentiment of many nineteenth-century American Holy Land travelers with its headline for an article about the exhibition: "Less awe than shucks for the Holy Land's first US visitors" (Mitch Ginsburg, "Less Awe than Shucks for the Holy Land's First US Visitors," *The Times of Israel*, July 4, 2012, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/from-melville-to-roosevelt-to-twain-celebrating-the-holy-lands-first-americans/>).

²²³ Otts, *The Fifth Gospel*, 22.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

Many found the Holy Land particularly lacking when compared with America. Henry Martyn Field, a Presbyterian minister and long-time editor of *The Evangelist*, thanked God that Palestine had not been the land promised to America's forefathers: "Old Massachusetts is worth a hundred Palestines," he wrote.²²⁵ The Reverend Goodspeed noted a conspicuous lack of picturesque features that made for great sightseeing: Palestine "has no cataract like Niagara, no river like the Rhine in romance, or the Hudson for beauty, no bay like Naples, no harbor like New York, no mountains like Switzerland," he wrote. Both the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee were "attractive sheets of water" but America's waterways easily eclipsed them in charm, in Goodspeed's opinion.²²⁶

Jerusalem, in particular, often failed to meet travelers' expectations. That holy city "was not the Jerusalem of my dreams!" remarked the Presbyterian minister Field.²²⁷ While Field had prepared himself to find a city of "hoary age," he was surprised that the city retained so little of its "former magnificence":

I had looked also for something that should remind me of the ancient people and the ancient worship—venerable rabbis with long gray beards and flowing robes, chanting the Psalms of David. But I found little to admire either in the city or its inhabitants. ... It has neither the beauty of a modern city, nor the sombre stateliness of an ancient one. In its interior it has all the unsightly features of an Oriental town As the traveller picks his way over the rough stones, through the deep mire, while every open door that permits a glance uncovers a picture of squalid wretchedness, he feels indeed that this is not 'Jerusalem the Golden.'²²⁸

The church historian Philip Schaff shared Field's views on Jerusalem, with Schaff deeming the city "a venerable ruin."²²⁹ Schaff was "disgusted with the wretched interior, the ill-paved, narrow and dirty streets, the ignorance, poverty, and misery of the inhabitants." Where Christians sought "a fair type of 'Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest,'" Schaff wrote, instead they would find "'Jerusalem the stony, with dirt and rubbish cursed.'"²³⁰

²²⁵ Henry Martyn Field, *Among the Holy Hills* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), 242. Protestant writers often compared the Holy Land's physical landscape to America's. The Presbyterian minister Frank Dewitt Talmage, for example, found Palestine to look similar to southern California: if you "have been to Los Angeles and ridden through San Diego county," you know the hills of Palestine, he wrote (Frank DeWitt Talmage, "Talmage Sermon," *Burlington Weekly Free Press*, August 9, 1906, 12). Robert Morris concurred that there was nothing especially foreign about the Holy Land: "One would think, to read standard accounts of the trees and birds in the Holy Land, that they are different from birds and trees in other countries. Not so. Making allowance for difference in climate, nature is the same everywhere, and so I have used every-day words in describing them" (Robert Morris, *Freemasonry in the Holy Land; Or, Handmarks of Hiram's Builders*, 10th ed. (Chicago: Published for the author by Knight & Leonard, Printers, 1876), 5–6). For some, Protestants' proclivity for comparing the Holy Land with other places was irritating. The Reverend Thomas DeWitt Talmage, for example, reported finding the Holy Land to be vastly superior to the Sierra Nevadas, the Alps, and Yosemite Valley. The British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph* critiqued Talmage's flair for the comparative, writing that Talmage had "omitted, however, to say whether he had ever been to Barnum's, so that he has not yet subjected the attractions of the Holy Land, as he seems desirous of doing, to every possible comparative test" ("The Genius Loci of Jerusalem and of Brooklyn," *The Church Eclectic* 18 (April 1890): 43).

²²⁶ Goodspeed, *Palestine*, 11.

²²⁷ For a brief biography of Field, see "Is Sabbath Desecration Increasing? A Symposium of Opinions by Famous Christian Leaders," *Our Day* 17, no. 111 (July 1897): 308–15.

²²⁸ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, 9–10.

²²⁹ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 237.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 233.

Protestants routinely speculated on exactly how much “rubbish” separated modern visitors from the Jerusalem of biblical times. They believed they were walking not so much *in* biblical time as above it. One writer in 1878 put the Jerusalem of biblical times at 20 to 80 feet beneath “the ruins and rubbish of centuries.”²³¹ Another author upped that number, estimating that since the time of Christ, a layer of debris some 160 feet deep had accumulated over much of the city.²³² Yet another writer imagined “eight Jerusalems, lying one upon another, like the strata of the rock-ribbed hills.”²³³ Jerusalem’s hidden history prompted comparison to other ancient cities: like Rome, Jerusalem had “a city under the present city” that had been “buried as completely as Pompeii.”²³⁴

As evident in Field and Schaff’s descriptions of Jerusalem, critiques of the Holy Land’s physical condition were often intertwined with critiques of its inhabitants. American Protestants saw the Holy Land through the lens of Orientalism—that term made famous by Edward Said to denote a widespread mode of thought in which the West and the East were regarded as in opposition to one another, with the West ultimately regarded as superior.²³⁵ For Protestants, the Holy Land’s people were another sign of the land’s fallenness. Schaff described the “degraded and beggarly condition” of the Holy Land’s peoples. “Orientals,” according to Schaff, ate with their hands, did not use chairs, and kept their women veiled.²³⁶ The “masses of the people are repulsively filthy,” commented the Disciples of Christ minister John McGarvey.²³⁷ The non-Christian religions of Holy Land inhabitants were also criticized. Though the Methodist minister Beverly Carradine regarded Islam as one of the “four great religions of the world,” he was pained by the sight of mosques and hearing the Muslim call to prayer in the Holy Land.²³⁸

The great—even hyperbolic—lengths that Protestants went to describe the Holy Land’s decline raises an important question: if the Holy Land truly was a shadow of its former self, how did Protestants believe it could still reveal important truths about Christ and the Bible? The material gospel theology did accommodate the idea of the Holy Land as a destroyed land. American Protestants interwove the destroyed land narrative into their vision of the Holy Land as another gospel in two principal ways. First, Protestants imagined the rubbish and debris as having a protective quality: the debris had sealed off the Holy Land’s record of the biblical past. Protestants imagined a record hidden from view but pristinely preserved, unseen by human eye or touched by human hand—not unlike Giuseppe Fiorelli’s discovery in the 1860s of the scenes of agony pristinely preserved by the ashes of Pompeii. Reverend Carradine imagined dusty Jerusalem as “one of God’s secretaries, with a multitude of secret drawers therein, which we are slowly finding and opening.”²³⁹ The dust had preserved a record of the biblical past—frozen it in time—until it could be carefully removed with the aid of modern, scientific techniques. The time was right for such a recovery many Protestants, like Carradine, believed.

²³¹ Ibid., 235.

²³² DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 128.

²³³ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, 18.

²³⁴ Ibid. The comparison of Jerusalem to Pompeii was common. Reverend Carradine, who had visited Pompeii on his way to the Holy Land, described the hidden, buried streets of Jerusalem as a “Pompeii spectacle” (Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 295).

²³⁵ Said, *Orientalism*.

²³⁶ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 13.

²³⁷ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 118. Protestants expressed complex opinions about the populations of the Holy Land. Prejudicial and racialized remarks often stand side-by-side with more generous, though often still paternalistic, attitudes. Despite his harsh assessment, Schaff, for example, also praised Holy Land residents for their “native courtesy and dignity” (Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 12).

²³⁸ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 390, 409.

²³⁹ Ibid., 293.

Second, Protestants positively interpreted the supposedly abject state of the Holy Land as a confirmation of prophecy. Protestants saw the Holy Land's decline in a prophetic light, pointing to pronouncements such as Jesus' in Matthew 24 that "[t]here shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."²⁴⁰ In its "ruins" Jerusalem "confirms the truth of prophecy," wrote church historian Schaff.²⁴¹ That Jerusalem had been "laid waste, and become a 'heap of rubbish'" should hearten visitors, not disappoint them, suggested the American consul DeHass. If Jerusalem had not been so miserable, "it would lose all interest to the Christian, as it would falsify the predictions concerning it," DeHass wrote.²⁴² Rejoice in the dust of Jerusalem, DeHass told his readers.

Protestants cited many different causes for the Holy Land's sad state, including natural disasters, wars, and occupation by foreign powers. Most often, though, they turned to the explanation that the Holy Land's condition was a sign of God's displeasure. The Reverend Beverly Carradine interpreted differences in landscapes as a barometer of God's wrath. While riding through the rocky landscape along the Damascus Road, Carradine wrote, "The land has sinned grievously. It rejected and killed God's only Son, and he has written his displeasure and judgment in lines of brown and gray all over the landscape. The blessings that produce the harvest have been withheld, the elements have washed away the oil, and the projecting rocky ribs of the mountain are yellowing or whitening in the sun."²⁴³ By contrast, Carradine saw Samaria as a fecund and green landscape, which he attributed to the fact that "Samaria was not as guilty [for the death of Jesus] as Judea."²⁴⁴ Similarly, Carradine believed the town of Tiberias beside Lake Galilee had been "spared from the doom of judgment" because it was a Gentile community that did not reject Christ²⁴⁵—whereas the nearby ruins of Capernaum confirmed the prophecy of Matthew 11:23: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell." The Reverend Carradine read this passage while standing amid the Capernaum ruins. "As it is, the rocks are witnesses. The ruins," he wrote, "confirm the Word."²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ Matthew 24:2; also Mark 13:2. This scriptural passage, widely cited by Protestants as an example of a prophecy fulfilled by Jerusalem, produced varying interpretations. While most commentators cited this passage to explain Jerusalem's ruinous condition, others read it in the completely opposite sense, citing it as an explanation for why the area of the Temple Mount had been relatively protected over the centuries. The Methodist writer Mary S. Allen, for example, quoted this passage as "There shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down"—a close approximation of the King James Version—and focused her attention on the clause "which shall not be thrown down." For Allen, the fact that the Temple "is still entirely free from the piles of stones and rubbish usually found in the place of old ruins" confirmed Jesus' prophetic statement that the stones of the Temple would *not* be thrown down, a markedly different interpretation from other Protestant writers (Mary S. Allen, *From West to East, Or, The Old World as I Saw It: Being a Description of a Journey from California to the Holy Land and Egypt, by the Way of England, France, Switzerland and Italy* (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1898), 77). See Goodspeed, *Palestine*, 59–100 for other prophecies Protestants regarded as confirmed by the Holy Land. Prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem was a popular topic among nineteenth-century writers. The British author George Peter Holford's tract *The Destruction of Jerusalem, an Absolute and Irresistible Proof of the Divine Origin of Christianity* (London: S. Sael, 1805) enjoyed particular success throughout nineteenth-century Europe and America.

²⁴¹ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 387.

²⁴² DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 129.

²⁴³ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 353.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 382.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 388.

A Timeless Land

The destroyed land narrative stressed the Holy Land's discontinuity with the past: little remained, visible or otherwise, of what Jesus and his apostles had seen. Protestants, though, told another story about the Holy Land that took the opposite position: certain aspects of biblical times did persist in the Holy Land. The Reverend John Heyl Vincent believed that Protestants could "live the old life over again in Canaan" because the "mummy wrappings of Mohammedan domination" had "held the far East unchanged through the centuries."²⁴⁷ The timeless land narrative most often cited three aspects of the Holy Land as "unchanged" since the time of Christ: its natural landscapes, its place names, and its people.

Protestants showed a strong interest in the Holy Land's natural world. Holy Land works reflected the growing veneration for nature in the nineteenth century.²⁴⁸ Illustrations of landscapes fill Holy Land travelogues, recalling the popularity of nineteenth-century landscape painting (Figures 2.4 and 2.5). Holy Land flora preoccupied many visitors, who gathered flowers from various locations and artfully arranged them in souvenir books bound in olivewood (Figures 2.6 and 2.7).²⁴⁹ For those who could not make the Holy Land trip themselves, the Congregational minister Harvey G. Greene published in the 1890s and 1900s books containing actual dried flowers collected in the Holy Land—from delicate wisps of Lily of the Valley to bits of papyrus arranged in the shape of a cross (Figure 2.8).²⁵⁰ Some editions included a certificate from the U.S. Consul in Jerusalem assuring purchasers that the Consul was "sure that the flowers [Greene] here offers, really grew in the Christ Land."²⁵¹

²⁴⁷ Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, vi.

²⁴⁸ On the admiration of nature in mid-nineteenth century America, as well as a critique of such veneration, see Rochelle L. Johnson, *Passions for Nature: Nineteenth-Century America's Aesthetics of Alienation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009).

²⁴⁹ For examples of such olivewood books, see Jeffrey Shandler and Beth S Wenger, eds., *Encounters with the "Holy Land": Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*, Brandeis Series in American Jewish History, Culture, and Life and The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series ([Philadelphia]; Hanover: National Museum of American Jewish History: Center for Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Library; Distributed by University Press of New England, 1997), 29.

²⁵⁰ Harvey B. Greene, *Wild Flowers from Palestine: Gathered and Pressed by Rev. H. B. Greene* (Lowell, Mass.: H.B. Greene, 1898); Harvey B. Greene, *Pressed Flowers from the Holy Land: Flowers Gathered and Pressed in Palestine by Rev. Harvey B. Greene, B. D.* (Lowell, Mass.: H.B. Greene, 1896).

²⁵¹ Harvey B. Greene, *Pressed Flowers from the Holy Land: Flowers Gathered and Pressed in Palestine by Rev. Harvey B. Greene, B. D.* (Lowell, Mass.: H. B. Greene, 1900).

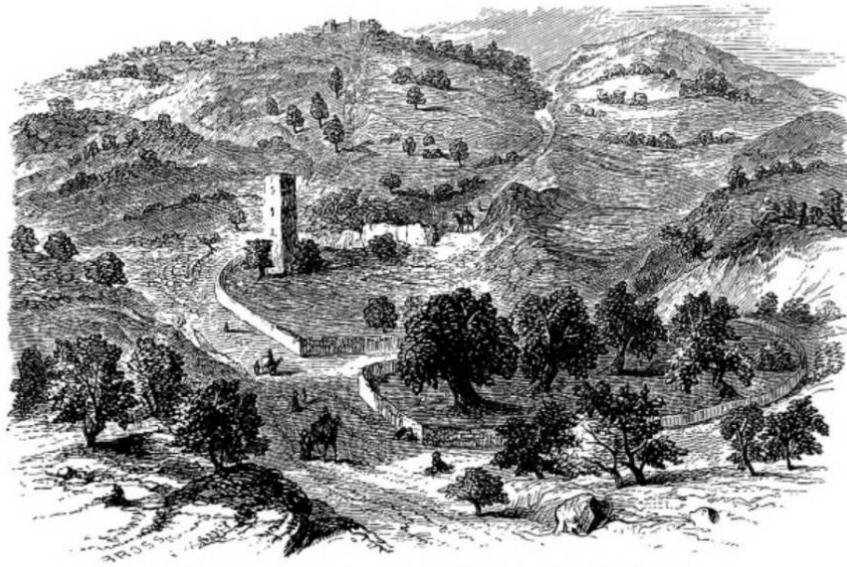


Figure 2.4. Illustration titled “Gethsemane, and Mount of Olives” (unknown artist and date). From Schaff, Philip, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*, between pages 208 and 209.

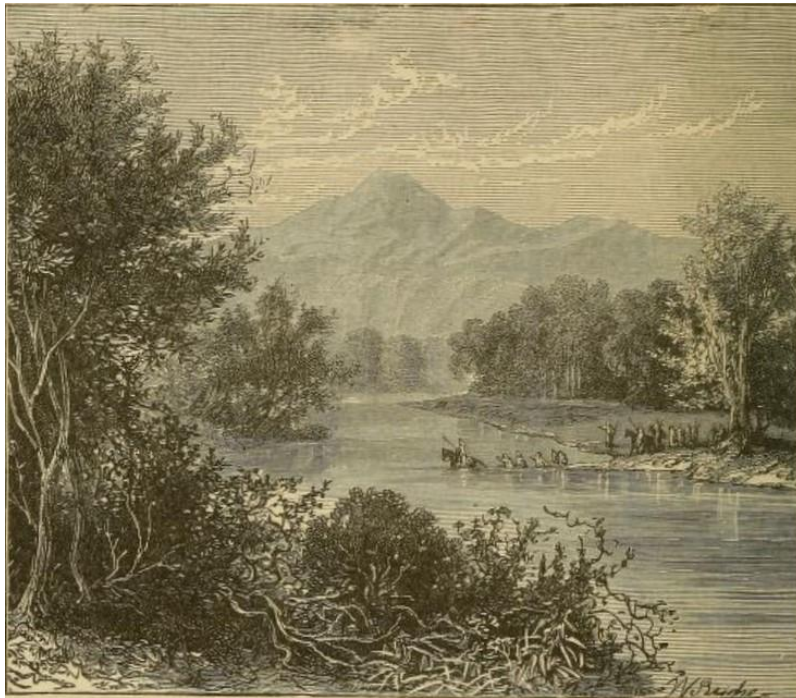


Figure 2.5. Illustration titled “A Ford of the Jordan” (unknown artist and date). From Elizabeth Champney, *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1892), page 258.



Figures 2.6 and 2.7. Dried flower arrangements titled “Flowers from Rachel’s Tomb” (left) and “Flowers from Bethlehem” (right) (1890s). From *Album: Flowers and Pictures of the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Boulos Meo, 1890s). Getty Research Institute Digital Collections, 2873-944.

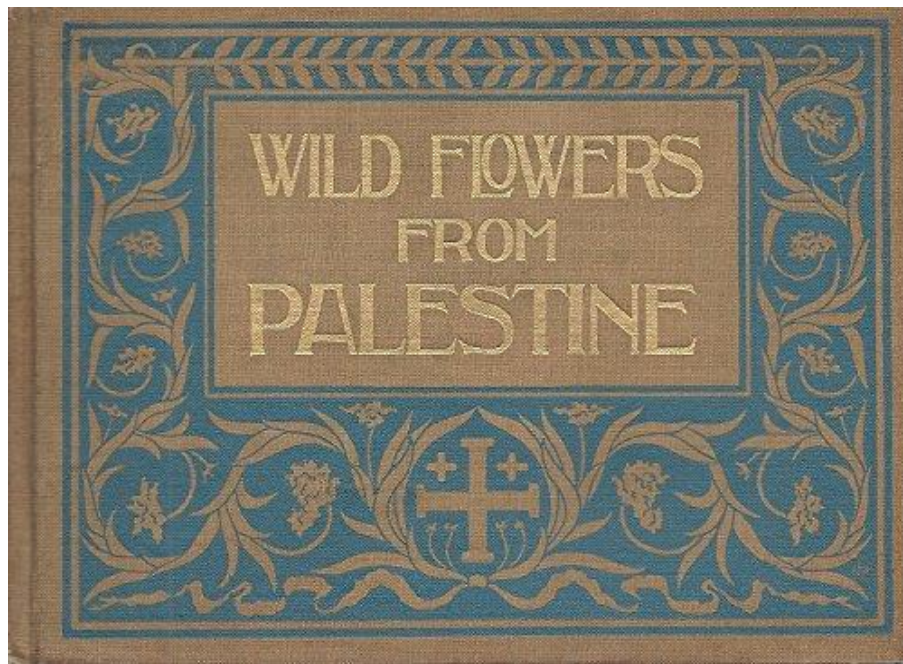


Figure 2.8. Cover of *Wild Flowers from Palestine: Gathered and Pressed by Rev. H. B. Greene* (1898).

Protestants valued the natural world for its constancy: they saw the natural world as a witness to biblical times that had passed unchanged into the modern world. Historian of art and architecture Kirk Savage has described the “most cherished axiom of the memorial landscape” as “its permanence, its eternity”—the idea that it “shuts a lid on history.”²⁵² For Protestants, the Holy Land’s natural world was exactly this type of memorial landscape. “The rock, the tree the flower, the seed / Are all there as they were that day / When heartless thousands heard him pray, / When pitiless thousands saw him bleed,” read the words of Robert Morris’s poem “Come, View the Holy Land” (1895).²⁵³ Consul DeHass suggested that the “mountains and valleys, lakes and rivers, birds and flowers, remain much the same, and the inquirer after truth will find the Scriptures every-where written on the very face of the Holy Land.”²⁵⁴ The church historian Philip Schaff, who was particularly fond of poetic imagery about Palestine’s natural landscape, described “the mountains and hills, the lake and rivers, the caves and rocks” as “alive with Biblical stories.”²⁵⁵ The natural world seemed so unchanged that some felt they might be too much living “the old life over again in Canaan”: as the authors of *Earthly Footsteps* traveled along the rugged, isolated road to Jericho, they worried they might relive the fate of the traveler in the Good Samaritan parable and be attacked.²⁵⁶

The Land and the Book (1859) by the American Protestant missionary William McClure Thomson (1806-1894) illustrates the continuities that Protestants saw between the Holy Land’s natural world and the Bible. Thomson’s book, one of the most popular and important of American Holy Land books in the second half of the nineteenth century, was designed so that readers might walk through the Holy Land with Thomson as their guide.²⁵⁷ “Our first walk in the Land of Promise!” exclaimed the opening line of Thomson’s book.²⁵⁸ As Thomson and reader ambled through the Holy Land together, Thomson described what they encountered. “What tree is this which overshadows our path? It is more bushy and thick-set than the apple tree, for which I at first mistook it, and, as we near it, I see the leaves are longer and of a much darker green,” writes Thomson. At this point in the text, is a large inset illustration (Figure 2.9). Thomson goes on to explain that this is a carob tree—which “swine did eat, and which the poor prodigal would have filled his belly,” citing Luke 15:16.²⁵⁹ A little further down the road, Thomson describes a Syrian sycamore, again, accompanied by a picture (Figure 2.10). Thomson draws readers’ attention to how the low branches of such trees made them “admirably adapted” to climbing, as Zacchaeus reportedly did in Luke 19:4. The design of Thomson’s book suggested that for the observant traveler, a walk through the Holy Land was a walk through scripture.

²⁵² Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 10. On memorial landscapes, see also Judith R. Wasserman, “To Trace the Shifting Sands: Community, Ritual, and the Memorial Landscape,” *Landscape Journal* 17, no. 1 (March 1998): 42–61; and Judith R. Wasserman, “Memory Embedded,” *Landscape Journal* 21, no. 1 (March 2002): 190–200.

²⁵³ Robert Morris, *The Poetry of Freemasonry*, Laureate Edition (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1895), 348.

²⁵⁴ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 140.

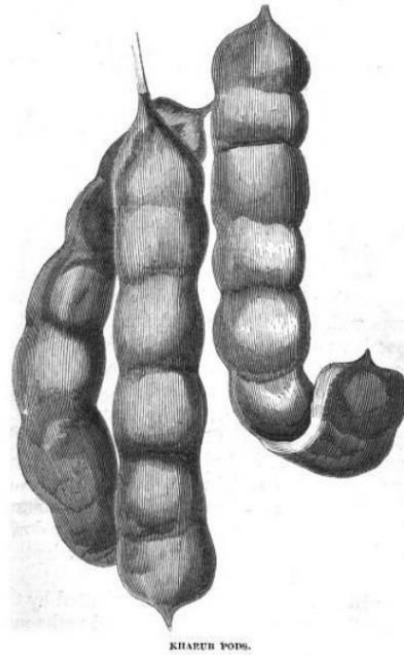
²⁵⁵ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 387.

²⁵⁶ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 222–223.

²⁵⁷ It has been claimed that Thomson’s *The Land and the Book* was outsold only by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) in the second half of the nineteenth century. Historian Heleen Murre-van den Berg agrees that the popularity of Thomson’s book is “undisputed,” though she questions the veracity of this oft-repeated comparison to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (see Heleen Murre-van den Berg, “William McClure Thomson’s *The Land and the Book* (1859): Pilgrimage and Mission in Palestine,” in *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, Studies in Christian Missions 32 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 43, note 1).

²⁵⁸ Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, I:17.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, I:21–22.



Figures 2.9. Illustration of carob pods. From William McClure Thomson, *The Land and the Book* (1859), Volume I, page 21.



Figure 2.10. Illustration of sycamore tree. From Thomson, *The Land and the Book* (1859), Volume I, page 23.

Protestants' confidence that the Holy Land's natural world—its plants and mountains, rivers and plains—remained much as it had since the time of Christ contrasted with their doubt about its built environment. A visitor could never be certain about the genuineness of sites such as the house of Mary or Joseph's carpenter shop in Nazareth, wrote the minister Field, but the visitor could be sure that the "hills which surround [Nazareth] are the same to which our Lord looked up from his mother's door."²⁶⁰ Built sites were potentially inauthentic, while the natural world could not be falsified, according to Field. Scholar Stephanie Stidham Rogers argues that Protestants' embrace of the natural world and simultaneous rejection of Palestine's indoor shrines was one means by which travelers created an appropriately Protestant mode of pilgrimage: "Protestant pilgrims avoided and condemned indoor shrines. . . . Time and again, they advocated the out-of-doors experience in the Holy Land as the most aptly Protestant one," writes Rogers.²⁶¹ The natural landscape contained the pristine, unadulterated gospel.

Protestants also found other timeless elements in the Holy Land. They pointed to the static nature of place names as another example of how the Holy Land could witness to the truth of the Bible. The great nineteenth-century explorers of the Holy Land—including Edward Robinson and the Swiss doctor Titus Tobler—had greatly expanded knowledge of place names. They catalogued place names that had been unknown to previous travelers, whether because of language barriers or because the places were not along typical pilgrim pathways.²⁶² "Names and places rarely change in the Orient, and great events are never forgotten," Consul DeHass wrote.²⁶³ Contemporary Arabic place names contained antecedents of their Hebrew roots, DeHass explained, forming "a most wonderful philological corroboration of the Biblical narrative."²⁶⁴ Abiding place names constituted their own testimony about the biblical past, according to DeHass.

The people of the Holy Land were also regarded as another unchanging aspect. Protestants often used the word "land" to encompass the Holy Land's topography and its people—and both were seen as equally unchanged. "Manners and customs are so stationary in the East, that you are transferred as by magic to the age of the apostles, the prophets, and the patriarchs," wrote church historian Schaff.²⁶⁵ Similarly the Reverend Henry Clay Trumbull argued in a 1902 article for *The Biblical World* that knowledge of Palestine's "unchanging people with their unchanging customs" was imperative for understanding the gospels—though Trumbull did not give specific examples of how such knowledge might illumine the text.²⁶⁶

This interest in the peoples and cultures of the Holy Land as surviving residuals of ancient biblical times gave an anthropological bent to many Holy Land travelogues. Protestants often saw the Holy Land as populated by different "types." Schaff listed the types that a visitor could reasonably expect to encounter:

the Arab, the Turk, the Armenian, the Maronite, the Copt, the Jew, the Nubian, the Bedawin, the dervish, the priest, the official, the merchant, the mechanic, the barber, the dragoman, the donkey-boy, the runner, the singer, the serpent-charmer, the fruit-seller, the water-carrier, the slave, the beggar.

²⁶⁰ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, 122.

²⁶¹ Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land*, 119.

²⁶² Hilprecht et al., *Explorations in Bible Lands*, 586–591.

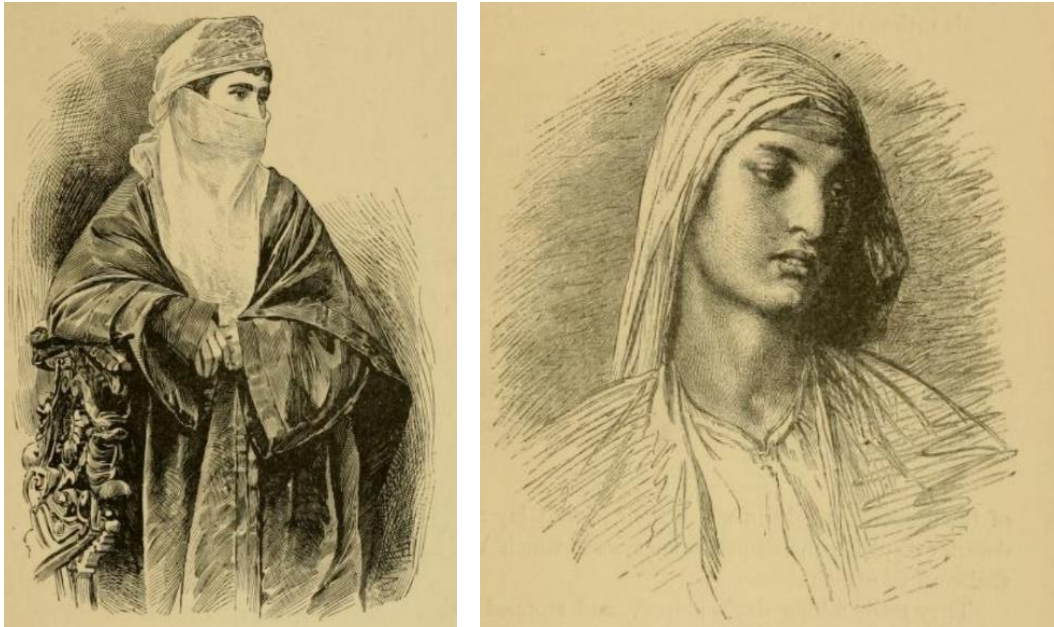
²⁶³ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 140.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁶⁵ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 14.

²⁶⁶ Henry Clay Trumbull, "An Illustrator of the Fifth Gospel: Dr. William M. Thomson," *The Biblical World* 20, no. 5 (November 1902): 380.

These types, Schaff argued, could be easily identified based upon external, physical characteristics. Many Holy Land works included illustrations of these types (Figures 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, and 2.14). The ease with which these types could be readily identified distinguished the Holy Land from America, Schaff suggested. Modern, civilized life had eliminated physical distinctions to such an extent that identifying “types” in America was difficult—but the Holy Land, in Schaff’s eyes, was neither fully modern nor civilized, and, thus, these types persisted.²⁶⁷ Like Schaff, the Reverend Goodspeed also saw the Holy Land as populated by an array of eternal types. The modern sight of a shepherd with his sheep, a man sowing seed, a woman drawing water at the well were signs of the biblical past for Goodspeed. The “commonplace becomes sacramental” in the Holy Land, he wrote.²⁶⁸



Figures 2.11 and 2.12. Illustrations titled “Turkish Woman” (left) and “Maiden of Palestine” (right) (unknown artists and dates). From Elizabeth Champney, *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land*, pages 191 and 227.

²⁶⁷ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 13.

²⁶⁸ Goodspeed, *Palestine*, 37–38. Historian Heleen Murre-van den Berg describes a similar tendency in Protestant missionary William Thomson’s *The Land and the Book*. For Thomson, “[t]attoos on hands and faces illustrate what Moses might have intended with the ‘sign on your hand,’ women weeping at graves in Sidon provide insight into the mourning rituals described in the Bible, and the present-day costume of the ‘Syrian Arab’ might well resemble the dress of the Israelites,” she notes (Berg, “William McClure Thomson’s *The Land and the Book* (1859),” 47).



Figures 2.13 and 2.14. Illustrations titled “Strolling Platers (I)” and “Strolling Platers (II)” by Corwin Knapp Linson (1864-1959). From *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900), pages 396 and 397.

American Protestants sought the timeless wherever they could find it in the Holy Land. Where they discovered supposedly unchanged elements, they embraced and cherished them—a counterbalance to the doom and destruction of the destroyed land narrative. The destroyed land and timeless land narratives were not, however, completely opposed. They rested on a common assumption: that the Holy Land was a witness to the biblical past. Protestants relied, however, upon yet another narrative to explain how the Holy Land was a material gospel—one that insisted that the Holy Land was not simply a witness to the past but a source of continuing revelation. In the destroyed and timeless land narratives, history, dust, rock, and the witness of the Holy Land predominate; in this third narrative—the spiritual land narrative—experience, spirit, impressions, the insight of feeling, and the revelation of the Holy Land come to the fore.

A Spiritual Land

Alongside Protestant accounts that emphasized the historical witness of the Holy Land were also those that spoke of it as a place that continued to disclose—in spiritual, ephemeral ways—God’s revelation. The Holy Land did not just witness the biblical past passively; it manifested a present, spiritual truth. Protestant travelogues often depicted the Holy Land as a place where the unseen spiritual world and the present material world were in exceptionally close contact. Embedded within otherwise factually-minded, empirically-driven travelogues are, thus, accounts of numinous encounters in the Holy Land. Protestants described being moved by the Holy Land’s spirits—be it the voice of God, the presence of Christ, the apostles, other

Biblical figures, or, occasionally, less friendly spirits. Protestants plumbed impressions, emotions, and feelings to sense the divine, metaphysical speech of the Holy Land. The Holy Land was a spiritually vibrant landscape—a “haunted, holy ground” in the words of Lord Byron.²⁶⁹

The presence of these mystical, spirit-filled accounts in Protestant Holy Land travelogues stands in contrast with a view of nineteenth-century Protestants as seeking to recover the real, hard history of the Bible. A few points help contextualize the spiritual land narrative. First, the nineteenth century was a period of strong interest in spirits, metaphysics, and the occult. Historian T. J. Jackson Lears describes late nineteenth-century American popular culture as having a “preoccupation with releasing energy from previously untapped sources (body, soul, psyche).”²⁷⁰ Spiritualism and the New Thought Movement surfaced questions about the relationship between spirit and matter. Protestant Holy Land travelogues routinely engaged the ideas of spirit, energy, and presence, testifying to the porous boundaries between Christianity, the spiritual, and even the occult in the nineteenth century. Second, these accounts of spiritual encounters also serve as a reminder of the cultural construction of death. As Drew Gilpin Faust has shown in her study of death and the Civil War, the faithful often looked forward to and worked to bring about the “Good Death.”²⁷¹ Death was a reunion with those who had died. The Holy Land, for some, provided a premonition of this happy reunion.

The spiritual presence Protestants most often described sensing in the Holy Land was, perhaps unsurprisingly, that of Jesus. They believed that his divine, physical presence had transformed the Holy Land, effectively beatifying it. Upon his visit to the Holy Land in the 1860s, Phillips Brooks wrote, “Christ is not merely the greatest, but the only presence that fills the landscape in Palestine.”²⁷² Consul DeHass described the “influence of the name of Jesus, and the glory of his personal presence” as seeming “to pervade the whole land.”²⁷³ DeHass used a sensory metaphor to describe his diffuse presence: “the whole land seems fragrant with his memory,” wrote DeHass.²⁷⁴ The Reverend Beverly Carradine described Christ being “in a sense, everywhere. ... His presence descended as gently as the light and abides without any sunset upon this sacredly historic place.”²⁷⁵ The Reverend James Wideman Lee believed that great people, like Jesus, illuminated, magnetized, and saturated places, elevating those places above “the dead level of terrestrial monotony” and moving them “from the domain of matter to that of spirit.”²⁷⁶ “Jesus’ spirit had transformed the Holy Land, in Lee’s view.

For Protestants, not just gentle spirits like those of Jesus or Mary populated the Holy Land. Some Protestants detected far less amicable spirits. A “ghostly influence broods, silencing the daylight, and whispering in the darkness,” wrote John Kelman in *The Holy Land* (1902).²⁷⁷ Kelman was a Scottish Presbyterian minister who came to America to pastor the prestigious

²⁶⁹ Josias Leslie Porter borrowed Lord Byron’s phrase “haunted, holy ground” to refer to Jerusalem in his *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1887), 8. The phrase “haunted, holy ground” came from Lord Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812-1818): “Where’er we tread is haunted; holy ground” (Lord Byron, *Childe Harolds Pilgrimage*, vol. I (Brussels: Dujardin-Sailly, 1829), Canto II: 88: 1).

²⁷⁰ Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 225.

²⁷¹ Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage books, 2008), 6–17.

²⁷² As quoted in Alexander Viets Griswold Allen, *Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893: Memories of His Life, with Extracts from His Letters and Note-Books* (Boston: E.P. Dutton, 1907), 198.

²⁷³ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 11.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁷⁵ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 258.

²⁷⁶ James Wideman Lee, *The Geography of Genius* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1920), 9–10.

²⁷⁷ John Kelman, *The Holy Land* (London: A. & C. Black, 1902), 249.

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, New York.²⁷⁸ He described Palestine and Syria as ghastly places suffused by magic, spirits, and the occult. In a chapter titled “The Spectral” in *The Holy Land*, Kelman documented the superstitious beliefs and practices of Holy Land residents, making “no attempt,” he wrote, “to distinguish between the superstitions of Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans in Palestine” because he regarded their beliefs and practices as essentially the same.²⁷⁹ Palestine and Syria, according to Kelman, were duplicitous and treacherous places: beautiful flowers hid stinging nettles and inviting pools of water teemed with malaria. The diffuse, spectral element was inescapable. “Every one feels it whose imagination and heart are in the least measure open to spiritual impressions,” wrote Kelman.²⁸⁰

A number of Protestant travelogues contain very specific descriptions of spiritual encounters in the Holy Land. The Baptist minister David Austin Randall’s *The Handwriting of God in Egypt, Sinai, and the Holy Land* (1862) includes one such striking account. The Baptist minister recounts that one evening while in Egypt he experienced a series of visions. It was twilight on the Sabbath—a time that often comes up in Protestant accounts of spirit encounters and that mirrors the fact that many spiritual encounters recorded in the Bible happened at daybreak or twilight.²⁸¹ Alone in his hotel, Old Testament figures began to gather around Randall. “[V]isions of the past flitted around me,” he wrote. “I saw Abraham, the venerable old man, on his visit to the court of Pharaoh; Joseph rose up in the dim visions of the past, and I saw old Jacob, his father, expiring in his arms; then Moses, with his wonder-working rod, came and joined the group.”²⁸² The Old Testament fathers then disappeared, replaced by visions of Randall’s friends “loved of former days”—presumably dead, though Randall does not say so directly. Randall’s “absent friends came on light and cheerful wing to greet [him].” He claimed to have spoken with these friends and that he “then seemed lifted above them all.” Randall was not being taken up to heaven—but heaven had come down to him: “The heavens were bending toward me, and the glory of God kindled [my friends] with an unearthly radiance.”²⁸³ Randall had a foretaste of a glorious heavenly reunion in the Holy Land.

This account of a numinous encounter comes from a man not known for hyperbole or excess. Randall’s contemporaries regarded him as an exceedingly simple, untheatrical preacher: “There were no sensational utterances, no striking climaxes, no rhetorical periods—scarcely a gesture save a rising movement of the hand to emphasize some important idea,” wrote one of Randall’s biographers.²⁸⁴ The most remarkable aspect of Randall’s detailed description of this vision, thus, may be his own lack of remark on its exceptionality. He makes no attempt to justify or explain it; upon concluding his description of the vision, he resumes his day-by-day narration of his journey. Randall’s very lack of comment gives a quotidian appearance to this spiritual encounter in the Holy Land.

The Presbyterian minister Henry Field’s *Among the Holy Hills* (1883) contains another account of a spiritual encounter—this time with Jesus. Field’s encounter took place in Nazareth, and like Randall’s, happened at twilight on the Sabbath. “[I]n the last glow of sunset seemed to float the form of Him who once walked among these hills,” wrote Field. Field wondered whether Jesus might wish to return to “revisit the scenes dear to him,” especially those of his childhood. Field is more circumspect than Randall about the reality of this vision. But “whether it was faith or imagination” that led him to sense the presence of Jesus, “to the quickened sense

²⁷⁸ “Dr. John Kelman Arrives: New Pastor of Fifth Av. Presbyterian Church Attends Communion,” *The New York Times*, November 3, 1919, 12.

²⁷⁹ Kelman, *The Holy Land*, 263.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 245.

²⁸¹ Jesus’ first post-resurrection appearances to Mary Magdalene and the disciples in John 20 occurred, for example, before first light and in the evening.

²⁸² Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, 174.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁴ Randall, *Ham-Mishkan*, xxx.

[Jesus] was very near,” Field wrote. For Field and his travel companions, it was if they “could see [Jesus] dimly in the twilight.”²⁸⁵ The spirit of Jesus still wandered the Holy Land, according to Field.

Protestant perceptions of the Holy Land as a broadly spiritualized landscape had important consequences for how they understood the landscape to function as a material gospel. Some Protestants, for example, used the diffuse spirituality of the Holy Land to downplay the need to identify the exact locations of biblical events. Consul DeHass believed that “modern explorations and scientific researches” would eventually allow Protestants to “fix the locations of [biblical] events on, or very near, the precise spot” where they had occurred. The inn of Bethlehem or the tomb of Christ would be as precisely identified as the location of the Coliseum or the Parthenon, he suggested.²⁸⁶ But DeHass maintained that Protestants did not need to precisely identify the locations of biblical events because Christ’s presence had suffused the whole landscape.²⁸⁷ The sacred landscape was a general one—not a specific one.

The authors of *Earthly Footsteps* used a similar line of reasoning in the captions for many of their photographs. A caption for a photograph of the House of Ananias describes the house as that identified as such by “the tradition.”²⁸⁸ The authors anticipate the objection that tradition could be wrong: “Of course, it would be interesting to know the precise place in which Ananias lived,” the caption acknowledges. But the “true Christian pilgrim,” the caption continues, “is in no way dependent upon traditional houses and tombs. He is content to know that Jesus walked beside Galilee, and sailed upon its waters, stilling its waves, and that Paul, converted by a stupendous miracle, at Damascus, walked on this street called Straight, dumb, blind, childlike.” The authors sidestep the problem of precisely locating biblical sites by reminding readers that the *true* original is the broader, sacralized landscape of the Holy Land.²⁸⁹

DeHass and the *Earthly Footsteps* authors used the spiritualized landscape of the Holy Land to justify not needing to precisely identify the exact locations of biblical events. But the spiritualized landscape could also be turned toward the opposite purpose: it could be used to *more* precisely identify biblical sites. Protestants turned to impressions, emotions, and feelings to locate the real, authentic places of biblical history. A character in Elizabeth Champney’s novel *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land* (1892), for example, uses Schaff’s scholarly writings to identify the exact spot where Moses supposedly received the law on Mount Sinai. The character felt sure it was the right spot because of the emotions provoked when she stood in it. Looking out from the location, the character remarks, “I believe it. . . . I believe it all most profoundly. The sublimity of the place is so perfectly fitted to the sublimity of the event.”²⁹⁰ Emotional responses, for Champney’s character, confirmed the veracity of a site.

Protestants also used emotional responses to guide them to the “real,” unmarked sites of biblical history. Another character in Champney’s novel refuses to visit the Holy Sepulchre—the location traditionally identified as the site of Christ’s crucifixion—because she felt “so convinced” that she had previously visited “the true site of Calvary” elsewhere.²⁹¹ The Reverend Carradine, after a lengthy discussion of the archaeological and physical evidence for Mount Calvary as the crucifixion site, concluded that one could be sure it was the real spot because of the feelings produced by standing in the location.²⁹² The Reverend Otts, similarly, identified the

²⁸⁵ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, 133.

²⁸⁶ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 137.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁸⁸ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 277.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 278.

²⁹⁰ Champney, *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land*, 122.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 158.

²⁹² Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 278.

exact location on the Mount of Olives where Jesus had wept over Jerusalem because of a “sudden and affecting impression.”²⁹³ Previous visitors’ descriptions led Otts to a smooth rock at some distance from the spot traditionally identified as where Jesus wept.²⁹⁴ This smooth rock produced in Otts the “sudden and affecting impression described in the Gospel narratives.”²⁹⁵ Otts knew it was the real place because of his emotional reaction. The lack of official identification gave this location special value to Otts: the smooth rock “is almost the only unmarked spot—undefiled or unhallowed by mosque or church, chapel or tower—left to speak for itself.”²⁹⁶

Even the soberest of travelers sometimes reported spiritually powerful, emotionally-moving encounters in the Holy Land. Such was the case for the Disciples of Christ minister John McGarvey, who recorded his supremely unsentimental reflections on his Holy Land trip in his *Lands of the Bible* (1881). McGarvey does not wax poetic about Palestine as the place where Jesus walked; the imminently present Jesus—as Field described—is, in fact, strikingly absent from McGarvey’s work. Moreover, unlike many Protestants who reported feeling near to Christ in the Holy Land, McGarvey felt alienation. For McGarvey, the Bible Lands were not a pristine, timeless, pure record of the historical world of Jesus. Instead, for McGarvey, centuries of superstitious practice had obscured the biblical past. The sites associated with Christ’s life, for McGarvey, spoke of the apostasy of Christianity—a prominent theme in Restorationist theology.

McGarvey’s skepticism about the Holy Land is particularly evident during his visits to Bethlehem and the Holy Sepulchre. At both places, McGarvey critiqued “tradition-mongers” who hoodwinked gullible pilgrims with fanciful stories.²⁹⁷ He cited Edward Robinson as a scholarly expert who shared his skepticism about Bethlehem. “We”—meaning McGarvey and rational experts like Robinson—“dismiss the tradition connected with this mass of buildings as entirely void of rational foundation,” he wrote.²⁹⁸ McGarvey still entered the buildings at Bethlehem—not out of reverence but from a pseudo-anthropological interest: he wanted to “witness the methods by which the tradition is kept alive, and by which it makes its impression on the minds of the superstitious.”²⁹⁹ His criticism extended to other holy sites in and around Bethlehem—such as the Milk Grotto, celebrated as the place where Mary’s breast milk spilled on the ground, turning the walls of the grotto white, and the Grotto of the Shepherds, where the seraphic announcement of Jesus’ birth was received.³⁰⁰ Dubious grottos such as these, McGarvey suggested, were not original to the time of Christ but had been established “after monks and hermits had begun to swarm into the Holy Land and burrow in the earth to make their miserable habitations.”³⁰¹

²⁹³ Otts was seeking the spot where Jesus wept in Luke 19:41-42 (KJV): “⁴¹And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, ⁴²Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.”

²⁹⁴ Otts, *The Fifth Gospel*, 321. Otts relied on a description from Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815-1881) to locate the “real” place where Jesus wept. Stanley was the Dean of Westminster and author of the popular volume *Sinai and Palestine: In Connection with Their History* (London: John Murray, 1856).

²⁹⁵ Otts, *The Fifth Gospel*, 322.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 174, 220.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 219–220.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 220.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 220–221.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 220.

McGarvey's critique was particularly strong at the Holy Sepulchre—a site about which many Protestant writers expressed skepticism.³⁰² He described the “tradition-mongers” who shepherded visitors through the site:

They show you the spot where Jesus was nailed to the cross. ... A cleft in the rock, about 4 1/2 feet from the foot of the cross and about *six inches deep*, is one of the clefts made by the earthquake when Jesus died, and it is said by some to reach to the centre of the earth! Between the cross and the sepulchre is shown the very spot where the body of Jesus lay as Joseph and Nicodemus were anointing it, and a little to one side is the chapel of Adam, marking the spot where this venerable patriarch was buried. It is said that the blood of Jesus flowed through the cleft in the rock above mentioned until it touched Adam's skull, when he was restored to life. In another place a hole in the wall is shown where this skull is yet preserved. You can put your hand into the hole, and you are expected to believe. ... Other things equally impossible or incredible, and almost without number, make up the wonders of this building,—the centre of an astonishing superstition, and the annual resort of tens of thousands of pilgrims.³⁰³

For McGarvey, the Holy Sepulchre was a deceitful hall of wonders, an ersatz stage for rituals that were among “the most shameless frauds ever invented in the name of religion.”³⁰⁴

McGarvey, though, had a spiritual encounter at the very end of his Holy Land trip that helped redeem what had otherwise been a somewhat disappointing journey. In light of McGarvey's negative reaction to many of Palestine's sites, it is perhaps not surprising that his numinous encounter occurred outside of Palestine and at the site of a famous New Testament indictment of false belief. It is in Athens—on McGarvey's final stop on his tour of the “Lands of the Bible”—that he has a supremely moving, spiritual encounter. McGarvey climbed Mars Hill alone so that he might stand in the spot where Paul indicted Athens' citizens for being “too superstitious,” as recorded in Acts 17:18-33. He wanted to reenact Paul's very performance: he planned “to climb this hill, stand in the very spot, as near as I could determine it, where Paul stood, seat before me by imagination the philosophers who constituted his audience, and repeat to them from the seventeenth of Acts that wonderful speech on the unknown God which I had memorized many years ago.”³⁰⁵ Upon reaching the summit of Mars Hill, McGarvey finds that his “heart was too deeply stirred for utterance.”³⁰⁶ He sits and weeps, studying the panorama before him for hours. Mars Hill pulsed with memory, as the “remembrance” of Paul's speech “crowded” around him. McGarvey—skeptical of skeptics—finally had the moving experience that had eluded him. “I had visited no spot in all my journey which impressed me more deeply,” he wrote.³⁰⁷

The conditions of McGarvey's spiritual experience on Mars Hill contrast markedly with those Holy Land sites about which he had voiced so much doubt. His visit was not mediated by a guide.³⁰⁸ There were no “tradition-mongers” with which to contend. He met no other person on

³⁰² Protestants wrote exhaustively about why the Holy Sepulchre could not be over the actual site of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. See one writer's attempt to debunk the Holy Sepulchre in Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 267–269.

³⁰³ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 174, italics original.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 174.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 604. McGarvey's admiration of Paul and his desire to stand in his footsteps of Paul reflects McGarvey's Restorationist views. One of McGarvey's most influential works was his commentary on Acts (*A Commentary on Acts of Apostles: With a Revised Version of the Text* (Cincinnati: Wrightson, 1863).

³⁰⁶ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 604.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 603.

Mars Hill, unlike the throngs of visitors at the Holy Sepulchre. In McGarvey's eyes, Mars Hill had been forgotten by tradition—the place of Paul's speech unmarked by a “mass of buildings.”³⁰⁹ Mars Hill offered McGarvey an immediate, revelatory connection with the pristine, pure gospel that he had otherwise struggled to find in the Bible Lands.

Conclusion

American Protestants saw the Holy Land as both testimony and revelation. On the one hand, they imagined the Holy Land as a witness to the biblical past. The land preserved affirmations of the Bible, be it in its destruction or its mountains, flowers, place names, or people. Its materiality affirmed the historicity of the gospel. On the other hand, the Holy Land was also a revelatory text for Protestants. The materiality of the Holy Land preserved and fostered a spiritual record. The biblical past was not dead but alive—whether in the fading moments of twilight or atop an august hill.

This chapter has described the different ways that American Protestants believed the Holy Land recorded a material gospel. The question still remains, though, as to how Protestants read this material gospel. To “acquire and appreciate” the “full significance” of the “Fifth Gospel,” Protestants had to “learn to read it in the original,” in the words of John Martin Philip Otts.³¹⁰ Chapter three takes up the question of the ritual practices to which Protestants turned to discern the meaning of the Holy Land's material gospel, as well as what they learned when they compared the book with the land. The result, as it turned out, was not always a perfect harmony.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 220.

³¹⁰ Otts, *The Fifth Gospel*, 28.

CHAPTER III

'WALK ABOUT ZION': READING A MATERIAL GOSPEL

... I entered the Jaffa Gate and found myself in Jerusalem, and, in a few moments, in the Grand New Hotel. In several minutes more I ascended the terraced roof of the building to look upon the city of our God and His Christ. I went up alone, with my heart in my throat. ... Here was suddenly arrayed before me the sights of the most amazing and important transactions in the history of the world, and, indeed, of the universe. The incarnation, the life and teaching of the Son of God, His crucifixion and death; His resurrection and ascension; and the descent of the Holy Ghost, were all, in a sense, before me. It was a sudden materialization of spiritual truths before my eyes.

— Beverly Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine* (1892)³¹¹

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

— Psalm 48:12 (KJV)

In October 1895 the periodical *The Congregationalist* announced the organization of a pilgrimage “to scenes of historic interest in England and Holland”—a return to the “mother country,” as the editors described it in the first public announcement of the trip.³¹² The tour came on the heels of the periodical’s successful “Oriental Tour” of Egypt and Palestine earlier that spring.³¹³ The England and Holland tour attracted a very positive response, garnering, in fact, more participants than the previous Oriental Tour.³¹⁴ Clergymen, businessmen, a lawyer, a physician, a teacher, and a number of prominent society women signed on for the trip—nearly all with “pronounced Puritan and Congregational sympathies,” according to the editors.³¹⁵ Special privileges awaited these pilgrims: “Doors will be opened which do not usually swing inwards to the touch of the tourist,” promised *The Congregationalist*.³¹⁶

As a memento of the England and Holland tour, the periodical issued *The Book of The Pilgrimage* (1896), containing the trip itinerary, pilgrim biographies, narrative descriptions, and photographs. Medieval motifs abound in the volume. “New World Pilgrims at Old World Shrines” reads a banner in an elaborate, calligraphed scroll across the title page (Figure 3.0). An epigraph from Sir Walter Scott’s novel *Ivanhoe* speaks of a pilgrim’s receipt of alms (Figure 3.1). Elsewhere, the book utilizes pilgrimage imagery of a different vein: illustrations juxtapose the Protestant pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock with *The Congregationalist* pilgrims on their reverse pilgrimage, returning to England and Holland (Figures 3.2 and 3.3).

³¹¹ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 243–244.

³¹² *The Book of The Pilgrimage: A Record of the Congregationalists Pilgrimage to England and Holland* (Boston: Office of the Congregationalist, 1896), 17.

³¹³ “The Congregationalist’s Oriental Tour,” 2; “The Oriental Tour and the Pictures,” *The Congregationalist* LXXX, no. 4 (January 24, 1895): 1.

³¹⁴ *The Book of The Pilgrimage*, 18.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 20–21.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.



Figure 3.0. Title page of *The Book of The Pilgrimage: A Record of the Congregationalists Pilgrimage to England and Holland* (1896) illustrated by L. S. Ispen.



Figure 3.1. Stylized epigraph from *The Book of The Pilgrimage* (1896) by Ispen.



Figures 3.2 and 3.3. Illustrations of Puritan pilgrims in 1620 (left) and 1896 pilgrimage journey via steamship (right) by Ispen. From *The Book of The Pilgrimage* (1896), pages 9 and 10.

The iconography of *The Book of The Pilgrimage* illustrates the nexus of competing ideals within American Protestant pilgrimage during the second half of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, Protestants imagined themselves as following in the footsteps of medieval pilgrims. On the other, American pilgrims saw their journeys as distinctly modern endeavors. They were “New World Pilgrims” enjoying a “pleasanter pilgrimage than of scallop-shell and staff and shoon,” as the words to a poem in *The Book of The Pilgrimage* read.³¹⁷ American Protestant Holy Land pilgrimage in the second half of the nineteenth century was riveted by contradictory tensions: Protestants saw it as an ancient practice, unchanged since the earliest days of Christianity; a modern practice, made possible by new technological advances; a superstitious and condemnable Catholic practice; and an appropriately Protestant activity. American Protestants wanted to both be and not be pilgrims. This chapter explores this paradoxical quality of nineteenth-century American Protestant pilgrimage. The first section describes a range of ritual acts in which American Protestants engaged in the Holy Land, with a particular focus on how they perceived their practice of pilgrimage as distinct from that of Catholics. The second section focuses on one particular ritual act of Protestant pilgrimage—that of walking. Protestant pilgrims placed a great emphasis on walking the Holy Land, which this chapter argues arises from the material gospel theology: they regarded walking as peculiarly suited to “reading” the material gospel of the Holy Land. The final section, then, turns to how Protestants reconciled what they discerned from the Holy Land’s material gospel and what they read in their Bibles.

Protestant Pilgrims

The medieval age experienced a revival in the nineteenth-century³¹⁸—and along with it, pilgrimage. New churches in the Gothic style graced America’s skylines, like New York City’s

³¹⁷ Ibid., 26.

³¹⁸ Michael Alexander, *Medievalism: The Middle Ages in Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Florence S. Boos, *History and Community: Essays in Victorian Medievalism* (New York: Garland, 1992).

towering Trinity Church, built in 1846.³¹⁹ Crusades literature attracted new audiences.³²⁰ And organizations such as the Palestine Pilgrim's Text Society recovered a lost history of pilgrimage. Founded in London in the 1880s, the Society translated and published historical pilgrimage accounts—including those of the fourth-century anonymous Pilgrim of Bordeaux, Saint Silvia of Aquitania, Saint Paula, the twelfth-century Russian Abbott Daniel, and a fourteenth-century guidebook to Jerusalem. The Society claimed such pilgrimage accounts were “indispensable” to the modern student interested in the geography, topography, and history of the Holy Land.³²¹

An incredible flourishing of local, European Roman Catholic shrines also occurred in the nineteenth century—a pilgrimage movement propelled by lay devotion, as some scholars have argued.³²² This pilgrimage movement took some nineteenth-century observers by surprise. In 1873, after a summer of widely-reported mass pilgrimages to the French town of Paray-le-Monial, *The New York Times* remarked that the “assemblage of thousands of pilgrims around saintly shrines had been relegated to ... some historical limbo, and yet we have Paray-le-Monial, Lourdes, and La Salette”—all booming Catholic shrines in France.³²³ Reflecting upon the 1873 summer of pilgrimage, the British monthly magazine *Catholic Progress* argued that England had seen the birth of “modern pilgrimage”—a new pilgrimage born of “the age of railways and steamers, of the century of locomotion.” Pilgrimage was “no mere mediæval institution” declared the magazine.³²⁴

This revival of pilgrimage reignited old, familiar debates about pilgrimage—particularly whether it was a practice that Protestants should avoid. The medieval pilgrimage romanticized by Victorians had, after all, been a defining issue of the Reformation. “All pilgrimages should be dropped,” declared Martin Luther in 1520.³²⁵ And John Calvin called relics, often associated with pilgrimage, an “open abomination” that led people to engage in the “execrable sacrilege of worshipping dead and insensible creatures, instead of the one living God.”³²⁶ Anti-Catholic rhetoric appeared in American press coverage of the European pilgrimage sites attracting great

³¹⁹ “Trinity’s Bicentenary,” *The New York Times*, May 2, 1897, sec. Supplement, 2–6.

³²⁰ Elizabeth Siberry, *The New Crusaders: Images of the Crusades in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000); Inga Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur: The Arthurian Legends In Victorian Culture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2005). An interesting example of American crusades literature from the end of the nineteenth century is Elia Wilkinson Peattie’s *With Scrip and Staff: A Tale of the Children’s Crusade* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph and Co., 1891). Peattie’s young adult novel brought to life the ill-fated, twelfth-century Children’s Crusade. Its bleak story served as the backdrop upon which Peattie, a journalist and novelist, painted a tale of adventure, death, and survival.

³²¹ Palestine Pilgrims’ Text Society (London, England), *General Index to the Library of the Palestine Pilgrims’ Text Society* (London: Palestine Pilgrims’ Text Society, 1897), 103–106.

³²² Thomas A. Kselman, *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1983).

³²³ “The New Crusade,” *The New York Times*, August 20, 1873, 4. For a nineteenth-century account of the summer of 1873 at Paray-le-Monial, see William S. Walsh, *Curiosities of Popular Customs and of Rites, Ceremonies, Observances, and Miscellaneous Antiquities* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1897), 777. In 1886 a British writer noted that the 1873 Paray-le-Monial pilgrimages had “brought the subject of pilgrimages in general homes to all circles of English society” (Edward Walford, *The Pilgrim at Home* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1886), 11).

³²⁴ Young Men’s Catholic Association, “The Pilgrimage to Paray-Le-Monial,” *Catholic Progress* II, no. 21 (September 1873): 193.

³²⁵ As quoted in Graham Tomlin, “Protestants and Pilgrimage,” in *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Craig Bartholomew and Fred Hughes (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2004), 111. As Tomlin notes, critiques of pilgrimage did not originate with Luther and Calvin and had a long history in the Christian tradition.

³²⁶ John Calvin, *Treatise on Relics*, trans. Valerian Krasinski (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2009), 54.

numbers. *The New York Times*, for example, reported the “loss” of a member of St. Martin’s Protestant Episcopal Church in Brooklyn while on pilgrimage to Lourdes—“lost,” that is, to Roman Catholicism. The confusion of the “Recreant”—the apostate, in other words—arose, the article suggested, from the fact that services at St. Martin’s were “conducted with elaborate ceremony” and were more Catholic than Protestant.³²⁷ Of course such a believer would be confused in an age of “monster pilgrimages and morbid manifestations of pietistic frenzy, of revivals of the mysteries of the sacred heart, and of the miracles of half-crazy nuns,” *The New York Times* suggested.³²⁸

Debates over pilgrimage took on a particular virulence in England, which had a tradition of local pilgrimage shrines that had been charged sites in the upheavals of the Reformation. Debates raged in the English press particularly around the Paray-le-Monial pilgrimages in the 1870s. *Catholic Progress* observed that “[t]he revival of pilgrimages appears to excite the ire and derision of our Protestant fellow-countrymen.” Protestants accused Catholics of “restoring mediæval superstitious practices” and revivifying a primitive act ill-suited to modern life.³²⁹ Catholics attacked the English press for what they saw as biased portrayals of pilgrimage. Thomas William Marshall (1818-1877), a convert to Roman Catholicism, for example, criticized the English press for reflecting Protestants’ hypocritical attitudes toward pilgrimage. Protestants disliked pilgrimage but loved John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, observed Marshall—quite ironic, in his opinion, since he claimed that Bunyan’s work, typically regarded as “so purely English and Protestant,” was actually a translation of a fifteenth-century Catholic text.³³⁰

The renewed debate did not always break down along the lines of Catholic and pro-pilgrimage versus Protestant and anti-pilgrimage. Some, for example, sought to actively reframe pilgrimage as a devotional practice of value to all Christians. A particularly striking example of such an attempt is found in *The Pilgrim at Home* (1886) by Edward Walford (1823-1897), an English historian, translator, and travel author.³³¹ The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, a British, Anglican organization and prolific publisher of religious literature, published Walford’s tract on pilgrimage in both New York and London. Walford in *The Pilgrim at Home* sought to disassociate pilgrimage and Catholicism. “It is generally assumed, though very rashly, that pilgrimages are an institution of the Roman Catholic Church. Nothing can be farther from the truth,” wrote Walford.³³² He described pilgrimage as a universal practice, not limited to any particular religion or denomination. Visiting pilgrimage sites gave life and reality to the historical past and engaged the natural human inclination to associate people and places. Walford offered an illustrious list of pilgrims from history, including Herodotus and Alexander the Great. Even the Bible had its pilgrims, he claimed: Walford speculated that Noah might have returned to Mount Ararat and Adam and Eve to the Garden of Eden after their expulsion.³³³

³²⁷ “From Lourdes the Story Is: St. Martin’s, Brooklyn, Said To Have Lost a Member,” *The New York Times*, September 16, 1894, 12.

³²⁸ “The New Crusade,” 4.

³²⁹ Young Men’s Catholic Association, “The Pilgrimage to Paray-Le-Monial,” 193.

³³⁰ Thomas William M. Marshall, *Protestant Journalism* (London: Burns and Oates, 1874), 387.

³³¹ Walford was editor of *The Antiquarian Magazine and Bibliographer*, a magazine devoted to antiquities with an emphasis on Great Britain. He also translated early Christian texts and wrote travel literature (see Evagrius Scholasticus, *A History of the Church in Six Books, from A.D. 431 to A.D. 594*, trans. Edward Walford (London: S. Bagster and Sons, 1846); Edward Walford, *Tourist’s Guide to Essex, with Some Preliminary Remarks as to Its Early History, Antiquities, Worthies, Etc., Etc.* (London: Edward Stanford, 1882)).

³³² Walford, *The Pilgrim at Home*, 11–12.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

Walford even articulated a positive view of relics, objects often regarded by Protestants with the utmost of suspicion. He described “the veneration or love for relics” to be a virtuous and natural human tendency. Relics, including “portraits, images, autographs, books, bones, clothes, and hair,” impart a reality to the past, he argued.³³⁴ Walford criticized the discomfort of non-Catholics with relics when “the most enlightened of men” routinely venerated objects associated with great leaders, authors, and artists.³³⁵ What else is Madame Tussaud’s than “a gigantic Reliquary?” he asked.³³⁶ It would be illogical, according to Walford, to venerate the relics of great people of history—like Shakespeare, Milton, Burns, or Scott—while neglecting those of Christianity.

While attitudes like Walford’s were part of the renewed cultural and theological dialogue around pilgrimage, American Protestants often still resisted the idea that their practice of pilgrimage was comparable to that of Catholics. The growth of the material gospel theology in the second half of the nineteenth century coincided with periods of intense anti-Catholicism in America, fueled, in part, by new waves of immigrants arriving on America’s shores. As a privileged echelon of Protestants journeyed eastward across the Atlantic to see the Holy Land, they crossed paths with scores of European immigrants traveling westward to America. Unsurprisingly, in a period during which nativism could be quite virulent, anti-Catholic sentiments are easily found in Protestant travelogues. Protestants critiqued priests, monks, superstition, fables, and formalism, engaging the familiar language and targets of anti-Roman Catholic discourse. DeHass, for example, criticized “ignorant, unprincipled priests and monks, who practice all kinds of deception on the credulous” and who profited from the sale of sacred items.³³⁷ Schaff reported being “pained and shocked” by the “base superstition and empty formalism which meet us everywhere” on the approach to Jerusalem.³³⁸

Protestants often targeted Roman Catholic pilgrims’ love of the pope and their gullibility, as seen in Robert Morris’s fictionalized *Youthful Explorers in Bible Lands* (1870). John, one of the book’s young narrators, describes Catholic pilgrims as seeming “to believe in the Pope more than they do in God.”³³⁹ Catholic guides also bore the brunt of Protestant critique. John’s 12 year-old brother, Elliot, criticizes a Roman Catholic guide he overhears in the Garden of Gethsemane. The guide tells a group of pilgrims “all manner of stories,” purporting to identify the precise locations of various events that took place in the garden:

‘This is the spot where Peter’s eyes were heavy.’ ‘This is the spot where James could no longer keep awake.’ ‘This is the spot where John lay down and slept.’ [‘]Here the Blessed Saviour withdrew from his disciples about a stone’s cast and knelt down and prayed.’ ‘Here the drops of sweat fell like blood to the ground.’ ‘This is the spot where one of them smote the servant of the High Priest and cut off his right ear.’ ‘This is the spot where Judas betrayed the Son of Man with a kiss.’ ‘This is the spot where the young man left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.’³⁴⁰

Elliot expresses incredulity toward the guide, who “pretended to identify as exactly as one of the spots on the sun that the astronomers tell us so much about, lately.” Another guide from the Greek Church later tells Elliot that “the Catholic *stories* are *lies*.”³⁴¹

³³⁴ Walford, *The Pilgrim at Home*, 16.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

³³⁷ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 138.

³³⁸ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 122.

³³⁹ Morris, *Youthful Explorers*, 82.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 183–184.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 184, italics original. This passage on Roman Catholics remained essentially unchanged when Morris republished the book for an adult audience four years later. See Robert Morris et al., *Bible*

To Protestant pilgrims, the Holy Land presented a vastly different religious tapestry than that which they knew in America. The familiar divisions of Protestant versus Catholic or Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians proved far less applicable in the Holy Land. In an effort to explain this unfamiliar world, Protestant writers constructed hierarchies of religions and denominations for their readers—and Roman Catholics still frequently ended up on the unfavorable end of these hierarchies. In *Youthful Explorers*, for example, while the Greek Church, like their Roman Catholic brethren, is charged with having “mixed so many human inventions with the simple religion of Jesus,” Greek Christians, nonetheless, still receive a more charitable treatment.³⁴² Elliot describes the Greek Church as “a larger and more intelligent body here than the Catholics.”³⁴³ Both Catholics and Muslims were “superstitious”—but John suggests that a Muslim believer was preferable to a Catholic. He cites the popular travel author Bayard Taylor’s observation that “a pious Moslem is a better man than a bigoted Catholic.”³⁴⁴ *Youthful Explorers* left little doubt about how it believed readers should regard the Holy Land’s complicated and unfamiliar tapestry of religious identities.³⁴⁵

Many American Protestants believed what ultimately distinguished them from Catholic pilgrims was their interior orientation toward pilgrimage sites. A common refrain in Protestant travelogues was that Catholic pilgrims showed devotion at such sites, while Protestants did not. Consul DeHass reassured Protestant travelers that they did not show devotion merely by visiting sites.³⁴⁶ Do not “reject the real because superstition has invested it with ridiculous absurdities and falsehoods,” he wrote.³⁴⁷ Another common refrain was that Catholics unquestionably believed the stories told about sacred sites, while Protestants questioned them. Protestants’ skepticism, in other words, differentiated them from Catholic pilgrims, as seen in *Youthful Explorers*. Literature scholar Brian Yothers suggests that American Protestants perfected “skeptical piety” in the Holy Land, finding “themselves situated in the role of skeptics and scoffers almost as often as they [found] themselves in the role of humble worshippers.”³⁴⁸ The Presbyterian minister Henry Martyn Field distinguished between those Christians who believed unquestioningly in the authenticity of a sacred site and those who questioned the veracity of the site but nonetheless were moved by the long tradition of devotion that had been carried out there. Field described one friend who “turns away from holy shrines with an instinct of aversion”³⁴⁹—but Field still found reason to admire sites like the Holy Sepulchre. “[T]he tradition of the whole Christian world for sixteen hundred years has accepted [the Holy Sepulchre] as the place of burial of our Lord,” which made it “at least a historical monument of the deepest interest,” wrote Field.³⁵⁰ Whether a place was the real site of a biblical event was, for Field, less important than what had later occurred there. “The association makes [a site]

Witnesses from Bible Lands: Verified in the Researches of the Explorers and Correspondents of the American Holy-Land Expedition, Presenting a Faithful Account of the Scenery, Ruins, Productions, Customs, Antiquities, and Traditions of Bible Lands. Joppa and Jerusalem. (New York: American Holy-Land Exploration, 1874), 156.

³⁴² Morris, *Youthful Explorers*, 123.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 185.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 123. Taylor wrote many travel accounts, including one on the Holy Land titled *The Lands of the Saracen: Or, Pictures of Palestine, Asia Minor, Sicily, and Spain* (New York: G. P. Putnam & Company, 1855).

³⁴⁵ While attacks on Catholics are common in *Youthful Explorers*, there were conciliatory moments. Elliot, for example, believed that the ascetic life of some Roman Catholic priests was praiseworthy (*Ibid.*, 82).

³⁴⁶ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 124.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 138.

³⁴⁸ Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land*, 19.

³⁴⁹ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, 36.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

sacred; it has been consecrated by the faith and hope, by the tears and prayers, of generations,” he wrote. Because of this sacred history, Field described entering the Holy Sepulchre with “a feeling of reverence, if not of devotion.” At the same time, he maintained his distance and separation from those who came there to worship: while they kneeled and covered their heads, he stood, his head uncovered.³⁵¹ They participated; he observed.³⁵²

While Protestants may have sought to distinguish themselves from other pilgrims, the ritual acts in which they engaged in the Holy Land remained quite similar to not only Roman Catholic pilgrims but centuries upon centuries of pilgrims. Nineteenth-century American Protestant pilgrims, for example, placed a great emphasis on reading scripture in the locations where biblical events occurred—a practice found in the earliest Holy Land pilgrimage accounts. The fourth-century pilgrimage account of the Galician woman named Egeria documents her profound desire to hear the scripture in the place where it occurred. “Indeed, whenever we arrived anywhere, I myself always wanted the Bible passage to be read to us,” her account reads.³⁵³ Similarly, the travelogue of Beverly Carradine relates numerous occasions of the Methodist minister reading or reciting scripture in specific locations. He sat at the edge of Jacob’s Well and read Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman there, as recorded in John 4; in the ruins of Capernaum he read John 6, which contains a sermon Jesus gave near this same spot; and on the Mount of Beatitudes he “repeated aloud some precious passages” from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5.³⁵⁴ For Carradine, reading the scripture in the location where it had occurred gave a new vitality to the biblical account. Reflecting on reading John 4 at Jacob’s Well, Carradine wrote, “How vividly the scene arose before me—the wondering woman; the wearied, patient, teaching Christ.”³⁵⁵ Reading scripture in the location brought, for Carradine, a new, intimately experienced, historical reality to that old familiar story.

Hymn singing was another popular pilgrimage activity that from a ritual perspective connected Protestants with other pilgrims. One of the hymns Protestants most often reported singing was “O Galilee, Sweet Galilee.”³⁵⁶ “We drove from Nazareth to Tiberias over the very road that Christ probably trod many times and when, from one of the hills as we were approaching [the Sea of Galilee], we caught the first glimpse of the clear blue of that beautiful sea, with one accord the people in all the carriages broke into singing [‘O Galilee, Sweet Galilee’],” recalled a young female traveler.³⁵⁷ The Presbyterian minister Robert Morris (1818-

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab suggest that the tendency of nineteenth-century Protestant Holy Land travelers to observe and not participate in religious ceremonies is one marker that distinguishes what they call “modern tourist pilgrims” from pilgrims in their “A New Kind of Pilgrimage,” 138.

³⁵³ As quoted in Egeria and John Wilkinson, *Egeria’s Travels*, Third Edition (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, 1999), 111.

³⁵⁴ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 359, 387, 395.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 359–360.

³⁵⁶ For accounts of Holy Land travelers singing “O Galilee, Sweet Galilee” see, for example: Robert A. Edwards, *From Joppa to Mount Hermon: A Series of Narrative Discourses on the Holy Land, Delivered in the Church of St. Matthias, Philadelphia, during the Autumn and Winter of 1889-1890*, Second (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1891), 233; Wenger, *Six Months in Bible Lands*, 177; and Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 385.

³⁵⁷ Laura E. Packard, “The Sea of Galilee,” *The Jewish Era* II, no. 4 (October 15, 1902): 114. *The Jewish Era* was a journal of the Chicago Hebrew Mission, an organization founded in 1887 for the evangelization of Jews in America. For more on *The Jewish Era*, see Yaakov Shalom Ariel, *Evangelizing the Chosen People: Missions to the Jews in America, 1880-2000* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 25.

1888), a celebrated poet, penned the words of the hymn.³⁵⁸ Once set to music, the hymn earned “instant and national fame.”³⁵⁹ Its lyrics read:

Each cooing dove and sighing bough,
That makes the eve so blessed to me,
Has something far diviner now,
It bears me back to Galilee.

O Galilee, sweet Galilee,
Where Jesus loved so much to be,
O Galilee, blue Galilee,
Come sing thy song again to me.

Each flow'ry glen and mossy dell,
Where happy birds in song agree,
Thro' sunny morn the praises tell
Of sights and sounds in Galilee.

And when I read the thrilling lore
Of Him Who walk'd upon the sea,
I long, oh, how I long once more
To follow Him in Galilee.³⁶⁰

Everyday sights—a “cooing dove” or “sighing bough”—remind the narrator of seeing Galilee long after the fact. The narrator wishes to be born back there—to see it “once more.” For many American Protestants who sang Morris’s hymn while overlooking Lake Galilee, they were finally seeing a place that they had long sang about remembering.

American Protestants also collected Holy Land mementos, like centuries of pilgrims who returned home with *brandea* and other relics.³⁶¹ American Protestants tended to gravitate toward mementos from the natural landscape, such as the Methodist minister Beverly Carradine, who settled for a thorny bush from the Plain of Sharon when he could not find the more coveted rose of Sharon.³⁶² During his Holy Land trip, the Reverend James Wideman Lee wrote a letter to every family in his St. Louis congregation; inside the letters he enclosed flowers

³⁵⁸ Morris’s success as a poet led to his coronation as the “Poet Laureate of Masonry” in 1884, a title previously held by Robert Burns (Morris, *The Poetry of Freemasonry*, xiii–xiv).

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 316.

³⁶⁰ Words as printed in *Christ in Song*, 100th Anniversary Edition ([Hagerstown, Md.]: Review and Herald, 2008), 247.

³⁶¹ Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab in “A New Kind of Pilgrimage” argue that nineteenth-century Protestant pilgrims’ collection of souvenirs was, in fact, quite distinctive from the collection of relics by traditional pilgrims. They suggest that “modern tourist pilgrims ... acquired mementos of the holy sites, but they regarded these less as sacred objects and more as simple souvenirs” (142). For such tourist pilgrims, these “mementos ... were no different from the souvenirs they collected elsewhere during their visit” (142). Protestant travelogues, unfortunately, do not provide much insight into how Protestant regarded and used Holy Land mementos after they returned home—information that would be useful in determining whether the objects Protestants collected were more similar to souvenirs or holy relics. What is revealed by Protestant travelogues is that many travelers treated objects from the Holy Land with a great deal of care and reverence, certainly different from ordinary objects—reason enough, perhaps, to question attempts to draw a firm line of difference between traditional pilgrims who collected relics and modern tourist pilgrims who collected souvenirs.

³⁶² Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 236.

from the Garden of Gethsemane.³⁶³ Others sought much larger souvenirs. Thomas DeWitt Talmage—the minister who proclaimed finding a “new Bible” in the Holy Land—collected rocks during his 1889 Holy Land trip for his newly constructed Brooklyn Tabernacle, including a stone from the River Jordan for its baptismal font, one from Mount Calvary for its cornerstone, and one from Mars Hill in Athens to be used for its pulpit table.³⁶⁴ Some found pilgrims’ rapacious thirst for mementos distasteful. Mark Twain, for example, deemed his travel companions vandals for filling “their pockets full of specimens broken from the ruins,” including Noah’s tomb, the house of Judas and Ananias in Damascus, and any “old arches ... that Jesus looked upon in the flesh.”³⁶⁵

There was also a hot market for Holy Land mementos back home in America. In 1867 the Reverend Morris, author of “O Galilee, Sweet Galilee,” crisscrossed the northern United States visiting more than 100 Masonic lodges to petition them for funds to visit the Holy Land. Morris promised those who supported his “Masonic exploration” a collection of mementos in exchange for their monetary pledge. For a pledge of \$10 a supporter would receive 150 objects from the Holy Land, including building stones, shells, agates, ancient coins, salt, plants, corn, wine, and oil.³⁶⁶ Thousands of Morris’s Masonic brethren—3,782 brethren, to be exact—gave Morris nearly \$10,000 for his 1868 trip.³⁶⁷ Medieval Europe’s famous trade in holy relics had a robust counterpart in nineteenth-century America, revealing, yet again, far more continuity between pilgrims and pilgrimage practices than nineteenth-century Protestants would have preferred to believe.³⁶⁸

Walking as Embodied Reading

Aside from reading scripture, singing hymns, and collecting mementos, one specific practice featured prominently in American Protestants’ ritual engagement of the Holy Land during the second half of the nineteenth century: the idea of walking in the footsteps of Christ and his apostles—whether literally or imaginatively. Concluding his Holy Land travelogue, the Baptist minister David Austin Randall reflected on having “walked in the paths consecrated by the feet of our glorious Son of God.”³⁶⁹ Field, the editor of *The Evangelist*, described his *Among the Holy Hills* (1884) as a work that “follows closely in the footsteps of our Lord”—tracing his life “not merely in the streets of Jerusalem, but through Samaria and Galilee, along the lake shore and on the mountain side.”³⁷⁰ Likewise, *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee* (1894) promised to take readers on a photographic tour of where Jesus had walked.³⁷¹ The popularity

³⁶³ Lee, *The Geography of Genius*, xv.

³⁶⁴ Thomas DeWitt Talmage, *Trumpet Peals: A Collection of Timely and Eloquent Extracts from the Sermons of the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D.*, ed. L. C. Lockwood (New York: Bromfield & Company, 1890), 477.

³⁶⁵ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 471.

³⁶⁶ Morris, *Freemasonry in the Holy Land*, 14–15. Morris was later involved with the American Holy Land Exploration Society’s sale of “The Century Cabinet”—which contained 100 “Specimens” from the Holy Land. See the appendix of Morris et al., *Bible Witnesses* for a description of the Century Cabinet and examples of the leaflets that accompanied the objects.

³⁶⁷ Morris, *Freemasonry in the Holy Land*, 14–15.

³⁶⁸ On medieval relics, see Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

³⁶⁹ Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, 352.

³⁷⁰ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, v.

³⁷¹ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*. See also Daniel March, *Walks with Jesus: Or, Days of the Son of Man* (Philadelphia: P. W. Ziegler & Co., 1888). For a nineteenth-century British Anglican

of the walking motif extended beyond the Holy Land, appearing in popular religious literature, such as Charles Monroe Sheldon's blockbuster success *In His Steps* (1897).³⁷² It appeared in hymns, too. "'Tis so sweet to walk with Jesus, Step by step and day by day; Stepping in His very footprints, Walking with Him all the way," read the words of an 1897 hymn by the Canadian theologian and minister Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919).³⁷³

Like so many Protestant pilgrimage practices, a desire to walk in the footsteps of Christ was not new. Devotional reflection on the path of Christ—from his birth to resurrection—and, especially, the feet of Christ, was a common pilgrimage motif, particularly in the medieval period.³⁷⁴ John Bunyan's seventeenth-century *Pilgrims Progress* spoke of the desire to walk where Jesus walked: "I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too."³⁷⁵ The walking motif also continues to be important in contemporary American Protestant pilgrimage.³⁷⁶

Walking as a ritual pilgrimage practice, though, appears to have acquired a new importance in the second half of the nineteenth century. There are several religious and cultural explanations for why this occurred. It likely reflects the predominance of what Stephen Prothero calls a "Jesus-friendly Christianity" in nineteenth-century America.³⁷⁷ The Congregationalist minister Daniel March sought in his *Walks with Jesus* (1888) to "set forth the perfectly human reality of the life led by the Son of God."³⁷⁸ Walking with Jesus aligned with the idea of a human and relatable savior with whom a Christian could have a personal relationship. The idea of walking as a spiritual practice that forged a connection between the walker and nature had also been popularized by many nineteenth-century writers, including Henry David Thoreau.³⁷⁹ Good walking, advised Thoreau in his famous June 1862 essay for *The Atlantic Monthly*, requires *sauntering*—a word whose origins Thoreau traced to the medieval term for those who sought charity to go *à la Sainte Terre*, or to the Holy Land.³⁸⁰ Moreover, the

meditation on the footsteps of Christ, see Philip Bennett Power, *The Feet of Jesus in Life, Death, Resurrection and Glory* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1872).

³⁷² Charles M. Sheldon, *In His Steps* (Chicago: The Henneberry Company, 1897).

³⁷³ Adam Geibel, R. Frank Lehman, and H. C. Lincoln, eds., *Consecrated Hymns: For Use in Devotional Meetings, Young People's Societies, the Sunday School* (Philadelphia: Geibel & Lehman, 1902), no. 86. For a recent biography of Simpson, see Bernie A. Van De Walle, *The Heart of the Gospel: A. B. Simpson, the Fourfold Gospel, and Late Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Theology* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2009).

³⁷⁴ The writings of the twelfth-century Cistercian Aelred of Rievaulx offer a particularly good example of medieval devotion to Christ's feet. Thomas H. Bestul discusses one of Aelred's meditations on the feet of Christ in William F. Pollard and Robert Boenig, eds., *Mysticism and Spirituality in Medieval England* (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 1997). "Kiss, kiss, kiss, blessed sinner, kiss those dearest, sweetest, most beautiful feet . . . Kiss, I say, those feet, pressure your fortunate lips to them. . . Water the most sacred feet of my Savior, of my Champion," Aelred wrote (as quoted in *Ibid.*, 16). Bestul notes that Aelred instructed readers in visually meditating on the whole life of Christ, beginning with Mary on the way to Bethlehem and ending with Christ's Ascension (16).

³⁷⁵ As quoted in Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Footsteps of the Master* (New York: Forts, Howard & Hubert, 1876). Stowe chose this quote as the epigraph for her work.

³⁷⁶ Hillary Kaell, *Walking Where Jesus Walked: American Christians and Holy Land Pilgrimage* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).

³⁷⁷ Stephen R. Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003), 48.

³⁷⁸ March, *Walks with Jesus*, 6.

³⁷⁹ For a collection of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century essays on walking, including by Thoreau, see Edward Fuller Bigelow, *Walking: A Fine Art, as Practised by Naturalists and Explained by Original Contributions to This Volume, and by Quotations from the Published Works of Those Who Love to Dally along Country Lanes* (Salem, Mass.: S. E. Cassino & Son, 1907).

³⁸⁰ Henry David Thoreau, "Walking," *The Atlantic Monthly* 9, no. 56 (June 1862): 657.

burgeoning nature study movement encouraged Americans to wander and study nature for themselves.³⁸¹ And walking as a health practice reflected a preoccupation with bodily wellness in late nineteenth-century America. Popular advice manuals expounded on how to walk, both from a mental and physical standpoint. Walk with nothing in the hand, breathe through the nose, rest often, and “[r]emember the danger of standing or sitting quietly when in a perspiration,” advised an 1886 guide for young women.³⁸²

In addition to these factors, the material gospel theology also helps account for this renewed attention to walking. Protestants saw the Holy Land as a book; they ultimately needed a way to read and transcribe the Holy Land. Walking became that practice. As Michel de Certeau writes in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), “‘Trajectory’ suggests a movement, but it also involves a plane projection, a flattening out. It is a *transcription*.”³⁸³ Walking transformed the landscape into a linear set of interconnected sites, not unlike turning the pages of a book. Protestants emphasized the sensual aspects of walking: how it placed them in intimate proximity with the landscape’s biblical record and what the practice allowed them to hear, see, feel, and even taste. Walking, in short, resonated with Protestants’ textually-informed imagining of the Holy Land as a material gospel.

Walking the Holy Land was a highly structured practice. At almost every point of travel there was an *ordo peregrinationis*—a ritual pathway—that structured Protestants’ movements through the Holy Land.³⁸⁴ Long-standing traditions shaped these patterns, as well as more mundane factors, such as the availability of guides, travel pathways, and time constraints. Within regions or cities, Protestants often saw sites in a particular order—an order reinforced by the services of guides and written guidebooks.³⁸⁵ As Nicole Chareyron notes in her study of medieval pilgrimage to Jerusalem, “Visiting the holy places was not left to individual whim and was by no means a random or free exploration.”³⁸⁶ The same held true for nineteenth-century pilgrims.

³⁸¹ The highpoint of the material gospel theology in the nineteenth-century roughly coincides with the rise of the nature study movement. Kevin C. Armitage dates the “scholastic nature study” birth to the 1870s, its “gaining momentum in the 1890s,” and its achieving widespread influence on American culture and educational curriculum by the first decade of the 1900s (*The Nature Study Movement: The Forgotten Popularizer of America’s Conservation Ethic* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 15, 4.).

³⁸² Annie H. Ryder, *Hold up Your Heads, Girls! Helps for Girls, in School and Out* (Boston: D. Lothrop and Company, 1893), 41–42.

³⁸³ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), xviii, italics added. De Certeau notes the similarities between walking and speech acts. He describes walking as having a “triple ‘enunciative’ function” whereby “it is a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial-acting out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies *relations* among differentiated positions” (97-98, emphasis original).

³⁸⁴ The *ordo peregrinationis* had long been a feature of Holy Land pilgrimage. In particular, in medieval Jerusalem the Franciscans played a significant role in structuring the experience of pilgrims. The Franciscans were charged with protecting both sacred sites and visiting pilgrims and they ensured that pilgrims observed a ritual order during their visit to Jerusalem (Nicole Chareyron, *Pilgrims to Jerusalem in the Middle Ages*, trans. Donald W. Wilson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 84). On the medieval Franciscan *ordo peregrinationis*, see also Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099-1187)* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 96–105.

³⁸⁵ Doron Bar and Kobi Cohen-Hattab visually demonstrate the extent to which guidebooks shaped pilgrim itineraries by mapping the itinerary suggested by a Thomas Cook guidebook and the itinerary followed by Mark Twain. The paths show significant overlap. See Bar and Cohen-Hattab, “A New Kind of Pilgrimage,” 136.

³⁸⁶ Chareyron, *Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, 84.

Protestant accounts prescribed different types of walks for Holy Land visitors—each with their advantages. Many insisted that the first walk a visitor should make upon arrival in a new city was around it—particularly along a city’s walls, if possible. According to Presbyterian minister Henry Martyn Field, visitors to Jerusalem should follow the directive of Psalm 48:12 (KJV): “Walk about Zion, and go round about her” Field narrated a walk around the walls of Jerusalem—a “circuit of the city,” as he described it, to give visitors an overview of Jerusalem’s topography.³⁸⁷ Others preferred walking to a point that afforded them a view over the city, as opposed to circumnavigating it. The Methodist minister Beverly Carradine climbed to the roof of the Grand New Hotel upon arriving in Jerusalem “to look upon the city of our God and his Christ.” Seeing important sites from Christ’s life in a single panorama deeply moved Carradine. “I bowed my head on the railing before me and wept as I rarely weep in my life,” he wrote.³⁸⁸ Ada Goodrich-Freer in her *Inner Jerusalem* (1904) introduced readers to Jerusalem’s topography from an imagined balcony. “Let us pass to the balcony,” she invited readers. Standing on that balcony, Goodrich-Freer described Jerusalem’s topography arrayed before her readers. Jerusalem’s undulating terrain yielded itself to an all-encompassing view such that a balcony was not even needed: “from any point slightly elevated the Holy City presents a compact though outspread panorama,” Goodrich-Freer observed.³⁸⁹ This initial walk—whether around the city or to a point overlooking it—made the city a manageable, possessable, text-like object.³⁹⁰ De Certeau argues that the all-encompassing view “transforms the bewitching world ... into a text that lies before one’s eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god,” he writes.³⁹¹

Protestants also recommended outdoor walks, away from cities and people. “Walk with me now along this broad plain,” the Ohio minister David Austin Randall invited readers while describing the plain of Rahah on the Sinai Peninsula.³⁹² As described in chapter 2, Protestants often regarded the natural landscape as a witness *par excellence* to biblical history. Panoramas of natural landscapes populate Holy Land works, giving viewers the impression of traipsing through the countryside. In *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee*, a photograph of the austere Judean Mountains dominate a page (Figure 3.4). In another, the silent plains of Sodom and Gomorrah stretch before the viewer, overlooked by a muleteer (Figure 3.5). Through the juxtaposition of landscape images and lengthy captions describing historical events, the authors of *Earthly Footsteps*, argues John Davis, sought to make landscapes “speak with supposed certainty about the historical events ... that they formerly witnessed.”³⁹³ Walking in the outdoors placed Protestants in close contact with what many regarded as the most reliable evidences of biblical times. Jesus might not recognize modern Jerusalem—but surely the mountains looked the same, Protestants reasoned.

³⁸⁷ Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, 11. Psalm 48:12 was popular among nineteenth-century Protestant writers. See also Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, 44–45; Isaac Errett, *Walks about Jerusalem: A Search after the Landmarks of Primitive Christianity* (Cincinnati: R. W. Carroll & Co., 1872), 7; and Allen, *From West to East*, 71.

³⁸⁸ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 243–245.

³⁸⁹ Ada Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1904), 11–15.

³⁹⁰ Walking and possession of space are intimately linked: “We sigh not for more worlds to conquer but rejoice in the vast territory that is ours—for the mere walking” (Bigelow, *Walking*, 17).

³⁹¹ De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 92.

³⁹² Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, 330.

³⁹³ Davis, *The Landscape of Belief*, 78.



Figure 3.4. Photograph titled “Distant View of the Birthplace of John the Baptist” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 12.



Figure 3.5. Photograph titled “Plain of Sodom and Gomorrah” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 144.

Maps included in Holy Land works reinforced the idea that walking in the footsteps of Christ was an achievable goal. Red lines on maps laced their way across the Holy Land, purporting to show where Jesus had walked, from childhood to crucifixion (Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Such maps were vast simplifications—even fictionalizations—though authors often included detailed, linear chronologies to justify these representations. *Earthly Footsteps*, for example, included an “Outline Harmony of the Gospels and Chronological Index,” which attempted an extraordinarily precise level of dating: the chronology dated the healing of the blind man recounted in the gospel of John, for example, to the week of October 11-18, 29 A.D.³⁹⁴ Taken together such maps and harmonies gave the impression that walking in the footsteps of Christ was a precise and scientific endeavor.

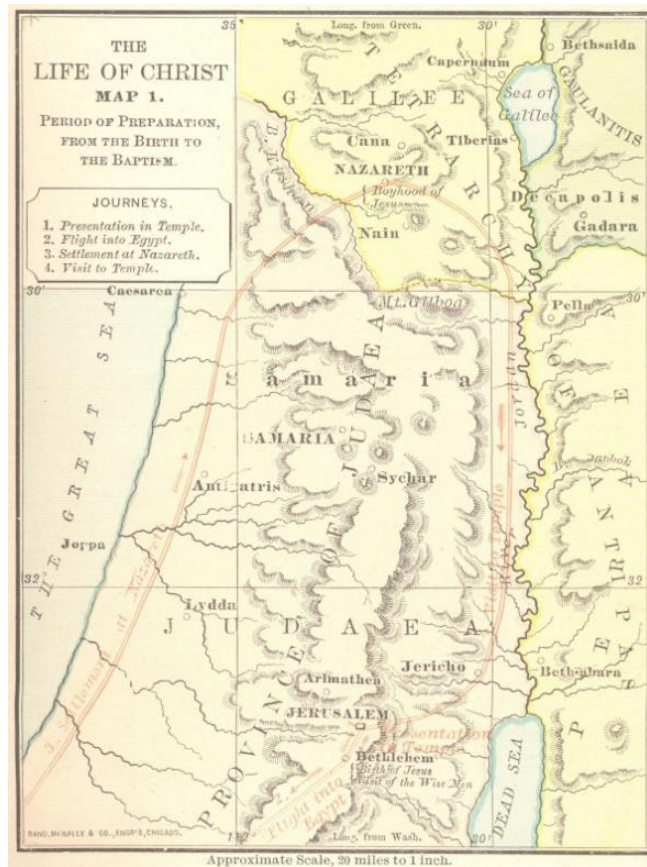


Figure 3.6. Map titled “The Life of Christ – Map 1 – Period of Preparation, from Birth to the Baptism.” From Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography* (1887), page 104.

³⁹⁴ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, “Outline Harmony of the Gospels and Chronological Index.” The *Earthly Footsteps* authors borrowed this chronology from Samuel J. Andrews’s *The Life of Our Lord*.

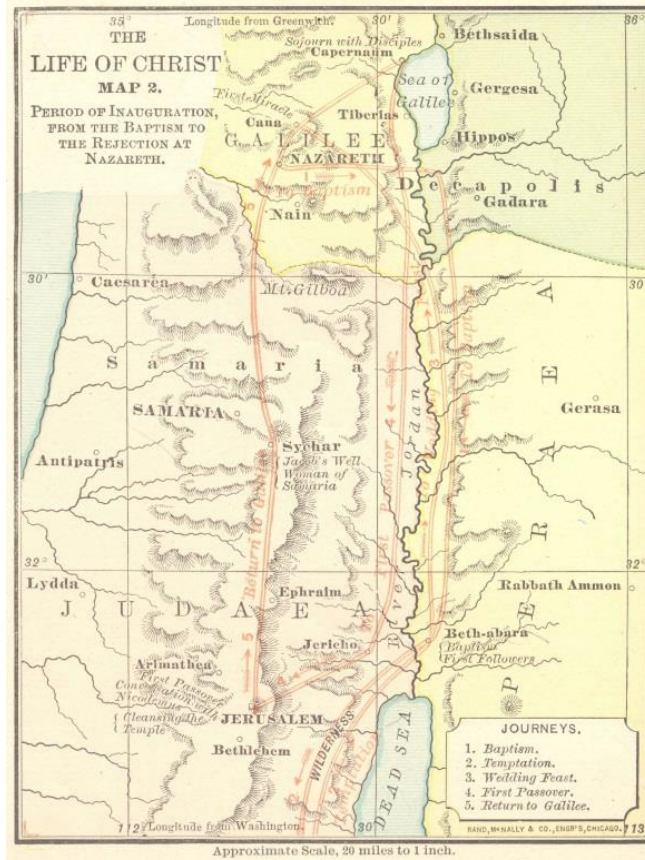


Figure 3.7. Map titled “The Life of Christ – Map 2 – Period of Inauguration, from the Baptism to the Rejection at Nazareth.” From Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography* (1887), page 104.

Walking influenced how Protestants saw the Holy Land. In particular, walking reinforced the idea of a unified Holy Land. The British artist William Henry Bartlett (1809-1854) suggested in his *Walks about the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (1844) that earlier Holy Land explorers had neglected the relationship between various sites, offering readers only disconnected images and descriptions. Using both original images and descriptive text, Bartlett aimed to provide “a clear, connected, and accurate view of the City.”³⁹⁵ Panoramas, like that of the wilderness of Judea published in *McClure’s Magazine* in March 1900, emphasized the proximity of sites: from the road to Jerusalem, a traveler could gaze upon Jericho, the River Jordan, and the Dead Sea, a sweeping vista that unified the Old and New Testaments (Figure 3.8).

³⁹⁵ William Henry Bartlett, *Walks about the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (London: George Virtue, 1844), preface. Bartlett later acknowledged being dissatisfied with his treatment of Jerusalem in his 1844 work, particularly with respect to “matter of sacred or historical interest” (William Henry Bartlett, *Jerusalem Revisited* (Edinburgh: T. Nelson & Sons, 1862), v). Almost two decades later, Bartlett published *Jerusalem Revisited* (1862), based upon his second trip in 1853 (1).

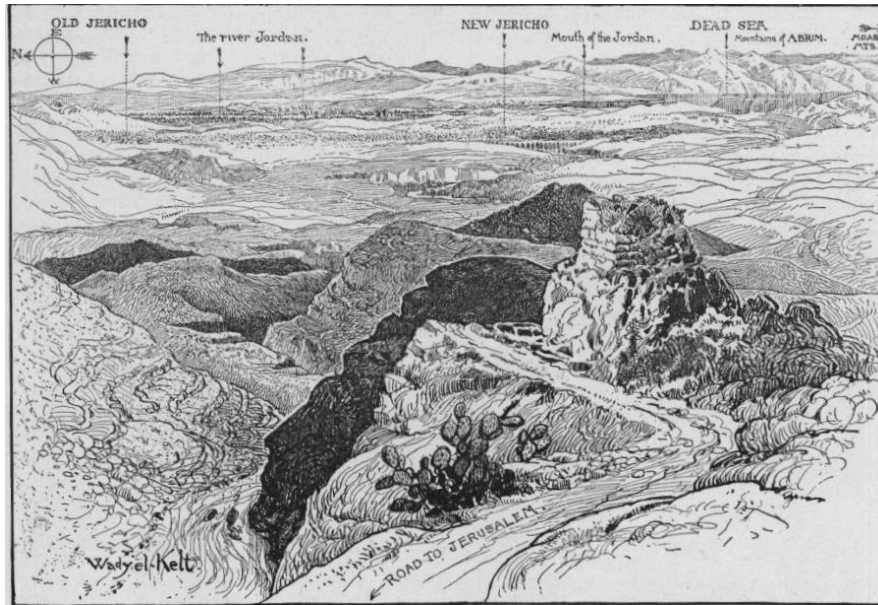


Figure 3.8. Illustration titled “The Wilderness of Judea” by Linson. From *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900), page 400.

This emphasis on the relationship among biblical sites extended to Sunday school curricula. The Methodist minister John Heyl Vincent first developed in the 1850s and 1860s what he called the Palestine Class—a series of classes dedicated to the study of Biblical history and geography.³⁹⁶ He recommended churches offer a Palestine Class on a day of the week other than Sunday. The class should be open to adults and children alike, though, divided into successive grades; students would progress from being a Pilgrim, Resident, Explorer, Dweller in Jerusalem, to, finally, Templar—reflecting Victorian romanticism for the medieval Crusades. Teachers would use visual aids to ensure that the class was “both study and pastime.” By focusing on “descriptions of sacred localities, distances from Jerusalem, size, present condition, sacred associations,” and other topics, Vincent hoped students would “become as familiar with the Holy Land as their own neighborhood.”³⁹⁷

The curriculum of the Palestine Class emphasized the relationship among various biblical sites. Consider, for example, the following class exercise. Teachers were instructed to read the following statement in its entirety, with students supplying the italicized words on a second reading:

We propose a trip to *Bible lands*, especially to the land of *Palestine*, also called the *Holy Land*, *Canaan*, the *Promised Land*, the *Land of Israel*, and *Judæa*. In making this pilgrimage we must go toward the *East*, and across the *Atlantic Ocean*. From New York to *Liverpool* in a straight line is about *three thousand miles*. From *Liverpool* we may go to *Paris*, thence to *Marseilles*, from *Marseilles* to *Malta*, from *Malta* to *Joppa*, making the whole distance from New York to *Joppa* not far from *six thousand miles*. At *Joppa* we recall the vision of *Peter* as reported in the *Acts of the Apostles*, where he saw a great

³⁹⁶ Vincent’s massive tome *The Modern Sunday-School* included in its appendix a circular describing the Palestine Class. The circular notes that the first class was organized in 1855 and that written instruction for the Palestine Class had been in existence since 1862.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 320–322.

sheet knit at the four corners, and *let down from heaven*. From Joppa we look northward and southward up and down the *coast line* of Palestine. Before us are the hills of *Judaea*, and among them, about *thirty-four* miles in a straight line from Joppa, a little south of east, is *Jerusalem*. Further east, *sixteen* miles, we come to *Jordan* and the *Dead Sea*. Beyond these are the table-lands of *Moab* and *Bashan*.³⁹⁸

The Palestine Class curriculum taught that the Bible lands had an undeniable unity. Sacred locations were connected to one another; the distances between them could be precisely measured. The places of the Bible were not imaginary. They were real places held in a network of associations that encompassed even America.

Walking was the nineteenth-century Protestant means of choice for reading the Holy Land's material gospel, placing the pilgrim in the role of witness and judge. One critical question remained: what would Protestants actually find when they read this material gospel and compared it with the Bible?

Harmonies and Dissonances

Holy Land travelers constantly compared what they saw in the landscape with their Bibles. "I rode slowly all day, with my Bible frequently in hand, comparing the land with the Book and the Book with the land," wrote the Methodist minister Beverly Carradine.³⁹⁹ There were several potential outcomes of this comparison: the Holy Land could confirm the Bible, it could refute it, or it could offer new testimony. Many vociferously affirmed the first of these possibilities: that the Holy Land and the Bible were in complete and perfect harmony with one another. The Baptist minister David Austin Randall described the Bible and the Holy Land as "two copies" of the same book. Comparing the Bible and the Holy Land, Christians would discover that "both conspire to establish the testimony of God."⁴⁰⁰ Consul Frank DeHass had a similar confidence in the fit between the Bible and the Holy Land: "the land should be in perfect harmony with the book—the one the exponent of the other," he wrote.⁴⁰¹ The Bible "fits into the very landscape, and is reflected in it, as trees on the bank of a river are reflected in its bosom," wrote minister Henry Martyn Field.⁴⁰² Elsewhere Field remarked on how the Gospels so reliably described "the *couleur locale* of the hills and valleys" that "one passing through them cannot but recognize the literal truth of all in the New Testament which pertains to things external." Having accepted the truth of such "external things," it was only a short step to believing the supernatural aspects of the Bible, Field argued.⁴⁰³

Protestants' effervescent appraisals of the perfect harmony between the Holy Land and the Bible aroused some skeptics. The *New York Evangelist*, for example, questioned Consul DeHass's tendency to "rush into exclamations of surprise and wonder when anything is found which corroborates the biblical record."⁴⁰⁴ A more critical eye was needed, according to the periodical. Others suggested that Protestants' claims of a "perfect harmony" between the book and the land resulted from their myopic vision: Protestants saw only what they wanted to confirm their views of the Bible. "Our pilgrims have brought *their* verdicts with them," wrote

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 319.

³⁹⁹ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 242–243.

⁴⁰⁰ Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, vii.

⁴⁰¹ DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered*, 139.

⁴⁰² Field, *Among the Holy Hills*, vi.

⁴⁰³ "Among the Holy Hills. By Henry M. Field, D.D.," *Christian Union* 29, no. 9 (February 28, 1884): 131.

⁴⁰⁴ "Bible Lands," *New York Evangelist* 51, no. 33 (August 12, 1880): 1.

Mark Twain of his travel companions in *The Innocents Abroad*.⁴⁰⁵ Twain believed that most pilgrims could not see beyond their denominationally-determined perspectives. Presbyterians “found a Presbyterian Palestine ... Others were Baptists, seeking Baptist evidences and a Baptist Palestine. Others were Catholics, Methodists, Episcopalians, seeking evidences indorsing their several creeds, and a Catholic, a Methodist, an Episcopalian Palestine,” Twain wrote.⁴⁰⁶ The Holy Land and the Bible were in perfect harmony because pilgrims wanted it to be, Twain argued.

To an extent, Holy Land travelogues bear out Twain’s point. Protestants did search the Holy Land for evidences that supported their theological positions. Consider baptism, for example—a popular topic of debate in Protestant Holy Land travelogues. Protestants used evidences from the Holy Land to justify their personal views on baptism. The Mennonite pastor Amos Daniel Wenger reproduced in his travelogue frescoes he saw in Roman catacombs that he argued provided historical evidence for the baptism of children.⁴⁰⁷ The Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey reported seeing a baptistery in Italy from the 1100s, evidence, for him, that the church had practiced full immersion in the past. McGarvey approvingly noted that the depth of this baptistery was “just the depth of most of our modern baptisteries.”⁴⁰⁸ The Methodist minister Beverly Carradine, though, reached a decidedly different conclusion than McGarvey about what the Holy Land revealed about the orthopraxy of baptism. Carradine visited the location on the Jordan River believed to be where John the Baptist preached and baptized.⁴⁰⁹ Carradine observed that it would have been difficult for John to “immerse all the multitudes of Judea and other provinces in the rushing stream” and decided that it “would have been a simple and easy task” for John to stand on the bank of the river and “sprinkle or pour water upon the heads of many thousands a day.”⁴¹⁰ The Holy Land appeared to yield whatever theological evidences pilgrims required.

Below the surface of American Protestants’ enthusiastic endorsement of the unfailing correspondence between the Holy Land and the Bible, there is, however, a more complex picture. Indeed, scholar Brian Yothers argues that one of the most surprising and unexpected aspects of nineteenth-century Holy Land travelogues “is their resistance to ‘finding what they seek’ in any reductive sense.”⁴¹¹ While many American travelers did exhibit a “sentimental piety” toward the Holy Land, they also approached it with “empiricist skepticism.”⁴¹² Not all facts and experiences they encountered affirmed their faith. Protestants adopted a variety of strategies to address apparent conflicts between the material gospel of the Holy Land and the sacred text of the Bible. A comparison of the Holy Land travelogues of two well-known nineteenth-century figures—Philip Schaff and Mark Twain—illustrates how Holy Land travelers successfully and unsuccessfully resolved tensions between the land and the book.

The church historian Philip Schaff’s *Through Bible Lands* (1878) offers a rich example of one Protestant’s negotiation of apparent conflicts between the Holy Land and the Bible. Schaff departed New York for the Holy Land in December 1876.⁴¹³ At the time, he was a professor at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Grief had spurred his journey: he went to the Holy Land, in part, seeking succor following the death of a daughter.⁴¹⁴ “The shadows of

⁴⁰⁵ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 511, italics original.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 511.

⁴⁰⁷ Wenger, *Six Months in Bible Lands*, 102.

⁴⁰⁸ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 406.

⁴⁰⁹ Matthew 3:5-6; Mark 1:5.

⁴¹⁰ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 327.

⁴¹¹ Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land*, 2.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴¹³ “Editorial Notes,” *New York Evangelist* 47, no. 50 (December 14, 1876): 4.

⁴¹⁴ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 5. Schaff had also lost a son at the age of 7 in August 1864 (see “Obituary,” *German Reformed Messenger* 30, no. 2 (September 14, 1864): 3).

death followed me,” he wrote, “but the God of Israel went before me in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.”⁴¹⁵ Schaff reported on his travels in a series of letters that appeared on the front page of the *New York Evangelist*.⁴¹⁶

Schaff strongly endorsed Holy Land travel. He acknowledged the value of Holy Land books but felt they did not have the impact of first-person experience: “A thoughtful traveller fills his memory with a gallery of photographic pictures more valuable than any number of books.”⁴¹⁷ He particularly urged theological students to visit the Holy Land. Such a visit would be “of more practical use ... than the lectures of the professors in Oxford or Cambridge, in Berlin or Leipzig.”⁴¹⁸ Schaff’s *Through Bible Lands*, nonetheless, was for those who could not travel to the Holy Land. Schaff related “what [he] saw and heard and felt” with a simplicity and accessibility in his 400-page book.⁴¹⁹ The work has an anthropological tenor; in a chapter titled “Ancient and Modern Egypt Compared,” for example, Schaff discusses contemporary living conditions in Egypt.⁴²⁰ His book exemplifies the growing interest in comparative religion at the end of the nineteenth century. Schaff’s book included a chapter on Coptic Christianity and another on Islam, in which he deemed the Koran “unquestionably one of the great books of the world.”⁴²¹ Schaff also used his book as a platform from which to criticize American failures to missionize in the Holy Land. America had done much to explore the Holy Land but not so much to convert it, he argued. “[T]here is not a single American mission church or mission school in all Palestine,” he reported.⁴²²

Schaff was a strong proponent of the material gospel theology. He described Palestine as “a library of revelation engraved on stones.” Its “mountains and hills, the lake and rivers, the caves and rocks” were “alive with Biblical stories.”⁴²³ He praised the “marvellous correspondence between the Land and the Book,” deeming the Bible “the best handbook for the Holy Land” and the Holy Land “the best commentary on the Bible.”⁴²⁴ His travels had not “shaken, but confirmed” his faith, he wrote.⁴²⁵

That said, Schaff acknowledged that conscientious readers of the Holy Land and the Bible would encounter difficulties in reconciling these two so-called texts. Schaff was well-informed on historical critical debates and recent archaeological developments, and he incorporated discussion of these topics in his travelogue. Schaff, for example, discussed how recent archaeological discoveries in Egypt compared with biblical chronologies. Schaff did not believe, unlike some other Protestants, that the Egyptian and biblical timelines could be easily reconciled.⁴²⁶ “The chronology of Egypt seems irreconcilable with the traditional views on the

⁴¹⁵ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 6.

⁴¹⁶ Philip Schaff, “Religion in Jerusalem,” *New York Evangelist* 48, no. 20 (May 17, 1877): 1; Philip Schaff, “Letters from the East-IV. Nazareth,” *New York Evangelist* 48, no. 22 (May 31, 1877): 1; Philip Schaff, “Letters from the East.-V.: Christianity in Beirut,” *New York Evangelist* 48, no. 24 (June 14, 1877): 1.

⁴¹⁷ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 14–15.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁴²² Schaff, “Religion in Jerusalem,” 1. Protestants frequently lamented the failure to sufficiently missionize Palestine. The Reverend Beverly Carradine’s account of his Holy Land trip, for example, concluded with a critique of contemporary missions and a call for “the more aggressive Protestant churches to take hold of this interesting missionary field” (Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 444).

⁴²³ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 387.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 383–384. In a footnote for this passage, Schaff quoted Renan’s famous “fifth gospel” passage in the original French.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 383.

⁴²⁶ Consul DeHass, for example, took a more positive view of the ability to reconcile biblical and Egyptian chronologies. “Some,” he wrote, “claim for [Egypt] a much higher antiquity than the Mosaic

chronology of the Bible,” Schaff stated simply and directly.⁴²⁷ He attributed this to the fact that both the chronologies remained “in a state of confusion, and cannot be satisfactorily settled with our present means of information.”⁴²⁸ After delving into lists of pharaohs, dynasties, and average reigns, Schaff concludes, though, that these discrepancies should not diminish one’s faith in the Bible: “Fortunately religion and the authority of the Bible do not depend on chronology, anymore than on astronomy or geology or any other science.”⁴²⁹ The Bible, Schaff concluded, ultimately “has nothing to fear from Egyptology.”⁴³⁰

Another challenge Schaff addressed in reconciling the land and the book was the problem of determining which “real” sites corresponded with locations described in the Bible. Schaff adopted several strategies on this question. One was to direct attention back to the simplicity of the scriptural account. The Bible, in Schaff’s view, is a straightforward book that contrasts with the complex histories of biblical sites. About the sites in and around Bethlehem, Schaff writes, “Whatever be the claim to the identity of these particular spots and the rubbish of superstition which has accumulated over them, it is impossible not to be impressed afresh with the power and beauty of the simple Scripture account of that Christ-child.”⁴³¹ When overwhelmed by the complex historical realities of Palestine, Protestants would be best served by returning to the simple account of the Bible, Schaff suggested.

With respect to the problem of identifying the “real” sites the Bible, Schaff also advised Protestants to focus on the long history of Christian devotion at particular sites, setting aside the question of whether a specific location was the actual biblical site. Such was the approach Schaff recommended at the Holy Sepulchre. Schaff regarded the Holy Sepulchre as “a unique museum of religious curiosities from Adam to Christ”⁴³²—a *wunderkammer*, and not an altogether believable one. “It is an amazing tax on our credulity that we should believe in the identity of these sites” within the Holy Sepulchre, writes Schaff.⁴³³ Nonetheless, Schaff encouraged readers to focus on the history of piety and devotion at the Holy Sepulchre. “Genuine or not, it has been for many centuries a centre of devotion, the very holy of holies of the largest portion of Christendom,” he wrote.⁴³⁴ Christians should seek inspiration in the “unbroken tradition” of Christian worship dating to at least the time of Constantine at the Holy Sepulchre.⁴³⁵

A final strategy Schaff suggested when Protestants faced apparent conflicts between the Bible and the land was that travelers should follow their own reasoned intuition. Schaff made this point in his discussion of Mount Sinai. Opinions differed over which peak had been that where Moses received the Ten Commandments. Schaff suggested that Christians should follow their own studied opinions on the matter: “If therefore we can find a better locality in the same Sinai group, we need not hesitate to give it the preference and to exercise our judgment in discriminating between the general truth of the tradition and the error in its minor details.”⁴³⁶ Schaff’s approach maintained a focus on finding the “real” sites of biblical events—but other Protestants took a different approach, focusing their attention, instead, on the fact that they

chronology” based, in particular, upon recently recovered Pharaoh lists (*Buried Cities Recovered*, 25–26). DeHass found no “difficulties in harmonizing the Hebrew and Egyptian chronology”—suggesting, for example, that the chronologies aligned if it was assumed that some pharaohs reigned concurrently (26).

⁴²⁷ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 88.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, 227.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 263.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 262–263.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, 176.

were likely in the general proximity of a biblical event even if they could not identify its exact location. Captions of the photographs in *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee*, for example, sacralize the idea of being near the site of a sacred event. The caption of a Sea of Galilee photograph reads, “Near this lake [Jesus] healed a leper by touching him. Here He called Levi, whom He found sitting at the receipt of customs. ... Here Christ healed the man with the withered hand, and here he ordained the twelve.”⁴³⁷ In another example of sacralizing proximity, the authors of *Earthly Footsteps* discounted the authenticity of the site identified as Lazarus’s tomb but took heart in the fact that the site was likely close to his real home. “There is something very impressive in the thought that it was here, within the sound of our voices, that Lazarus and Mary and Martha lived,” wrote the authors.⁴³⁸ Not being able to precisely match the Bible to the Holy Land did not prove an insurmountable problem for many Protestants.

Schaff acknowledged potential discrepancies between the land and the book. Some of these discrepancies were real; others could be resolved or reasoned away. Not all Holy Land travelers were, however, able to ultimately harmonize the Holy Land and the Bible. Such was the case for Mark Twain, who in his *The Innocents Abroad* sharply questioned the material gospel theology. Twain based his book on his 1867 Holy Land tour with a group of American pilgrims. Like Schaff, Twain’s Holy Land reports first appeared as serialized columns.⁴³⁹ Twain deliberately separated his work from more serious Holy Land works. “This book is a record of a pleasure-trip,” he wrote. “If it were a record of a solemn scientific expedition, it would have about it that gravity, that profundity, and that impressive incomprehensibility which are so proper to works of that kind,” Twain sardonically noted.⁴⁴⁰ Twain’s travel companions found themselves in the crosshairs of his famous satirical wit. He described the pilgrims as gripped by “romantic frenzies” and “melodramatic nonsense.”⁴⁴¹ The most revered sites of Christendom lost their shine in Twain’s account, such as St. Sophia in Constantinople, which Twain declared “the rustiest old barn in heathendom.”⁴⁴² Twain found a receptive audience for his pointed critique. An advertisement seeking booksellers asked, “Do you want to make money faster than ever before in your life? Sell this book.”⁴⁴³ “Six hundred and fifty pages of open and declared fun,” read one review.⁴⁴⁴ *The New York Times* deemed it a “pleasant but rather irreverent book” and recommended it to those “great many persons who would not care to read the graver accounts of travel through these world-renowned places.”⁴⁴⁵

Twain wanted to give a fresh view of the Holy Land. He hoped to see “with his own eyes instead of the eyes of those who travelled in those countries before him.”⁴⁴⁶ Twain’s desire to bring fresh eyes to his topic contrasted with his portrayal of his fellow travelers, who, he felt, could not escape the influence of previous Holy Land accounts. At Caesarea Philippi, for example, Twain was impressed with the “wisdom” some pilgrims exhibited about the place—only to later discover that they were repeating the opinions of Edward Robinson, without acknowledgement.⁴⁴⁷ Twain claimed he could nearly predict “in set phrase” what the pilgrims would say upon their arrival at a given site because “*I have the books they will ‘smouch’ their*

⁴³⁷ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 178.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, 229.

⁴³⁹ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, iv.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 540.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 362.

⁴⁴³ “Book Agents Wanted,” *Colman’s Rural World* 23, no. 26 (December 25, 1869): 411.

⁴⁴⁴ “[Review:] The Innocents Abroad,” *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* 4, no. 1 (January 1870): 100.

⁴⁴⁵ “New Publications,” *New York Times*, August 23, 1869, 2.

⁴⁴⁶ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, iv.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 512.

ideas from."⁴⁴⁸ "The pilgrims will tell of Palestine, when they get home, not as it appeared to *them*, but as it appeared to Thompson and Robinson and Grimes—with the tints varied to suit each pilgrim's creed," wrote Twain.⁴⁴⁹

Despite Twain's irreverence and biting critiques, some have argued that Twain's book strongly resembles other nineteenth-century Protestant travelogues. Scholar of religion Brooke Sherrard, for example, calls Twain's perspective "recognizably Protestant" and argues that his book shares a great deal in common with other Protestant travelogues of the period—including "similar attitudes toward Protestant superiority over Catholics and Eastern Christians, the fallenness of the landscape, and the importance of the biblical time period."⁴⁵⁰ Most importantly, Sherrard argues that "Twain gave Americans a model of how to experience the Holy Land as worthy of reverence": skepticism was fine, because "one could use one's shrewd American eyes to see beneath a few shams."⁴⁵¹

Twain traveled with a Bible and referenced scripture throughout his travelogue.⁴⁵² But he did not see the Holy Land as a mirror—even ever so dim—of the biblical past. Twain, for example, described hearing a group of shepherds playing music—exactly the sort of pastoral scene that other American Protestants might have heralded as "unchanged" since the time of Christ. This was not the case for Twain. "In their pipes lingered no echo of the wonderful music the shepherd forefathers heard in the Plains of Bethlehem what time the angels sang 'Peace on earth, good will to men,'" he wrote.⁴⁵³ For Twain, the mundane—shepherds playing pipes—should not be confused with the extraordinary—angels announcing the birth of the Savior.

Twain also attacked the idea that the Holy Land could "remember" the biblical past. Twain's chapter on Nazareth, for example, opens with a rehearsal of the rhapsodic comments that Protestant pilgrims so often made about the boyhood home of Jesus: "Nazareth is wonderfully interesting because the town has an air about it of being precisely as Jesus left it, and one finds himself saying all the time, 'The boy Jesus has stood in this doorway—has played in that street—has touched these stones with his hands—has rambled over these chalky hills.'"⁴⁵⁴ Twain, though, did not find that being in Nazareth brought him closer to the young Jesus. To better imagine Jesus in Nazareth, Twain, thus, turned to scripture—though certainly not the scripture most Protestants would have chosen. Twain read from apocryphal texts that were "ruled out of our modern Bible" and that told "forgotten" stories of the young Jesus. Did the landscape remember a young Jesus that had cured a bride of her dumbness with a kiss, that had restored a boy who had been turned into a mule, or that repaired his father Joseph's poor craftsmanship, asked Twain? What of the Jesus who threw a boy from the roof of a house?⁴⁵⁵ If a place could truly remember, would it not remember these stories, too? The landscape, Twain suggests, can only remember what the pilgrim remembers—not anything more.

Twain, ultimately, cannot reconcile the mundaneness of the Holy Land with the supernatural divine. Upon visiting the place where Christ supposedly told Peter that he was the rock upon which the church would be built, Twain writes, "It seems curious enough to us to be standing on ground that was actually pressed by the feet of the Saviour." He finds the moment to be "suggestive of a reality and a tangibility that seem at variance with the vagueness and mystery and ghostliness that one naturally attaches to the character of god." It is this dissonance between the materiality of the landscape and Twain's view of an immaterial god

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 511, italics original.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., 512, italics original.

⁴⁵⁰ Brooke Sherrard, "'Palestine Sits in Sackcloth and Ashes': Reading Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* as a Protestant Holy Land Narrative," *Religion & the Arts* 15, no. 1/2 (March 2011): 84.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 86.

⁴⁵² Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 484.

⁴⁵³ Ibid., 488.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 537.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

that he finds irreconcilable: “I can not comprehend yet that I am sitting where a god has stood, and looking upon the brook and the mountain which that god looked upon, and am surrounded by dusky men and women whose ancestors saw him, and even talked with him, face to face I can not comprehend this; the gods of my understanding have always been hidden in clouds and very far away.”⁴⁵⁶ The materiality of the Holy Land was not, for Twain, a conduit with the divine. Twain, in fact, found the landscape at night to be far more affecting than in “the rude glare of the day.”⁴⁵⁷ “One can comprehend it only when night has hidden all incongruities and created a theatre proper for so grand a drama,” he wrote.⁴⁵⁸ Only then, in the quiet darkness, did Twain find harmony between the land and the heavens.

Conclusion

Nineteenth-century American Protestant Holy Land travelers navigated between the shoals of pilgrim and tourist, believer and skeptic, medievalist and modernist, participant and observer. They sought to discern the material gospel of the Holy Land and come to terms with what they had learned. For some, it was an uplifting process; for others, it left them wanting. Regardless, many Protestants who traveled to the Holy Land felt compelled to share their experiences. They reproduced the Holy Land’s material gospel in countless books, newspaper articles, illustrations, and photographs—seeking to bring the land home for an eager American audience, as discussed in chapter four.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 472.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 512.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 513.

CHAPTER IV

A PERFECT COPY: REPRODUCING A MATERIAL GOSPEL

I have read it through at one sitting. It is a book for the times. I like it. Write another book like it and send me a copy.

— Reviewer on David Gregg's *The Testimony of the Land: Or, the Evidential Value of Palestine* (1895)⁴⁵⁹

Reflecting on his experiences as a missionary in Jerusalem in the 1850s, James Turner Barclay (1807-1874), a doctor and Disciples of Christ minister, predicted that the Holy Land stood on the cusp of “a surprising tide of enterprise.” Steamships traversed the Mediterranean and Red Seas, railways crisscrossed the countryside, and Jerusalem even had an electric telegraph.⁴⁶⁰ Palestine evidenced the fruits of what Barclay called “this Augustan age of electro-magnetic progression.”⁴⁶¹ By the beginning of the twentieth century, not all, however, shared Barclay’s optimism about modernity’s advance on the Holy Land. A 1906 article in *The Chautauquan* described the “shriek of the locomotive in the hills of Judah” and the “the smoke of the steamboat on the Dead Sea” as threats to “the land as it was of old.”⁴⁶² Modernity turned out to be a double-edged sword: while Protestants believed that modernity had revealed the Holy Land as a lost gospel and made possible its recovery, it also potentially jeopardized it.

All was not lost, however. According to *The Chautauquan* article, a host of chroniclers—painters, geographers, and writers, among others—had arrived in the Holy Land “just in the nick of time” to create copies of the old landscape.⁴⁶³ They would reproduce the Holy Land’s material gospel before it was lost again. The second half of the nineteenth century, indeed, saw a profusion of print materials that promoted experiential, imaginative encounters with the Holy Land. Maps, atlases, periodicals, travelogues, novels, poetry, engravings, paintings, lantern shows, and photographs created avenues for American Protestants to make surrogate pilgrimages to the Holy Land.⁴⁶⁴ These reproductions existed in a dense network of interdependency; Holy Land travelogues and novels referenced other Holy Land works. They also invited seemingly infinite reproduction, with maps, illustrations, photographs, and even narrative descriptions repackaged and republished under different titles.

Holy Land representations naturally invite scholarly investigation in that they lend themselves to comparative analysis. As Burke O. Long writes in his study of “imaginative representations” of the Holy Land, any representation “involves problematic exclusions and inclusions, effaced histories and privileged scenarios, assemblages of nostalgic desire and

⁴⁵⁹ Gregg, *The Testimony of the Land*, 1895. This review from A. F. Schaffler, pastor of the Olivett Presbyterian Church in New York, appeared in the second edition of Gregg’s work, published in 1896.

⁴⁶⁰ James Turner Barclay, *The City of the Great King: Or, Jerusalem as It Was, as It Is, and as It Is to Be* (Philadelphia: James Challen and Sons, 1857), xii–xiii.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, xi.

⁴⁶² “The Tissot Pictures,” *The Chautauquan* 43, no. 5 (July 1906): 403.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁴ On surrogate pilgrimage in the medieval period, see Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1975), 296–297. Long in *Imagining the Holy Land* uses the term “fantasy travel” as opposed to “surrogate pilgrimage” in his analysis of Holy Land representations.

fantasy, and embodied interpretations of the ‘true’ Bible as well as claims to the truly American.”⁴⁶⁵ While such comparative studies of the “real” and a representation is a revealing mode of analysis, this chapter takes a different approach. Instead, it focuses on the how the material gospel theology shaped Protestants’ production, admiration, and interpretation of Holy Land reproductions. Protestants endeavored to transcribe the Holy Land’s material gospel—transforming it into an object that itself could be readily copied and reproduced. Transforming the Holy Land into written and illustrated books brought full circle the textual metaphors at the heart of the material gospel theology: from imagined book to real book. This chapter explores three different mediums for reproducing the Holy Land—word, illustration, and photography—each of which Protestants believed had strengths and weaknesses in reproducing the Holy Land. Seeing Holy Land representations in connection with the material gospel theology reveals some unexpected stories—including helping to account for the decidedly dull and monotonous nature of many Holy Land reproductions, to explain America’s love affair with certain reproductions, and to illuminate the influence of particular spatial ideologies on Holy Land representations.

Word

American Protestants in the second half of the nineteenth century most frequently used the written word to reproduce the Holy Land. Travelers wrote copious descriptions—in journals, letters, newspaper columns, and published books—of their experiences abroad. The demand for such accounts appeared to be insatiable. A reviewer of the Presbyterian minister David Gregg’s 1895 Palestine book wrote, “I have read [Gregg’s book] through at one sitting. It is a book for the times. I like it. Write another book like it and send me a copy.”⁴⁶⁶ Protestants answered this expansive demand with a remarkable proliferation of Holy Land books.

Many creators of Holy Land books believed that such books could substitute for actual travel. As art historian David Morgan has argued regarding visual representations in Protestant culture, such books were “considered by many believers to be transparent, capable of offering the viewer the aesthetic qualities and moral effects available in viewing the original.”⁴⁶⁷ “As you read, you seem to be one of the party, and to be gazing on the scenes depicted,” reads the introduction of Mary Allen’s *From West to East* (1898).⁴⁶⁸ Protestant writers sought to make readers their travel companions, an attribute of travel literature, generally. Travel literature is “designed to evoke the sense of a fictive journey that is shared by author and reader,” writes scholar Alison Byerly.⁴⁶⁹ Writers often structured their Holy Land travelogues to mirror their actual journeys, taking readers on a trip with the author away and back home again. This attention to fostering a shared, “fictive journey” gives, as Byerly points out, even non-fictional travelogues an uncanny fictional quality. Travel literature resembles the realist novel with “its effort to generate an almost physical sense of presence within the fictional world.”⁴⁷⁰ “Even the most factual guidebooks,” notes Byerly, take on “an aura of fiction in their capacity to immerse the reader in an imaginary space.”⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁵ Long, *Imagining the Holy Land*, 5.

⁴⁶⁶ Review in Gregg, *The Testimony of the Land*, 1896.

⁴⁶⁷ David Morgan, *Protestants and Pictures: Religion, Visual Culture, and the Age of American Mass Production* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7–8.

⁴⁶⁸ Allen, *From West to East*, Hart’s Introduction.

⁴⁶⁹ Alison Byerly, *Are We There Yet?: Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 12.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

Some producers of Holy Land books insisted that their works offered readers not just an opportunity for surrogate travel but superior travel—sparing readers the frustrations, inconveniences, and dangers of actual travel. Holy Land writers regaled their readers with tales of the difficulties and dramas of travel abroad. Robbers and duplicitous guides emptied the pocketbooks of travelers, while fevers and unforgiving waters stole some travelers from the prime of their lives.⁴⁷² Americans accustomed to the swiftness and efficiency of the railroads would be frustrated by the slowness of Holy Land travel, noted church historian Philip Schaff. He found that transportation had not improved in many parts of the Holy Land since “the days of the patriarchs” and that “[a] whole day is required for a distance which can be traversed by railway in an hour.”⁴⁷³ The Baptist minister David Austin Randall reported on the trials of traveling with a single pair of pants and three dozen live chickens during his journey through Egypt, the Sinai, and Syria.⁴⁷⁴ Travelers would also find none of the conveniences of the modern American home, reported John William McGarvey.⁴⁷⁵

Protestant writers also praised Holy Land books for saving readers time. A book condensed far flung sites that might otherwise take weeks or even months to visit. Schaff promised his book would take readers on a “flying visit,” allowing them to see “in a few leisure hours” what had taken him five months of arduous travel.⁴⁷⁶ Real travel could promise neither that degree of swiftness nor such an all-encompassing, bird’s eye view. Moreover, American readers might actually spend more time with a book than in the Holy Land if they actually traveled there. Such was the observation of the authors of *Bible Witnesses from Bible Lands* (1874). Those authors sharply criticized American tourists who spent only a brief time in Palestine, scratching the surface of its offerings. The “succession of steamers” at Joppa marked the comings and goings of American tourists who made “hasty flights” through Palestine. The authors expressed incredulity toward those “Christian travelers” who are “content to give their time and money to *Europe* and only *ten days* to Palestine.” Engagingly written Holy Land accounts might prevent such slapdash tourists from journeying to the Holy Land in the first place, the authors hoped.⁴⁷⁷

Protestants approached the task of transforming the Holy Land into narrative descriptions with a seriousness, taking on the role of the faithful transcriber who sought to be comprehensive and complete. The sense that modernity threatened to wipe away the Holy Land’s fragile record intensified their sense of purpose. Writers resisted comparison of their books to mere travel writings. One writer critiqued “the nonsense (shall we call it worse?) of ‘Mark Twain’ and Ross Browne [that] are relished and received as truth” by the American public.⁴⁷⁸ The southern Presbyterian minister John Martin Philip Otts expressly disclaimed the

⁴⁷² For a characteristic passage about the “afflictions and sorrows” that beset even young, healthy travelers, see Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, 94–95.

⁴⁷³ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 11.

⁴⁷⁴ Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, 13, 242.

⁴⁷⁵ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 114.

⁴⁷⁶ Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 11.

⁴⁷⁷ Morris et al., *Bible Witnesses*, 6, italics original.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 6. This passage refers to the Irish-born American writer John Ross Browne, whose *Yusef* (1853) was a Holy Land hit. Browne styled himself as a jolly, adventurous soul. He trafficked in the irreverent, rejecting the idea that Holy Land travel had to be a serious event. “[U]pon a careful perusal of the Scriptures, I can find nothing said against a cheerful frame of mind” (iv), he wrote in his preface to *Yusef*. Nettling his more somber readers, Browne promised that on his next trip to Jerusalem he might “use every exertion to be depressed in spirits, and produce something uncommonly heavy and substantial” (iv). His cheeky style put Browne on a collision course with mawkish Victorian ideals. English scholar Joseph Csicsila describes Browne as a “nascent realist” who “crusaded against romantic literature a generation before American writers collectively took up the cause of literary realism” and whose work provided a model for Twain’s later *Innocents Abroad* (1869) (“An Old Southwesterner Abroad: Cultural

classification of his book *The Fifth Gospel* (1892) as mere travel literature. It was not a “book of travels,” he insisted.⁴⁷⁹ What separated his book from travel literature was keen observation skills, he maintained. Casual travelers were like swallows who “fly away for a change of climate or a change of diet, and, returning ... can give no more information about the lands which they have passed than the swallows can,” he wrote.⁴⁸⁰ Such travelers—like Twain or Browne—were not, according to Otts, appropriately serious transcribers of the Holy Land.

Protestant writers prized careful, minute, and detailed descriptions of the Holy Land. Authors sought to disappear into the prose, morphing into a generic eye that reported everything it saw in the sacred landscape. The Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey’s description of the Aedicule inside Jerusalem’s Holy Sepulchre exemplifies the type of graphic writing so common in Holy Land travelogues. McGarvey introduces readers to the small structure said to enclose the tomb of Christ, with attention to its material, experiential, and sensual qualities:

In the center of the rotunda under the great dome ... is a little building of white marble, 26 feet by 17 wide and about 15 high. Its outer wall is elaborately carved, and burning lamps of silver and gold hang thick about it, while enormous candles in tall candlesticks of marble and silver stand in front of it. It is divided into two rooms, and the entrance is through a door in the eastern end The first room is called the Chapel of the Angels This room is 16 feet long and 10 wide inside, and is lighted by silver lamps. The inner room is called the Chapel of the Sepulchre, and on your right hand, as you enter it, is seen a portion of the natural limestone of the hill, said to be a part of the wall of the sepulchre remaining in its original position. Silver lamps burn dimly here, and every pilgrim who enters the place brings a wax taper to be lighted and left there, and also leaves a contribution with the priest, receiving at his hands a slight sprinkling of holy water. The chamber is only about six feet square, and the ceiling is very low.⁴⁸¹

The graphic style of McGarvey’s Aedicule passage demonstrates how writers used sensorially rich narratives to vividly reproduce the Holy Land, immersing readers in another world. McGarvey’s rich description invites readers to imaginatively experience the Aedicule in all its particularity. He is attuned to the use of materials, such as marble, silver, and gold, and the Aedicule’s ornamentation, including decorative carving, lamps, and candles. His notes on the Aedicule’s physical dimensions and relative orientation give readers a sense of its size. And his attention to the priest and the pilgrims speaks to the human presence in the place. In his book McGarvey supplemented this vivid description with two illustrations: one of the Holy Sepulchre’s exterior and another of the Aedicule itself (Figures 4.0 and 4.1).

Frontiers and the Landmark Humor of J. Ross Browne’s Yusef,” in *The Humor of the Old South*, ed. Milton Thomas Inge and Edward J. Piacentino (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 215–216).

⁴⁷⁹ Otts, *The Fifth Gospel*, 5.

⁴⁸⁰ Otts, *Laconisms*, 39.

⁴⁸¹ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 172–173.

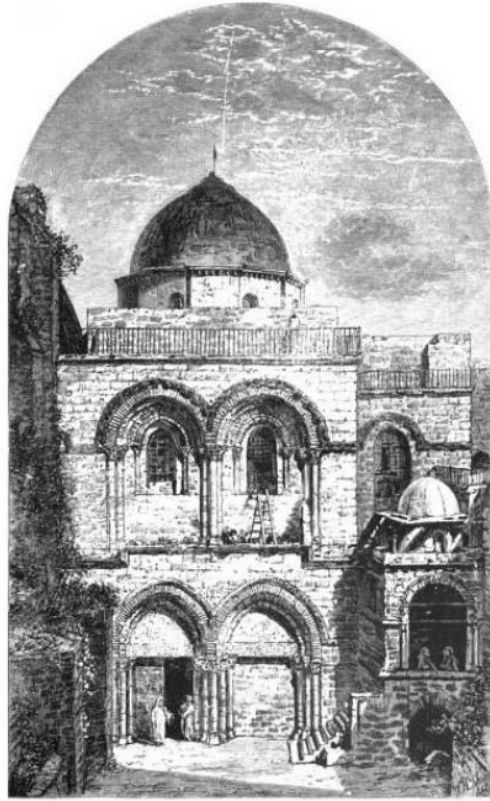


Figure 4.0. Illustration titled “Front of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre” (unknown artist and date). From John William McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible* (1881), page 172.



Figure 4.1. Illustration titled “The Holy Sepulchre” (unknown artist and date). From *Lands of the Bible*, page 173.

As seen in McGarvey's Aedicule passage, Protestant writers made use of numerous literary tools to create engaging Holy Land descriptions. The use of copious description to create imagined, visual images is a distinguishing mark of Victorian literature generally. Scholar Catherine Maxwell identifies "visionary imagination" as characteristic of the genre.⁴⁸² Victorian writers had a "preoccupation with particulars, with the material and phenomenal world and its material practices."⁴⁸³ Detailed descriptions—with attention to measurements, materials, sounds, smells, and actions—created sensorially engaging tours for readers. Writers also used the present tense to reinforce the sense that a writer and a reader were experiencing the sites in the same moment. Returning to McGarvey's description of the Aedicule, the entire passage is in the present tense: the "[s]ilver lamps burn dimly," the pilgrim "enters the place" and "leaves a contribution," and "the ceiling is low."⁴⁸⁴ The sense is that McGarvey is not so much describing something that has happened as *is* happening. McGarvey also places the reader in the scene by referring to "you": "on your right hand, as *you* enter"⁴⁸⁵ The reader is at the center of the experience. In proceeding through the space, McGarvey directs the reader's gaze, another classic technique of travel literature.⁴⁸⁶ Together, these techniques create what scholar Gregory S. Jackson in his study of American religious representation calls an "aesthetics of immediacy."⁴⁸⁷

Another common aspect of Holy Land descriptions evident in McGarvey's Aedicule passage is their emphasis on relationality. Objects are described in relationship to one another: the Aedicule is at "the center of the rotunda, under the great dome"; the candlesticks are "in front of" the outer wall; there are two rooms, a first room and then an inner room. This emphasis on relationality produces what Byerly calls "internal coherence"—a feature of virtual environments that "create[s] a sense of immersion in the viewer."⁴⁸⁸ This focus on relationality occurs at both micro and macro levels in Protestant Holy Land travelogues. At a micro level, descriptions of particular places, as seen in McGarvey's Aedicule passage, depended upon a series of objects put in relationship: things that are beside, beneath, near, over, and so on. But this emphasis on relationality also occurred at a macro level. As discussed in chapter 3, Protestants experienced the Holy Land in ways that emphasized the relationships among sites. Writers described their movements from one location to the next and among various Holy Land sites. This focus on relationality at both micro and macro levels had the effect of presenting the Holy Land as a unified whole.

This emphasis on relationality may also reflect the influence of empiricism on Victorian literature, culture, and, more specifically, ideas of space.⁴⁸⁹ William James described the empiricist view of space using an analogy of traveling to San Francisco: "The thought of the space between me and San Francisco has to be imagined as a successive number of hours and days of riding or railroading, filled with innumerable stoppings and startings, none of which can be omitted without falsifying the imagination." The spatial perception of the distance to San Francisco is, thus, built from "a vast number of perceptions of position fused together."⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸² Catherine Maxwell, *Second Sight: The Visionary Imagination in Late Victorian Literature* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2008), 1.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.* Maxwell traces this observation to English scholar Carol T. Christ's study *The Finer Optic: The Aesthetic of Particularity in Victorian Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).

⁴⁸⁴ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 173.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 173, italics added.

⁴⁸⁶ Byerly discusses these characteristics of travel writing in *Are We There Yet?*, 12.

⁴⁸⁷ Jackson, *The Word and Its Witness*, 5.

⁴⁸⁸ Byerly, *Are We There Yet?*, 21.

⁴⁸⁹ Peter Garratt, *Victorian Empiricism: Self, Knowledge, and Reality in Ruskin, Bain, Lewes, Spencer, and George Eliot* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), 16–17.

⁴⁹⁰ William James, "The Spatial Quale," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 13, no. 1 (January 1, 1879): 69. James, it should be noted, was ultimately critical of the empiricist view of space.

Protestant travelogues aspired toward a similar comprehensiveness—a sense that none of the “innumerable stoppings and goings” could be “omitted without falsifying the imagination.” Narrative descriptions linked Holy Land sites together such that, in James’s words, they became “fused together.”

McGarvey’s Aedicule passage also recalls the practice of word painting, which gained a particular following in the nineteenth century. English scholar Rhoda Flaxman describes word paintings as “visually oriented descriptions” with a “faithfulness to a precise and consistent perspective focused through the viewpoint of a particular spectator.” Word paintings have a “cinematic” effect, as descriptions move from one object to the next, creating a “narrative of landscape.” This “narrative of landscape transforms a static catalogue of visual data into the dramatization of the visual,” writes Flaxman.⁴⁹¹ Among the most well-known Victorian word painters was the artist and writer John Ruskin (1819-1900).⁴⁹² Popular periodicals published his evocative, beautiful passages, and his writings were undoubtedly on the mind of some nineteenth-century Holy Land travelers.⁴⁹³ John Heyl Vincent, for example, while gazing upon the Mount of Transfiguration recalled Ruskin’s vivid description of it.⁴⁹⁴

For some, the practice of word painting also had a spiritual dimension, making it a form particularly suited to the Holy Land. Warren Burton, a reform-minded Unitarian minister with interests in Transcendentalism and phrenology, for example, introduced American readers to the practice of word painting in his *The Scenery-Shower, with Word-Paintings of the Beautiful, the Picturesque, and the Grand in Nature* (1844).⁴⁹⁵ He sought to “awaken perception” of nature and the divine through word paintings of trees, mountains, and water falls, among other things.⁴⁹⁶ “[P]erfected picturings of God lie in exhaustless profusion every where,” waiting to be perceived and documented by the pen.⁴⁹⁷ The Holy Land, for many Protestants, provided a seemingly inexhaustible source of such “perfected picturings.”

Writers often described their works with visual analogies, further underscoring the fraternity between word painting and Holy Land travelogues. William Hepworth Dixon, an English writer, called his *The Holy Land* (1865) “a picture of what [he] then saw and read” while abroad.⁴⁹⁸ In July 1885 *The Chautauquan* published an article titled “Some Damascene Pictures” written by John Fletcher Hurst (1834-1903), Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The article described the city of Damascus. Despite the article’s title, no “pictures” appeared with it; it was only words.⁴⁹⁹ And in a metaphor that mixed the literary and the visual, S. Dryden Phelps, pastor of the First Baptist Church in New Haven, Connecticut,

⁴⁹¹ Rhoda L. Flaxman, *Victorian Word Painting and Narrative: Toward the Blending of Genres* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987), 9–10.

⁴⁹² Alexandra Wettlaufer, *In the Mind’s Eye: The Visual Impulse in Diderot, Baudelaire and Ruskin* (New York: Rodopi, 2003), 244. Though Ruskin is often associated with word painting, he rejected the title “word painter.” He wrote to a friend that the “chief provocation” of his life was “to be called a ‘word painter’ instead of a ‘thinker’” (as quoted in *Ibid.*, 244).

⁴⁹³ John Ruskin, “The Mount of Transfiguration,” *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*, April 1883.

⁴⁹⁴ Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, vi–vii.

⁴⁹⁵ Warren Burton, *The Scenery-Shower, with Word-Paintings of the Beautiful, the Picturesque, and the Grand in Nature* (Boston: W.D. Ticknor & Co., 1844). For a brief biography of Burton, see Nathan Franklin Carter, *The Native Ministry of New Hampshire* (Concord, N.H.: Rumford Printing Company, 1906), 817.

⁴⁹⁶ Burton, *The Scenery-Shower*, 3.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁴⁹⁸ William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1865), v.

⁴⁹⁹ John F. Hurst, “Some Damascene Pictures,” *The Chautauquan* V, no. 10 (July 1885): 559–61.

described his travelogue as offering “a kind of stereoscopic view” of the Holy Land.⁵⁰⁰ Writers clearly aspired for the visual through words.

Protestant writers also treated other writers’ narrative descriptions as picture-like objects that could be reproduced. Consider, for example, Elizabeth Champney’s *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land* (1892). While a fictionalized account, Champney’s book embeds copious, extended quotations from Holy Land authorities, including Edward Robinson, Selah Merrill, Philip Schaff, Dean Stanley, and William Thomson.⁵⁰¹ Champney typically introduces these experts by name only—without reference to their biographies—implying a reader would be familiar with these experts. Champney relies upon previous descriptions where an expert has described a scene particularly evocatively. “The country near Bethlehem, and the town itself, is so well described by Dean Stanley that we cannot do better here than to refer to his description,” reads a typical introduction by Champney to a reproduced description.⁵⁰² Writers treated other narrative descriptions as reproducible and self-contained units, with a certain involubility.

One of the most curious examples of the recycling of Holy Land descriptions is the unusual publishing history of *Youthful Explorers in Bible Lands* (1870), that volume written by Robert Mason, the Freemason poet, minister, and purveyor of Holy Land objects. The book was published in a series designed to “reach the minds of the young by lectures and specimens” and “to publish the results of recent researches in Palestine in a style adapted to youth.”⁵⁰³ *Youthful Explorers* was based upon the fictional diaries of three children, who, as a reward for their assiduous study of the Holy Land, had been sent abroad by their father—a “wealthy and pious merchant of New York.” The children were entrusted to the care of Mr. Richard Fountain, the Superintendent of the children’s Sunday school.⁵⁰⁴ Mr. Fountain plays an important role in ensuring the reliability of the children’s testimony: he, the reader is told, has examined and corrected the children’s accounts.⁵⁰⁵ Further blurring the line between the real and the fictional, Morris’s book refers to actual nineteenth-century figures, including the very real person of the Holy Land enthusiast John Heyl Vincent.⁵⁰⁶

Morris’s book takes the hyper-descriptive quality of Holy Land travelogues to an extreme. A “style adapted to youth” apparently meant describing the world through the eyes of a curious child. On a single page of *Youthful Explorers*, Elliot, the 12-year-old narrator, writes about his breakfast of inordinately large oranges, English tourists’ use of the term “luggage” for “baggage,” and a smelly, dead cat on the steps of a hotel.⁵⁰⁷ Morris’s book enjoyed moderate success, with the sale of some 6,000 copies of *Youthful Explorers* within the first four years of its publication. When the Great Chicago Fire of October 1871, however, destroyed the plates and engravings for the volume, Morris decided to repackage and republish *Youthful Explorers* for an adult audience and under a new title—*Bible Witnesses from Bible Lands* (1874).⁵⁰⁸ He transformed a fictional book into a non-fiction account, bolstering the credibility of the new book

⁵⁰⁰ S. Dryden Phelps, *Holy Land with Glimpses of Europe and Egypt: A Year’s Tour* (New York: Sheldon & Company, 1863), preface.

⁵⁰¹ In Champney’s *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land*, see 78, 145, and 154 for references to Robinson; for Merrill, see 158; for Schaff, see 122; for Stanley, see 206 and 220; and for Thomson (misspelled as Thompson), see 234 and 241.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 206.

⁵⁰³ Morris, *Youthful Explorers*, 4.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 218.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁰⁸ Morris et al., *Bible Witnesses*, 5. The 1871 fire was a great loss for Morris, destroying not only the plates of *Youthful Witnesses* but his Masonic Poems. He vowed, at the time, to never publish again, though he ultimately relented (Morris, *The Poetry of Freemasonry*, vii).

by adding several expert co-authors to the title page: the Reverend John Shelville, who had participated in explorations of the Holy Land, and two Holy Land “residents.”⁵⁰⁹ While the new work dampened some of the guileless enthusiasm for the mundane—the discussion on luggage and the dead cat, for example, were expunged—it nonetheless preserved the format and descriptive content of the earlier fictional work.⁵¹⁰ The descriptions were the core of Morris’s work; everything else was merely a frame that could be exchanged.

It is important to note that the Protestant enthusiasm to minutely document the Holy Land had less enchanting aspects. While travelogues offer evocative and engaging passages, they are also filled with tedious, superfluous descriptions. The compulsion to be a faithful transcriber often got stuck in overdrive, bogging texts down in an overwhelming litany of names, dates, distances, and other details. Detailed descriptions were also not reserved solely for sites of biblical or historical importance. Consider, for example, McGarvey’s description of Turkish barracks in Jerusalem, a passage that appears just a few pages after his Aedicule description:

Moving northward between the west wall and the platform, which are here about fifty yards apart, until you pass the latter, you have before you, in full view, the entire northern wall of the area. The western end of it is really the wall of the soldiers’ barracks; but immediately at the corner, and for a hundred or more yards eastward, the natural rock shows a perpendicular face from thirty down to ten feet above the surface, and supports the wall of the barracks, which rises fifteen or twenty feet higher. The barracks extend about one-third of the way across the northern end of the area, and the remainder of the distance is occupied by a wall about twenty feet high. The ground has a slight downward slope towards the east all along this wall. As we have said before, there are three small gateways through this wall, making, with the five on the western side, eight gates through which ingress is obtained at the present time. All the surface in the north western corner from the wall to the platform, a distance of about one hundred yards, is the natural rock, which has been cut down from a sharp ridge to its present level, leaving the perpendicular rock just mentioned to mark its original elevation.⁵¹¹

This passage presents an inordinately difficult interpretive challenge for a reader who is not actually standing in front of the Turkish barracks. The directional information—north, west, perpendicular, downward—as well as measurements strain the limits of spatial reasoning. Mark Twain satirized passages like this one in his *The Innocents Abroad*. “I like to revel in the dryest details,” Twain wrote upon visiting the Cathedral of Milan. He then offered a meticulous, measured, and exhausting account of the building.⁵¹² As Twain makes evident in his satirization of “the dryest details,” descriptive writing did not always make for good reading. As such, many Holy Land travelogues resemble not so much a leisurely walk through the Holy Land as a long, tiresome slog.

While not every Holy Land travelogue can be considered riveting, such narratives were, indeed, one of the principle ways that the vast majority of Americans ever experienced the Holy

⁵⁰⁹ Morris et al., *Bible Witnesses*, 1.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵¹¹ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 177.

⁵¹² “The building is five hundred feet long by one hundred and eighty wide, and the principle steeple is in the neighborhood of four hundred feet high. It has 7,148 marble statues, and will have upwards of three thousand more when it is finished. In addition, it has one thousand five hundred bas-reliefs. It has one hundred and thirty-six spires—twenty-one more are to be added. Each spire is surmounted by a statue six and a half feet high” (Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 180). Twain’s passage is not far off from actual Protestant descriptions of the Cathedral of Milan. For a comparable description, see McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 612.

Land. Protestants aspired to a comprehensive reproduction of the Holy Land through words. The late nineteenth-century would see attempts, however, to carry out this same comprehensive vision in another medium: that of illustration. It was a medium, some insisted, more capable of an accurate and complete representation than the word alone.

Illustration

Writers often supplemented their vivid Holy Land descriptions with illustrations, as already seen in McGarvey's use of the Holy Sepulchre and Aedicule images. There were a growing number of works, however, in the nineteenth century that placed the focus more squarely on illustrations and images themselves. The Reverend Lyman Abbott strongly supported such illustrated Holy Land works. He saw them not only as instructional but elevating and enlightening. Illustrated works "banish from the home the rude and coarse engravings and the tawdry chromes which in times past have so often furnished the sole art treasure of the American household," wrote Abbott. Illustrated Holy Land works could enlarge a viewer's sense of the world. "No household can have such works as these lying on its center-table and have its children grow up wholly provincial," wrote Abbott.⁵¹³

Illustrations, though, also posed risks. Travel writers went to great lengths to assure readers of the faithfulness, authenticity, and reliability of their narratives—but standalone images rarely came with such assurances as to their veracity. Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey warned against blindly trusting illustrations of biblical scenes because they were often "unfaithful to the originals." He criticized artists who took "liberties" in their representations, and urged both historians and artists to be "faultlessly true in their representations." McGarvey assured his readers that they could trust the images reproduced in his own Holy Land account because he had personally selected them based on their "fidelity."⁵¹⁴

The aspiration for historically faithful representations characterizes many of the most important nineteenth-century painters of the Holy Land. European artists such as David Roberts (1796-1864) and William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) created works based on their personal travels to the Holy Land.⁵¹⁵ By the end of the nineteenth century, America had produced its own painters of the Holy Land, including Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937), born in Pittsburgh to a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Tanner traveled to Palestine in the 1890s with support from Rodman Wanamaker, the department store heir, and produced many biblically-themed paintings.⁵¹⁶

Among the many nineteenth-century Holy Land artists, no artist, though, perhaps satisfied American Protestants' desire for faithful, historical representations of biblical scenes as the French artist James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902). In October 1886 Tissot left his Paris home to paint the Holy Land, producing several hundred biblical scenes over the course of the next decade. Tissot debuted a large collection of these images depicting the life of Christ at

⁵¹³ Lyman Abbott, "The Cradle of Christianity," *Christian Union* 25, no. 3 (January 19, 1882): 73.

⁵¹⁴ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 15. McGarvey does not identify the source for his images but, in several cases, they look strikingly similar to illustrations in William Thomson's *The Land of the Book*. Compare for example the illustrations of the olive branch and berry and of Muslim prayer in McGarvey on pages 56 and 137 with those in volume I of Thomson's *The Land and the Book* on pages 73 and 26.

⁵¹⁵ On Roberts, see Debra N. Mancoff, *David Roberts: Travels in Egypt & the Holy Land* (San Francisco: Pomegranate, 1999). On Hunt, see Katharine Jordan Lochnan et al., *Holman Hunt and the Pre-Raphaelite Vision* (Toronto: Art Galley of Toronto, 2008).

⁵¹⁶ Kristin Schwain discusses Tanner in chapter 2 of *Signs of Grace: Religion and American Art in the Gilded Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

the 1894 Champ de Mars Salon.⁵¹⁷ “[T]ireless in the pursuit of truth, he has represented to us this old life of the Gospels as none other has done, clear, distinct, impressive, the mists of time lifted, the veil of legend pushed aside, those men and women revealed to us breathing and human,” a reviewer wrote of Tissot’s series.⁵¹⁸ Following celebrated exhibitions in Paris and London, Tissot’s “Life of Christ” opened at the American Art Galleries in New York, New York in November 1898.⁵¹⁹ Exhibitions followed in other American cities, including Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, and Chautauqua, New York.⁵²⁰ In 1900, with the endorsement of American clergy, including the Reverend Lyman Abbott, the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts purchased Tissot’s “Life of Christ” series.⁵²¹ Americans had made Tissot’s “Life of Christ” their own.

There exists an unusually rich historical record documenting the reception of Tissot’s “Life of Christ.” Newspapers, magazines, and periodicals reported extensively on Tissot and his series for more than a decade—from the series’ debut in Paris to its arrival in America, its acquisition by the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts to Tissot’s death in 1902. This press coverage helps unravel what Americans found so compelling about Tissot’s project. In particular, it suggests a fascination with Tissot’s artistic vision and process. Why and how Tissot painted—and not necessarily *what* he painted—most inspired the affection of his American Protestant admirers. Protestants marveled at the scope of Tissot’s project: his was a grand, monumental vision that sought to represent all of the life of Christ. Protestants saw this totalizing dimension of Tissot’s project as distinguishing him from earlier Holy Land artists, who, in the words of one reviewer, depicted the Holy Land in a “fragmentary” manner.⁵²² How Tissot sought to paint the Holy Land, in other words, appeared strikingly similar to how Protestant writers discussed in the previous section wrote about it: with an eye toward an encyclopedic documentation of the biblical world, enabled by the assiduous study of historical sources, and yielding a depiction of the Holy Land that emphasized its ultimate integrity, unity, and reality.

As the American press told the story, Tissot’s “Life of Christ” began with a spiritual awakening. Early in his career Tissot was best known for his luminous portraits of wealthy, beautifully adorned women (Figure 4.2).⁵²³ He was a painter of “Parisian frivolities,” in the words of one American reviewer.⁵²⁴ Then, at the midpoint of his career and after moderate

⁵¹⁷ L. K., “The Champ de Mars Salon: James Tissot’s Life of Christ a Marvelous Series,” *The New York Times*, June 10, 1894, 11. The series also appeared under the title *The Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ* and was commonly referred to as *The Life of Christ* (Judith F. Dolkart, ed., *James Tissot: The Life of Christ: The Complete Set of 350 Watercolors* (New York: Merrell Publishers, in association with Brooklyn Museum, 2009), 11).

⁵¹⁸ Edith Coues, “Tissot’s ‘Life of Christ,’” *Century Illustrated Magazine* LI, no. 2 (December 1895): 294.

⁵¹⁹ “The Tissot Pictures and Drawings,” *The New York Times*, November 15, 1898, 6.

⁵²⁰ Clifton Harby Levy, “The Life of Jesus as Illustrated by J. James Tissot,” *The Biblical World* 13, no. 2 (February 1899): 72; Dolkart, *James Tissot*, 39; “The Tissot Pictures,” 97.

⁵²¹ “The Brooklyn Museum,” *The New York Times*, February 4, 1900, 22; “Tissot Pictures Secured,” *The New York Times*, March 29, 1900, 7. Abbott reportedly said that Tissot’s “Life of Christ” allowed viewers to “come as near to living the Christ-life with Christ as is permitted to any one in this modern life of ours.” The institute acquired the Tissot collection in 1900 at a price of \$60,000. On the institute’s acquisition of the series, see Dolkart, *James Tissot*, 35–47.

⁵²² Ernest Knaufft, “The Art of J. James Tissot,” *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* XVIII, no. 6 (December 1898): 667. Knaufft identified Hunt as one artist whose approach to the Holy Land had been fragmentary. Articles on Tissot often noted that Hunt had inspired Tissot (see, for example, “Current News of the Fine Arts,” *The New York Times*, January 28, 1894, 19).

⁵²³ On Tissot’s early works, see Malcolm Warner, *James Tissot: Victorian Life / Modern Love* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

⁵²⁴ John Henry Hughes, “Tissot’s Contribution to Religious Art,” *Brush and Pencil* 10, no. 6 (September 1, 1902): 357.

success, Tissot experienced a life-altering religious vision. The American press reported various accounts of his vision.⁵²⁵ Most mentioned that it occurred in a Parisian church—some that it was Saint Sulpice.⁵²⁶ Some noted that Tissot found himself in the church not out of a religious conviction but simply to make sketches of the interior.⁵²⁷ It was there in the church that Tissot had a vision of Christ, who “with bleeding hands beckoned to him.”⁵²⁸ In response to this vision, Tissot shuttered his studio and departed for Palestine in October 1886.⁵²⁹ The American press presented Tissot’s story as the Horatio Alger story in reverse, with Tissot forsaking a comfortable and urbane life for one of religious piety. “From gay *salons* he made his way to moldering churches,” remarked one American magazine.⁵³⁰



Figure 4.2. Painting titled “Seaside (July: Specimen of a Portrait)” (1878) by James Tissot (1836-1902). The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980.288.

⁵²⁵ Less frequently, the death of a close friend was identified as the turning point that caused Tissot to reassess his life and dedicate himself to the “Life of Christ” project. This story is recounted as the origin point for the project in, for example, Cleveland Moffett, “J. J. Tissot and His Paintings of the Life of Christ: His Own Story of How He Was Drawn to the Work and How It Was Executed,” *McClure’s Magazine* 12, no. 5 (March 1899): 392.

⁵²⁶ James Jacques Joseph Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ*, vol. I (New York: The McClure-Tissot Co., 1899), ix; “The Tissot Pictures,” 397–398.

⁵²⁷ “Art: The Life of Christ as Painted by J. James Tissot,” *Christian Advocate* 73, no. 51 (December 22, 1898): 2099.

⁵²⁸ “J. James Tissot,” *Zion’s Herald* 86, no. 17 (April 22, 1908): 533.

⁵²⁹ Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1899, I:ix; “The Tissot Pictures,” 397–398.

⁵³⁰ Cleveland Moffett, “J. J. Tissot and His Paintings,” 388.

Tissot spent the following eight years painting and sketching biblical scenes based upon his time in the Holy Land.⁵³¹ His goal was to portray the ancient biblical world as realistically as possible. Tissot critiqued earlier artists for their ahistorical—even nonsensical—representations of biblical scenes. “For a long time the imagination of the Christian world has been led astray by the fancies of artists; there is a whole army of delusions to be overturned, before any ideas can be entertained approaching the truth in the slightest degree,” he wrote.⁵³² Tissot traveled between France and the Holy Land, gathering “vivid impressions” in the Holy Land, and then completing most of the final works in France.⁵³³ He relied upon copious notes and sketches for these final works; beginning with his second trip to the Holy Land, he also added a camera to his tool kit.⁵³⁴ Attention had to be paid to the smallest details of what Tissot called the Holy Land’s “[g]eneral data”—its landscapes, structures, local dress, the physiognomies of its residents.⁵³⁵ “With unwearied fidelity [Tissot] studied the land and the people,” reported the Methodist periodical *Zion’s Herald*.⁵³⁶ The ease with which Tissot gathered this “general data” varied considerably. In Egypt, for example, Tissot found the task comparatively easy. There he felt that “the past was palpable in the actual present,” he wrote, “and it appeared to me easy enough to remove the thin layer of modernism encrusting it, so as to bring to light without delay the vestiges of olden times”—a description that implicitly compared Tissot’s process with that of the archaeologist.⁵³⁷ Palestine, by contrast, presented a more challenging recovery.⁵³⁸

Tissot’s labor of nearly a decade was finally revealed at the 1894 Champ de Mars Salon, where he debuted a collection of images documenting the life of Christ. The collection was not yet complete, as Tissot exhibited only 270 of the eventual 350 images.⁵³⁹ American newspapers reported on the stir created by the exhibit. Reviews of the salon had been mixed, with some deeming it the “worst exhibition ever seen in Paris.”⁵⁴⁰ Nonetheless, Tissot’s “Life of Christ” was considered its high point. It was the “artistic hit of the year” trumpeted one article.⁵⁴¹ *The New York Times* deemed Tissot’s series “the Koh-i-noor of the Salon; the gem of all the gems”—a reference to the large diamond that had been a sensation at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851.⁵⁴² In an extravagant burst of commendation, *The New York Times* suggested that Tissot’s work might be “the very highest labor attempted and thoroughly realized in the last fifty years.”⁵⁴³

Tissot’s “Life of Christ” series included a range of images. The majority showed readily identifiable scenes from the life of Christ—from accounts of Jesus’ miracles (Figure 4.3) to critical moments from the passion story (Figure 4.4). Jesus appeared in many of the paintings,

⁵³¹ K., “The Champ de Mars Salon: James Tissot’s Life of Christ,” 11.

⁵³² Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1899, I:ix.

⁵³³ As quoted in Cleveland Moffett, “J. J. Tissot and His Paintings,” 396.

⁵³⁴ Theodore Stanton, “Tissot’s Illustrations of the Gospels,” *Century Illustrated Magazine* XLVIII, no. 2 (June 1894): 244.

⁵³⁵ Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1899, I:x.

⁵³⁶ “J. James Tissot,” 533.

⁵³⁷ Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1899, I:ix–x.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, I:x.

⁵³⁹ Dolkart, *James Tissot*, 23.

⁵⁴⁰ L. K., “The Champ de Mars Salon: Notable Pictures by American and French Masters,” *The New York Times*, May 20, 1894, 20.

⁵⁴¹ H. F., “Why Radicals Are Bitter: They Think the Two Republics Will Help the Tories,” *The New York Times*, July 15, 1894, 1.

⁵⁴² K., “The Champ de Mars Salon: James Tissot’s Life of Christ,” 11. On the history of the Kohinoor and its presence in literature, see Jean Arnold, *Victorian Jewelry, Identity, and the Novel: Prisms of Culture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011), 75.

⁵⁴³ K., “The Champ de Mars Salon: James Tissot’s Life of Christ,” 11.

often identifiable by his white garments. Tissot painted the majority of these biblical scenes in watercolors, using a muted palette that gives the images an overcast quality. The series also included watercolor portraits of key New Testament figures (Figures 4.5 and 4.6). Alongside Tissot's watercolors were also pared back pen-and-ink sketches—a medium to which Tissot often turned for contemporary portraits (Figures 4.7 and 4.8) and landscapes (Figures 4.9 and Figures 4.10). The distinction of medium—watercolor or pen-and-ink sketch—signified a temporal difference: watercolors were most often used for biblical scenes, while the pen-and-ink sketches generally showed contemporary views of the Holy Land and its people.



Figure 4.3. Watercolor titled “The Palsied Man Let Down through the Roof (*Le paralytique descendu du toit*)” (1886-1896) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.123.

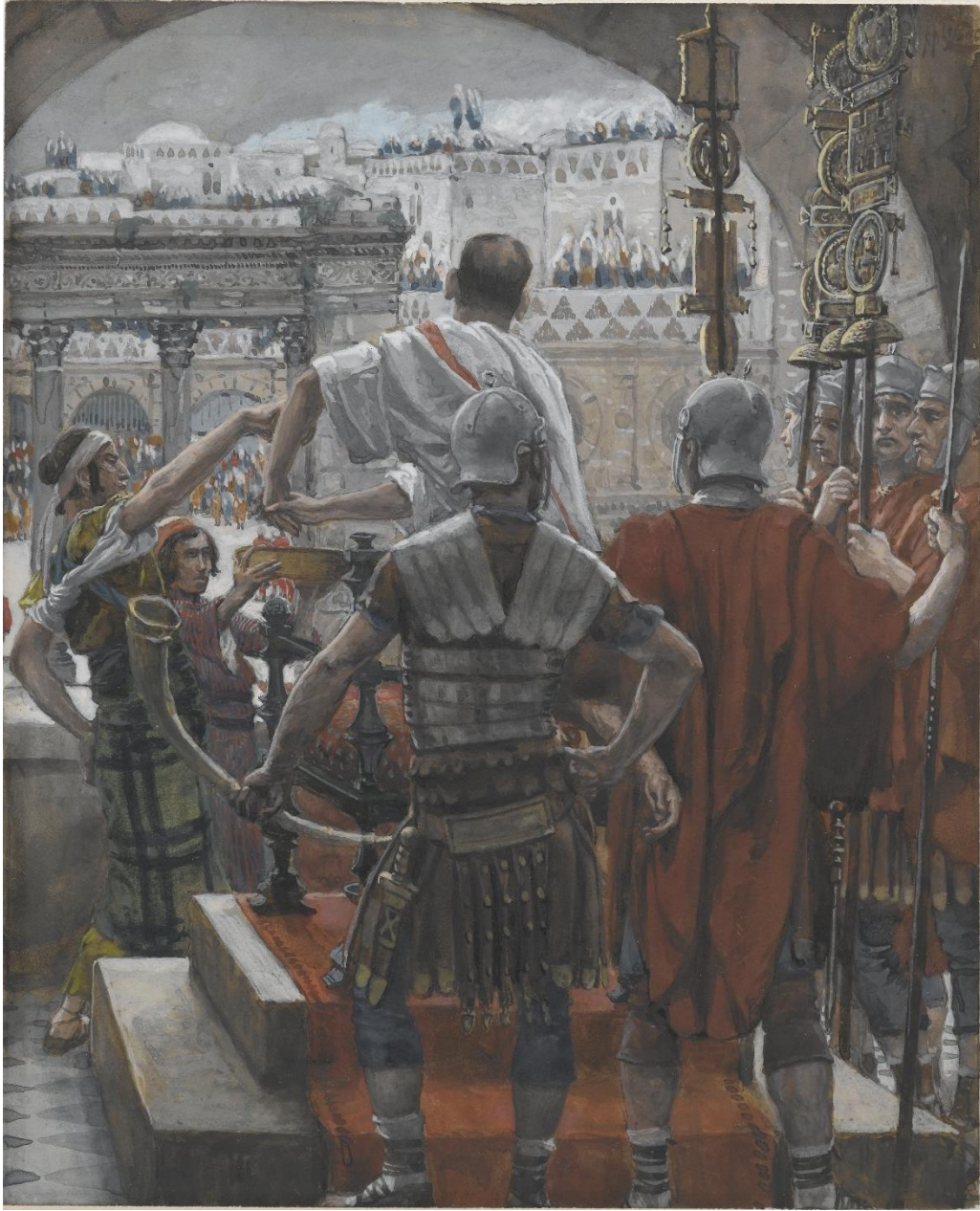


Figure 4.4. Watercolor titled “Pilate Washes His Hands (*Pilate se lave les mains*)” (1886-1894) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.271.



Figures 4.5 and 4.6. Watercolors titled “The Holy Virgin in Her Youth (*La sainte vierge jeune*)” (left) and “Saint Andrew (*Saint André*)” (right) (1886-1894) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.17 and 00.159.57.



Figures 4.7 and 4.8. Pen-and-ink sketches titled “Woman of Geba, Samaria (*Femme de Geba; Samarie*)” (left) and “Type of Jew” (right) (1886-1887 or 1889) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.381 and 00.159.424.2.



Figure 4.9. Pen-and-ink sketch titled “Sea of Tiberias” (1886-1887 or 1889) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.380.



Figure 4.10. Pen-and-ink sketch titled “Lake of Gennesaret near Medgel” (1886-1887 or 1889) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.405.

Tissot carried out his grand, sweeping vision of the life of Christ in surprisingly diminutive sizes. Tissot's watercolors and pen-and-ink sketches were very small when compared with the monumental religious paintings of the period, like those of Gustave Doré, with whom Tissot's work was often compared.⁵⁴⁴ Many of Tissot's watercolors were no more than twelve inches wide⁵⁴⁵—some even smaller at roughly 6 inches square. The small size of the images took some viewers by surprise. One visitor at the first American exhibition of the "Life of Christ" wrote that the "first impression is one almost of disappointment" because the eye first registers the images as simply "an enormous collection of photographs."⁵⁴⁶ The diminutive size of the images forced an intimacy between image and viewer. Dozens of viewers could not crowd beneath one of Tissot's watercolors, as they could a monumental canvas of Doré. Their small size compressed and contained the scenes, as if a viewer were looking alone into a spyglass. The effect, for some viewers, enhanced the images' sense of reality. Peering into the image, the representations are "[s]o real ... that we lose the sense of dimensions and they seem life size," one reviewer wrote.⁵⁴⁷

The impassioned response to Tissot's first exhibition became part of the mythos surrounding the series. The American press described the devout reverence that the images inspired in salon visitors—all the more striking considering Paris was an "unbelieving and iconoclastic" city, in the words of one *Los Angeles Times* writer.⁵⁴⁸ Women moved from painting to painting, "weeping and full of emotion, speechless and deeply moved," while men who "came in chattering and gay, soon began to move about silently, with soft and reverent step."⁵⁴⁹ Not only did Paris' comfortable and urbane classes come to view the series but "[p]leasants came in crowds and fell down on their knees before the pictures, weeping and praying," noted the Methodist periodical *Zion's Herald*.⁵⁵⁰ "To make the round of the 365 pictures is to make a pilgrimage," reported the American magazine *Current Literature*.⁵⁵¹

1898 was an important year in the life of Tissot's images in America. 1898 marked the first American exhibition of the series. The opening exhibition in New York was followed by others throughout the country. Attendance at these exhibits was impressive: an estimated 110,000 people saw a St. Louis exhibit of Tissot's works in October 1899 alone.⁵⁵² 1898 also marked the first American publication of Tissot's *The Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ*, which included reproductions of 365 images.⁵⁵³ Americans could purchase the 4-volume *Life of Our*

⁵⁴⁴ The Doré exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1896 and then Tissot's exhibition in the spring of 1899 led to many such comparisons. Reviewers described Doré as the more imaginative and fanciful of the two painters, but, ultimately, less faithful to the Bible than Tissot. For reviews comparing the two artists, see Charles Francis Browne, "James Tissot's Exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago," *Brush and Pencil* 3, no. 6 (March 1, 1899): 335–41; and "The Note-Book," *The Art Amateur* 40, no. 1 (December 1898): 3.

⁵⁴⁵ "Art: The Life of Christ," 2099.

⁵⁴⁶ "Art Topics of the Week," *The New York Times*, November 19, 1898, 34.

⁵⁴⁷ Browne, "James Tissot's Exhibition," 336.

⁵⁴⁸ "Creator of a New Madonna," *The Los Angeles Times*, November 13, 1898, 6.

⁵⁴⁹ K., "The Champ de Mars Salon: James Tissot's Life of Christ," 11.

⁵⁵⁰ "Tissot's Story of His Paintings," *Zion's Herald* 77, no. 2 (January 11, 1899): 43.

⁵⁵¹ Dublin Freeman, "Tissot's Marvellous Series of Paintings: Picturing the Life of Christ," *Current Literature* XX, no. 2 (August 1896): 159.

⁵⁵² Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, *The Fourteenth Yearbook of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1901-1902* (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1902), 123.

⁵⁵³ James Jacques Joseph Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ: Three Hundred and Sixty Five Compositions, with Notes and Explanatory Drawings* (New York: The Century Co., 1898). The work had been previously published in France and England.

Saviour Jesus Christ—declared the “publishing achievement of the nineteenth century”—though, admittedly, at a fairly steep price.⁵⁵⁴

Tissot and his images were everywhere at the close of the nineteenth century. Magazines advertised reproductions of the images.⁵⁵⁵ Profiles of Tissot appeared.⁵⁵⁶ Churches projected Tissot’s images for their congregations, sometimes accompanied by music and lectures.⁵⁵⁷ The American press lavished virtually limitless praise on Tissot. “In all the history of modern art there is nothing more interesting than the life-work of Monsieur Tissot,”⁵⁵⁸ wrote one reviewer. The images were of “inestimable value” to “thoughtful people of all classes.”⁵⁵⁹ Publishers of Tissot’s images would “contribute more to the diffusion and influence of the Bible than thousands of missionaries and preachers of all creeds.” Tissot, once his work was complete, could “rest blissfully happy in the knowledge of having achieved perhaps the greatest work ever conceived by the human brain.”⁵⁶⁰

This love of Tissot centered upon his avowed commitment to a realistic, historical depiction of the life of Christ. “Believer as he is, Tissot is a realist,” reported *The New York Times*.⁵⁶¹ He had “given a reality to the gospel story”⁵⁶² through his use of “refined realism” and commitment to “absolute verisimilitude.”⁵⁶³ Viewers could trust that he was an artist “ever faithful to facts.”⁵⁶⁴ Reviewers praised his “faithfulness in smallest details,”⁵⁶⁵ his “thorough

⁵⁵⁴ “One Quarter Former Price,” *McClure’s Magazine* 13, no. 6 (October 1899): front material. Reviewers often commented on the steep price of Tissot’s *Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ*, particularly the early volumes published in France. *The New York Times* reported in 1896 that the first twenty volumes issued by the French publisher were being sold for \$1,000 each (H. F., “England and Germany: Intense Anger Provoked by the Kaiser’s Message to Kruger,” *The New York Times*, January 5, 1896, 1). *The Christian Advocate* reported a price of \$150 for the American edition in December 1898 (“Art: The Life of Christ,” 2099). Ten months later, *McClure’s Magazine* announced a dramatic price reduction because of a production surplus, slashing the price to a quarter of the work’s previous price (“One Quarter Former Price,” front material). In April 1900, *The Publishers Weekly* reported that the 4-volume set, available in three different finishes (regular, ¾ leather, and leather), sold at a price of \$30, \$40, and \$50, respectively (“Weekly Record of New Publications,” *The Publishers Weekly* LVII, no. 15 (April 14, 1900): 801). Even at this reduced price, the set remained significantly more expensive than many of the books listed in *The Publishers Weekly*, many of which retailed for between \$1 and \$5.

⁵⁵⁵ “Tissot Pictures in Color,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIII, no. 6 (October 1899): front material.

⁵⁵⁶ Coues, “Tissot’s ‘Life of Christ,’” 289–302. *Century Illustrated Magazine* also published narratives by Tissot. See James Jacques Joseph Tissot, “Christmas at Bethlehem,” *Century Illustrated Magazine* LVII, no. 2 (December 1898): 176–78; and James Jacques Joseph Tissot, “Round About Jerusalem,” *Century Illustrated Magazine* LVII, no. 6 (April 1899): 859–63.

⁵⁵⁷ A letter to the editor in the May 4, 1903 issue of *The New York Times* tells of a Staten Island church that used a stereopticon to project Tissot’s images. A parishioner from the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewater wrote that the church had used a stereopticon—“one of the most modern inventions”—to project Tissot’s images accompanied by “admirable discourses and music.” The author found it a memorable event and offered it as an example for how churches could make their services and activities more “attractive” to congregants (William MacDonald, “Letter to the Editor: Making Churches Attractive,” *The New York Times*, May 4, 1903, 6).

⁵⁵⁸ Freeman, “Tissot’s Marvellous Series of Paintings,” 158.

⁵⁵⁹ Coues, “Tissot’s ‘Life of Christ,’” 302.

⁵⁶⁰ K., “The Champ de Mars Salon: James Tissot’s Life of Christ,” 11.

⁵⁶¹ Charles de Kay, “A Believer’s Pictures of Christ,” *The New York Times*, December 11, 1898, sec. illustrated magazine supplement, 7.

⁵⁶² Levy, “The Life of Jesus,” 78.

⁵⁶³ Hughes, “Tissot’s Contribution,” 358.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 364.

⁵⁶⁵ Cleveland Moffett, “J. J. Tissot and His Paintings,” 392.

manner,”⁵⁶⁶ and his “pure realism tempered by sincere faith.”⁵⁶⁷ He had infused religious art with a “new and realistic life,”⁵⁶⁸ leaving viewers with the sense that they had seen the “true representation of the sacred story.”⁵⁶⁹ It was Tissot’s commitment to “realistic truth,” a reviewer explained, rather than to simply “grace and beauty,” that is “the great difference between the golden age of the renaissance and the art of to-day.”⁵⁷⁰ According to his supporters, Tissot’s commitment to truth, history, and realism made his art of interest to modern, critical audiences.

The American press also lauded Tissot as a scholar. One writer suggested that Tissot’s “Life of Christ” was only possible because of the artist’s “rare combination” of skills: he had “the master’s hand” and “the soul of the religious enthusiast” but also “the scholar’s mind.”⁵⁷¹ Articles detailed the many sources Tissot consulted in creating his images. “He pored over musty old commentaries on the Bible, studied archaeology, mastered the Talmud, devoured books of Eastern travel, read the history of the Jews and Arabs, and went over the scripture again and again in the Vulgate and in the French and English translations,” wrote one reviewer. Tissot “saturated his mind with his subject.”⁵⁷² This tremendous amount of research one reviewer called “appalling”—but supposedly all the better for Tissot’s art and his audience.⁵⁷³

Tissot’s “Life of Christ” resonated with the material gospel theology of the Holy Land in several ways. First, Tissot’s images echoed Protestants’ desire to walk in Christ’s footsteps. “M. Tissot followed literally in the very footsteps of Christ,” reported the *Los Angeles Times*.⁵⁷⁴ “In the minute exactitude of the portrayal one may follow the events with something of the intensity of an eye-witness,” wrote another reviewer.⁵⁷⁵ The narrative in the book format of Tissot’s *Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ* reinforced the idea that these images were portals to a first-person experience of the biblical past. Italicized text running throughout the book provided a moment-by-moment narration that adopted many techniques of travel writing. A passage describing the trial of Jesus reads, for example:

The crowd is increasing rapidly, swelled by the dregs of the populace of Jerusalem. A stone parapet, however, protects the Judgment Hall itself from being invaded. The latter is full: Caiaphas as President occupies an armchair in the center, whilst the other judges, who have been purposely chosen from amongst the enemies of Jesus, are ranged in the semicircle of seats on either side. Opposite to the Presidential Chair, in the entrance indicated by two columns supporting lamps, stands Jesus bound. His hands tied together with cords, the ends of which are held by His guards.⁵⁷⁶

The present-tense descriptions—that the crowd “is increasing rapidly,” that the Judgment Hall “is full”—places the reader in the midst of the action. The description also emphasizes relationality between objects, as often found in travel writing. The reader is told, for example, that Caiaphas is at the center, while Jesus’ enemies are arranged “in the semicircle of seats on

⁵⁶⁶ Stanton, “Tissot’s Illustrations of the Gospels,” 246.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 247.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 246.

⁵⁶⁹ Freeman, “Tissot’s Marvellous Series of Paintings,” 158.

⁵⁷⁰ Browne, “James Tissot’s Exhibition,” 336.

⁵⁷¹ Coues, “Tissot’s ‘Life of Christ,’” 302.

⁵⁷² Stanton, “Tissot’s Illustrations of the Gospels,” 244.

⁵⁷³ “Art: The Life of Christ,” 2099.

⁵⁷⁴ “Creator of a New Madonna,” 6.

⁵⁷⁵ Coues, “Tissot’s ‘Life of Christ,’” 292.

⁵⁷⁶ James Jacques Joseph Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ*, vol. 3 (New York: The Werner Company, 1903), 362.

either side.” Such descriptive writing when read in conjunction with Tissot’s images transformed them into action-filled scenes in which the viewer participated. One of Tissot’s most unorthodox compositions took this idea to an extreme, placing the viewer in the position of Christ on the cross, looking out at the crowds before and beneath him (Figure 4.11). With no visible horizon, onlookers fill the image, looking up at the viewer/Christ—including Mary Magdalene, the disciples, and a Roman centurion. An open tomb is visible in the background. The composition took the idea of standing in the footsteps of Christ to the extreme.



Figure 4.11. Watercolor titled “What Our Lord Saw from the Cross” (1886–94) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.299.

Tissot's images also reinforced a unified vision of the Holy Land, of biblical history, and of the life of Christ, as the material gospel theology also did. Tissot had given Christians "a grand consecutive, graphic narrative of the life of Christ," one reviewer approvingly wrote.⁵⁷⁷ Protestant writers used relational, descriptive narratives to move readers both through the Holy Land and the life of Christ in a linear, step-by-step manner. The seriality of Tissot's images had a similar effect: there was one image, and then another and another and another for hundreds more. "Tissot's art at the best is panoramic," wrote one reviewer. "We see as from a balloon," the reviewer continued, recalling Philip Schaff's promise that his book would take readers on a "flying visit" of the Holy Land.⁵⁷⁸ Tissot's images gave the Holy Land, biblical history, and the life of Jesus a unity and wholeness.

Tissot wanted his images to ultimately influence, if not reorder, how people read the Bible, as evidenced by the book format of *Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ*. The 4-volume book reproduced Tissot's images side-by-side with the biblical text in two columns—Latin on the left and English on the right. The images guided a harmonized arrangement of the scripture. For example, following a description of Jesus entering the court of Caiaphas, a series of scriptural passages appear, labeled with the following headings: The First Denial of Saint Peter, The Second Denial of Saint Peter, The High Priest Rends His Clothes, and The Lord Turned and Looked Upon Peter (The Third Denial). This apparently linear narrative depended, however, upon a very non-linear movement through the gospels; the chronologically arranged passages come from John 18:15-18; John 18:25 and Luke 22:56; Matthew 26:63-65; and Luke 22:59-61.⁵⁷⁹ Tissot's images supported a gospel harmony, reordering and rewriting scripture into a grand historical narrative.

Protestants' perception of Tissot's "Life of Christ" series resonated with the material gospel theology—but Protestants also tended to downplay or neglect certain aspects of Tissot's biography and work that might have drawn into question their crowning of him as the historically accurate biblical painter, *par excellence*. In particular, the presence of supernatural figures in Tissot's images, his Catholic faith, and the spiritualist aspects of his artistic process presented challenges to Protestants' co-option of Tissot as an emblem of historical realism.

Haunting, supernatural figures make regular appearances in Tissot's paintings. Tissot's Jesus has an ethereal, otherworldly appearance, luminously clothed in white in many scenes (Figure 4.12). Images depict the risen dead (Figure 4.13), angels (Figure 4.14), and Satan (Figure 4.15), including one image where Tissot, to the humor of one reviewer, depicted Satan as "a long black transparent monster of human form with bat's wings."⁵⁸⁰ For Tissot, these numinous elements did not conflict with his own understanding of historical realism, but, for others, they seemed out of place. "Tissot fails with the supernatural," wrote one reviewer.⁵⁸¹ The appearance of these supernatural elements in an oeuvre that otherwise aspired for historical realism gave Tissot's images a touch of the "comic and grotesque," some felt.⁵⁸²

⁵⁷⁷ Knaufft, "The Art of J. James Tissot," 667.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.; Schaff, *Through Bible Lands*, 11.

⁵⁷⁹ Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1903, 3:363–367.

⁵⁸⁰ S. Beale, "Monsieur J. James Tissot's 'Life of Christ,'" *The American Architect and Building News* 52, no. 1068 (June 13, 1896): 103. Beale was likely referring to Tissot's image "Jesus Carried up to a Pinnacle of the Temple (*Jésus porté sur le pinacle du Temple*)" (1886-1894).

⁵⁸¹ Freeman, "Tissot's Marvellous Series of Paintings," 158.

⁵⁸² Beale, "Monsieur J. James Tissot's 'Life of Christ,'" 103.



Figure 4.12. Watercolor titled “The Lord’s Prayer (*Le Pater Noster*)” (1886-1896) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.167.



Figure 4.13. Watercolor titled “The Dead Appear in Jerusalem (*Les morts apparaissent dans Jérusalem*)” (1886-1894) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.312.



Figure 4.14. Watercolor titled “Jesus Ministered to by Angels (*Jésus assisté par les anges*)” (1886-1894) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.54.



Figure 4.15. Watercolor titled “Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness (*Jésus tenté dans le désert*)” (1886-1894) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.51.

Tissot’s Catholicism also troubled some Protestants. The degree to which reviewers acknowledged Tissot’s personal faith varied considerably. Some articles noted that Tissot was a “faithful son of the Roman Catholic church,”⁵⁸³ while others said little if anything of his religious allegiance. A reviewer of an exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago, for example, made no mention of Tissot’s Catholicism, opting instead to stress his independence from outside influences: “No wealthy patron dictates what shall be done, what subjects, dimensions, colors and sentiments shall be chosen. James Tissot is here his own master, both in thought and production.”⁵⁸⁴ The reviewer stressed Tissot’s commitment to Christ’s divinity—the “fundamental belief of the Christian religion” and “a sentiment and conviction all too rare in these days.”⁵⁸⁵ Tissot was described as “a straightforward, honest believer in the existence and Godhead of the Saviour.”⁵⁸⁶ Others noted that Tissot was “an ardent student of the Bible”⁵⁸⁷ How Tissot carried out his work—his piety, devotion, and aesthetic lifestyle—prompted comparisons of him to “a monk of the middle ages”⁵⁸⁸ or “a palmer in the days of the Crusade.”⁵⁸⁹ Tissot’s allegiance to his task often took center stage over his allegiance to the Catholic Church.

The element of Tissot’s identity most frequently neglected by Protestants in order to make the artist fit into the mold of a historical, realist painter was the influence of mystical, spiritualist practices on Tissot’s artistic process. Nineteenth-century American Protestants were

⁵⁸³ Stanton, “Tissot’s Illustrations of the Gospels,” 247.

⁵⁸⁴ Browne, “James Tissot’s Exhibition,” 335.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 341, 340.

⁵⁸⁶ de Kay, “A Believer’s Pictures of Christ,” 7.

⁵⁸⁷ “J. James Tissot,” 533.

⁵⁸⁸ Coues, “Tissot’s ‘Life of Christ,’” 300.

⁵⁸⁹ “Tissot’s Story of His Paintings,” 42.

hardly averse to spiritualism; indeed, as discussed in chapter 2, spiritualism strongly patterned Protestant views of the Holy Land. But Tissot's spiritualism proved hard to square with the image of him as the scholar-artist who got the details right through assiduous biblical and historical research. Tissot's introductory remarks to his *The Life of Our Saviour* make clear the spiritualist dimensions of his artistic process. His fascinating description of how he produced the images is worth quoting in full:

I had to identify myself as much as possible with the Gospels; to read them over and over again a hundred times, and there is no doubt that it is in the Holy Land itself, on the very spots where all the sublime scenes described took place, the mind is best attuned alike to receive and grasp the significance of every impression. Sometimes, indeed, as I trod the very path over which the feet of the Saviour had passed; when I realized that my eyes were reflecting the very landscape on which He had gazed, I felt that a certain receptivity was induced in my mind which so intensified my powers of intuition, that the scenes of the past rose up before my mental vision in a peculiar and striking manner. In the same way, penetrated as I became with the spirit of the race to which the actors in these scenes belonged, realizing as I did the character of the districts in which they lived and moved; with the local colour of the familiar objects by which they were surrounded; when, thus prepared, I meditated on any special incident in its own peculiar sanctuary, and was thus brought into touch with the actual setting of every scene, the facts I was anxious to evoke were revealed to me in all their ideality and under the most striking forms. Is not the artist, indeed, a kind of sensitive plant, the activity of which, when concentrated on a certain point, is intensified, and through a kind of hyperæsthesia, is powerfully affected by contact with objects outside of itself; this contact producing vivid images on the brain?⁵⁹⁰

Tissot's artistic process, as he described it, relied not just upon scholarly research but quasi-mystical practices to get the historical facts of his images right. His use of words like "sublime," "the mind," "receptivity," and "intuition" reflects the late nineteenth-century fascination with spiritualism and mysticism. Indeed, his metaphor of the artist as "a kind of sensitive plant" under the effects of "hyperæsthesia"—or heightened sensitivity—recalls the practices of automatic writing explored by Spiritualists at the end of the nineteenth century.⁵⁹¹ Similar to the Spiritualist claim that a person could become a passive conduit for messages from the spirit world, so Tissot suggests that contact with the Holy Land produced "vivid images on the brain." Tissot knew how this process must have sounded to his readers—and he worried he would be "accused of mysticism."⁵⁹²

The American press only rarely addressed the more mystical aspects of Tissot's production of his "Life of Christ." One of the few articles that focused on this particular dimension of Tissot's work was a March 1899 article by Cleveland Moffett for *McClure's Magazine*. Moffett, an American journalist and author, spent several weeks with Tissot, and the resulting article contains one of the most extended discussions of Tissot's quasi-mystical practices. Moffett explained to his readers that when Tissot created a new image, he began with a very rough sketch. "[O]nly black ovals for the heads and a few rough lines for the bodies," wrote Moffett. Then, "a strange thing would happen, a rather uncanny thing":

⁵⁹⁰ Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1899, I:x–xi.

⁵⁹¹ Works like Sara Underwood's *Automatic or Spirit Writing, with Other Psychic Experiences* (Chicago: T. G. Newman, 1896), published just two years before Tissot's first American exhibition, brought the practice of automatic writing into the public eye.

⁵⁹² Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1899, I:xi. A "religious mystic" was, in fact, how some remembered Tissot upon his death in 1902 (see, for example, Hughes, "Tissot's Contribution," 357).

Scientists have called it ‘hyperæsthesia,’ a super sensitiveness of the nerves having to do with vision. And this is it—and it happened over and over again, until it became an ordinary occurrence—M. Tissot, being now in a certain state of mind and having some conception of what he wished to paint, would bend over the white paper with its smudged surface, and, looking intently at the oval marked for the head of Jesus or some holy person, would see the whole picture there before him, the colors, the garments, the faces, everything that he needed and had already half conceived.⁵⁹³

Tissot intently memorized this image that appeared in his mind’s eye, and then reproduced it on the page. The final product, Tissot admitted, fell short of the more glorious images he saw: “the things that I have seen in the life of Christ, but could not remember! They were too splendid to keep,” Tissot told Moffett.⁵⁹⁴

Moffett acknowledged how bizarre this talk of hyperæsthesia must have sounded to his American readers, and he sought to normalize it. “Let me not give the idea that there is anything abnormal about M. Tissot,” Moffett wrote. Moffett framed Tissot’s hyperæsthesia in terms of biology and the brain. Tissot simply had “a high degree” of “sensitiveness to color impulses to the brain”—a biological trait that Cleveland suggested Tissot shared with many other artists.⁵⁹⁵ Nonetheless, Moffett admitted that Tissot had an unusual air about him. “Each time I saw him he told me strange things,” wrote Moffett in his final paragraph of his profile.⁵⁹⁶

As beloved as Tissot’s “Life of Christ” was, it could not escape all theological critiques. Some questioned, for example, the images’ historical and biblical accuracy. A February 1899 review in *The Churchman* pointed to Tissot’s depiction of the Sermon on the Mount as an example of a scriptural inaccuracy. The image showed Jesus delivering the Sermon on the Mount while standing—whereas scripture indicated that Jesus seated himself before speaking.⁵⁹⁷ The author would not let Tissot off easily for this error, writing that this “misconception on the part of the artist” was “of a very grave and serious character.”⁵⁹⁸ Others worried about Tissot’s incorporation of supra-biblical material. The Reverend Johnston Myers at the Immanuel Baptist Church in Chicago questioned Tissot’s image showing “the holy face on the handkerchief”—almost certainly a reference to Tissot’s image of Saint Veronica (Figure 4.16).⁵⁹⁹ Myers charged that the source for this images was not the Bible but the “artist’s prejudices,” a thinly veiled critique of Tissot’s Catholicism.

⁵⁹³ Cleveland Moffett, “J. J. Tissot and His Paintings,” 394.

⁵⁹⁴ As quoted in *ibid.*

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 396.

⁵⁹⁷ Matthew 5:1-2 (KJV): “¹And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: ²And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying...”

⁵⁹⁸ Eremita Peregrinus, “The Ministry of Christ in the Pictures of J. James Tissot,” *The Churchman* LXXIX, no. 6 (February 11, 1899): 219.

⁵⁹⁹ Tissot’s *The Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ* included a two-page spread on Saint Veronica, including one image showing her wiping Christ’s face and another holding the shroud aloft. See Tissot, *The Life of Our Saviour*, 1903, 3:412–413.



Figure 4.16. Watercolor titled “The Holy Face (*La sainte face*)” (1886-1894) by Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.284.

Some also questioned whether Tissot had relied too heavily on the modern Holy Land in creating his biblical scenes. “[W]e must be on our guard against believing too easily that the barren Palestine of to-day, desolated by generation after generation of invaders, trampled by Mohammedan hordes, ... is the land represented on the highest authority as a land flowing with milk and honey, a good land,” wrote a reviewer for *The Churchman*. The same caution extended to assuming that physiognomies of Holy Land residents had remained unchanged. While Tissot had made careful studies of modern Holy Land residents to populate his images, some critics argued that this was a mistake to equate contemporary Holy Land residents with those of the biblical past. One reviewer, for example, in a curious case of racialized, evolutionary reasoning, argued that the physical features of modern Jews were vastly different from their ancestors. The faces of contemporary Jews told a story, but not of the Bible; instead it was the story of “bitter persecution and oppression, of centuries of degraded and cruel ostracism” that have been “written on the countenance of this profoundly sensitive and emotional race ...”⁶⁰⁰ To assume that the Jews of today resembled the Jews of the Bible was a mistake, according to this reviewer.

⁶⁰⁰ Peregrinus, “The Ministry of Christ,” 220.

Tissot's depiction of Jesus came under question, too. One reviewer found Tissot's Jesus "commonplace and uninteresting."⁶⁰¹ The weekly newspaper of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Christian Advocate*, felt that Tissot had erred in making his Jesus appear too human and not divine enough.⁶⁰² Others pointed to how the washed out, nearly gray cast of Tissot's watercolors gave Jesus a somber appearance. "One gets an impression everything about Christ's life was tinged with sadness, bitterness, dismay, and terror," wrote Myers, the Baptist minister in Chicago. Tissot did not capture the joyful, happy, uplifting Jesus that Myers believed stood at the center of the gospels.⁶⁰³

Others also wondered whether Tissot's commitment to portraying the real history of the Bible had gone too far. Literalness had become a "fault" in Tissot's works suggested *The Christian Advocate*.⁶⁰⁴ One reviewer wished for more emotion and less historical accuracy. While Tissot had an uncanny sense for the real—including the "realistic horrors" of the crucifixion—an absence of emotion made Tissot's works "hard and dry at times." "[T]opographical and historical truth are as nothing compared with the true sentiment," wrote this reviewer.⁶⁰⁵

Interest in Tissot and his "Life of Christ" series waned in the first two decades of the twentieth century. After completing the series, Tissot turned to illustrating scenes from the Old Testament. The project remained incomplete at his death in 1902, and it never garnered the critical acclaim that the New Testament images did.⁶⁰⁶ By the 1930s the Brooklyn Museum had removed Tissot's "Life of Christ" from permanent exhibition.⁶⁰⁷ An aura of facticity, historicity, and authenticity, nonetheless, continued to surround the series. They were standard-bearers for the "real" picture of Palestine in the time of Jesus—so much so that in the 1920s the Religious Motion Picture Foundation continued to consult Tissot's works to guarantee the historical accuracy of the movies it produced for use in churches.⁶⁰⁸

Tissot's quest for historical and biblical accuracy and the process by which he created his images captivated the American public—but his process was not infallible. For his critics, Tissot himself was his art's greatest liability, as they questioned his accuracy, skill, and personal biases. For some, though, there appeared a medium capable of overcoming these exact problems: photography. By removing the artist, perhaps the questions of accuracy, skill, and bias in reproducing the Holy Land could also be eliminated, some Protestants would hope.

Photograph

The development of photography in the nineteenth century offered a new means to reproduce the material gospel of the Holy Land. The British and French outpaced Americans in their adoption of this new technology,⁶⁰⁹ with both countries producing some of the most famous names in nineteenth-century Holy Land photography, including the English photographers

⁶⁰¹ Beale, "Monsieur J. James Tissot's 'Life of Christ,'" 103.

⁶⁰² "Art: The Life of Christ," 2099.

⁶⁰³ "Dr. Myers on Tissot's Art: Criticises the Collection's Historical Truth and Challenges the Tone of Sadness in the Pictures," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 13, 1899, 10.

⁶⁰⁴ "Art: The Life of Christ," 2099.

⁶⁰⁵ Beale, "Monsieur J. James Tissot's 'Life of Christ,'" 103.

⁶⁰⁶ "Tissot's Old Testament: Last Works of the Illustrator of the New Testament on View," *The New York Times*, November 26, 1904, 9.

⁶⁰⁷ "To Exhibit Tissot's Works: Paintings of the Life of Christ to Be on View in Brooklyn," *The New York Times*, November 7, 1925, 15; Dolkart, *James Tissot*, 45.

⁶⁰⁸ "Religious Stories Filmed For Use in Small Churches," *The New York Times*, August 1, 1926, sec. 7, 2.

⁶⁰⁹ Hallote, "Photography and the American Contribution to Early 'Biblical' Archaeology," 28.

Francis Frith, Frank Mason Good, James Graham, James McDonald, and the Reverend George Wilson Bridges, as well as the French photographers Félix Bonfils, Maxime Du Champ, Louis De Clercq, and Auguste Salzmänn.⁶¹⁰ Some of these photographers capitalized on the commercial possibilities for Holy Land images.⁶¹¹ James T. Barclay, the Disciples of Christ minister, doctor, missionary, and author of *The City of the King* (1857), claimed to be one of the first Americans to photograph the Holy Land.⁶¹² While Americans lagged compared to their European counterparts in their adoption of photography as an artistic medium, they were leaders in its use as a tool in archaeological investigations of the Holy Land.⁶¹³

Photography appeared to offer a new means to ensure the faithfulness of a representation—a quality, as already seen, highly prized by Protestants in Holy Land reproductions. “We well know how often *the pencil* is proved to be treacherous and deceptive; while on the other hand the *fac simile* of the scene must be given by the aid of the *photograph*,” wrote the Reverend Albert Augustus Isaacs (1826-1903) of England, one of the earliest photographers of the Holy Land.⁶¹⁴ Isaacs’s description of the photograph as a “*fac simile*” recalls scholar Jennifer Lewis-Green’s observation that photographs were often seen in the nineteenth century as “apparently authorless texts.”⁶¹⁵ The mythology around nineteenth-century photography, argues Lewis, included the idea that the medium “had a mission, a moral purpose, which was to relate the truth.”⁶¹⁶ Photography supposedly avoided questions of artistic bias and skill that dogged even artists considered the most faithful to their subjects, like Tissot. It also eliminated confusing questions of time: when Protestants voiced a desire for “faithful representations,” they could mean “faithful” in several different senses. They could mean faithful to history, faithful to the Bible, or faithful to a place as it existed in the present. The photograph appeared to eliminate this confusion: it was faithful to the moment it was taken.

Many Protestants saw photographs as substantial improvements over illustrations. In 1895 a new edition of John Brown’s popular *The Self-Interpreting Bible* appeared that incorporated reproductions of Holy Land photographs.⁶¹⁷ Its editors claimed that it was the

⁶¹⁰ The catalogs of two museum exhibitions on nineteenth-century Holy Land photography offer beautiful reproductions of many of these images: Kathleen Stewart Howe, *Revealing the Holy Land: The Photographic Exploration of Palestine* (Santa Barbara, CA: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, distributed by the University of California Press, 1997); and Claire L. Lyons and J. Paul Getty Museum, *Antiquity & Photography: Early Views of Ancient Mediterranean Sites* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005).

⁶¹¹ Frith, in particular, profited from the commodification of travel photographs. In 1859 he founded Francis Frith & Co., a photography printing and publishing firm largely devoted to travel images (Maxim Leonid Weintraub, “Francis Frith & Co.,” ed. John Hannavy, *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography* (New York: Routledge, 2008)).

⁶¹² Hallote, “Photography and the American Contribution to Early ‘Biblical’ Archaeology,” 28.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 26–41.

⁶¹⁴ Albert Augustus Isaacs, *The Dead Sea* (London: Hatchard and Son, 1857), 4. Isaacs claimed in a letter to John Ruskin that he had been “the first person (1856) to take any photography of importance in the Holy Land” (as quoted in Roger Taylor, *Impressed by Light: British Photographs from Paper Negatives, 1840-1860* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007), 334).

⁶¹⁵ Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians: Photography and the Culture of Realism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), 4.

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁷ James Wideman Lee, Henry Cooke, and John Brown, *The Self-Interpreting Bible, with Commentaries, References, Harmony of the Gospels and the Helps Needed to Understand and Teach the Text* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Pub. Co., 1895). This book is one of many revisions of John Brown’s *The Self-Interpreting Bible* (Edinburgh: Printed by Gavin Alston, 1778). Like Brown’s original edition, the 1895-1896 version included copious supplementary materials, such as charts, tables, and indexes. All told the supplementary items totaled more than 200 pages. One of the editors of the 1895-1896 edition explained that the title *The Self-Interpreting Bible* referred not to the idea that scripture was self-interpreting but that the volume bundled together scripture with the necessary materials for its

“first to carry out the unique idea of specifically showing by means of PHOTOGRAPHY the actual places mentioned in the Bible.”⁶¹⁸ The volume’s editors criticized earlier illustrated Bibles. Those illustrated volumes “may contain sacred pictures of a general nature, such as portraits, copies of well-known paintings, representing scenes and incidents of more or less importance” but their pictures were nonetheless “wholly imaginary and hence untrue.” The camera, by contrast, was an instrument of truth, according to the editors. *The Self-Interpreting Bible* “show[s] by means of the absolutely perfect record of the camera, and also in immediate connection with the text, those very places of Bible event, as they now appear,” the editors wrote.⁶¹⁹

Not all, though, embraced photography as a perfect technology of reproduction. Concerns persisted about its accuracy. The Reverend Lyman Abbott, who, recall, was an adamant supporter of Tissot’s paintings, voiced concerns about photography. Abbott’s critical views appear in his review of *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt* (1881-1883), an ambitious volume that followed upon the successful release of *Picturesque America* (1872-1874) and *Picturesque Europe* (1875). *Picturesque Palestine* brought together an illustrious list of contributors, including church historian Philip Schaff, American Consul Selah Merrill, and Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the Dean of Westminster and author of a popular Holy Land book. The publisher of *Picturesque Palestine* recruited artists to create hundreds of new illustrations for the volume.⁶²⁰ This decision to use illustrations and not photographs was, Abbott felt, the right one. “The photograph aims to reproduce Nature, yet it can give but an imperfect hint of her. The artist interprets Nature, and if he be a true artist, gives her inward meaning as the photograph can not,” wrote Abbott.⁶²¹

Opinions about the disadvantages of photographs, like Abbott’s, as well as technological and cost barriers, slowed the use of photographs in Holy Land books in the second half of the nineteenth century. The vast majority of such works—even those considered the most advanced and innovative for their time, like *Picturesque Palestine*—continued to use sketches, engravings, and maps. Books with numerous photographs were the exception. Despite the Reverend Isaacs’s distrust of “treacherous and deceptive” illustrations, for example, his two most famous volumes—*The Dead Sea* (1857) and *A Pictorial Tour in the Holy Land* (1862)—included sketches based upon his photographs, not reproductions of the photographs themselves.⁶²² By 1887 Josias Leslie Porter (1823-1899)—an Irish Presbyterian missionary and author of a beloved Holy Land guidebook—estimated that “photographs have done much to make holy sites familiar in every Christian household.”⁶²³ Nonetheless, Porter also illustrated his book with engravings based upon photographs and not the actual photographs themselves.

The tide began to turn in the 1890s. The advent of mass-marketed, handheld cameras brought photography to a new audience. “You press the button, we do the rest,” promised an

interpretation: “This work could have no more fitting title than the name it bears,” as “bound up with the text of the Holy Scriptures there are all the helps, tables, commentaries, dictionaries, illustrations and side lights necessary to enable any one to understand it” (1:5).

⁶¹⁸ Lee, Cooke, and Brown, *The Self-Interpreting Bible*, 1:5, emphasis original.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:5.

⁶²⁰ Charles Wilson et al., *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1881). On the creation of this volume, including the recruitment of artists, see Sue Rainey, “Illustration ‘Urgently Required’: The Picturesque Palestine Project, 1878-83,” *Prospects* 30 (2005): 181–260.

⁶²¹ Abbott, “The Cradle of Christianity,” 73.

⁶²² Isaacs, *The Dead Sea*; Albert Augustus Isaacs, *A Pictorial Tour in the Holy Land* (London: Wertheim, Macintosh & Hunt, 1862).

⁶²³ Porter, *Jerusalem, Bethany and Bethlehem*, 11–13. Porter’s earlier book was *A Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine*, Murray’s Handbooks for Travellers (London: J. Murray, 1858). David Austin Randall, the Baptist minister from Ohio who went to the Holy Land in 1861, described Porter’s handbook as indispensable (Randall, *The Handwriting of God*, viii).

1890s advertisement for the Eastman Company's Kodak Cameras (Figure 4.17).⁶²⁴ Publishers advertised "Oriental" photographs for use in stereopticons (Figure 4.18). Books increasingly included photographs alongside engravings, as in the case of Elizabeth Champney's *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land* (1892). Champney's book was the final volume in her young adult series that followed the globetrotting adventures of Emma, Violet, and Bird.⁶²⁵ The vast majority of the book's illustrations continued to be engravings and sketches that looked much as they would have in earlier Holy Land works—but the novel also incorporated a handful of photographs, complicating the simple categorization of the book as purely fiction (Figures 4.19 and 4.20).⁶²⁶

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Figure 4.17. Advertisement for Kodak cameras (1890). From Bingham Reynolds, *The Standard Guide: St. Augustine* (St. Augustine, Florida: E.H. Reynolds, 1890).

⁶²⁴ Charles Bingham Reynolds, *The Standard Guide: St. Augustine* (St. Augustine, Florida: E.H. Reynolds, 1890). The "we do the rest" slogan alluded not just to the technology within the camera but how the film was processed. In the 1890s Eastman sold hand-held cameras pre-loaded with film that consumers mailed intact for processing, such that Eastman, quite literally, did the rest (Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age, 1865-1905* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2005), 90).

⁶²⁵ A complete list of books in Champney's series is printed in the front matter of *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land*.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, 209, 221.

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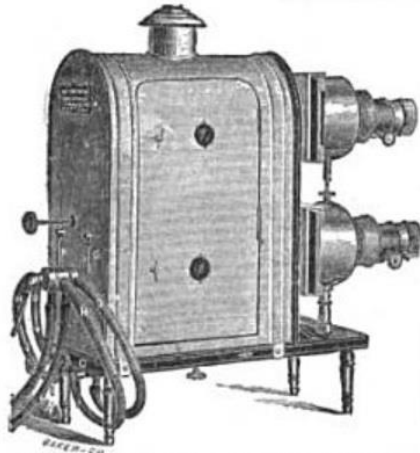
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Figure 4.18. Advertisement for “Oriental and American Photographs” (1890). From *The Standard Guide: St. Augustine*.



Figure 4.19. Photograph titled “A Woman of Bethlehem” (unknown artist and date). From Champney, *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land*, page 209.

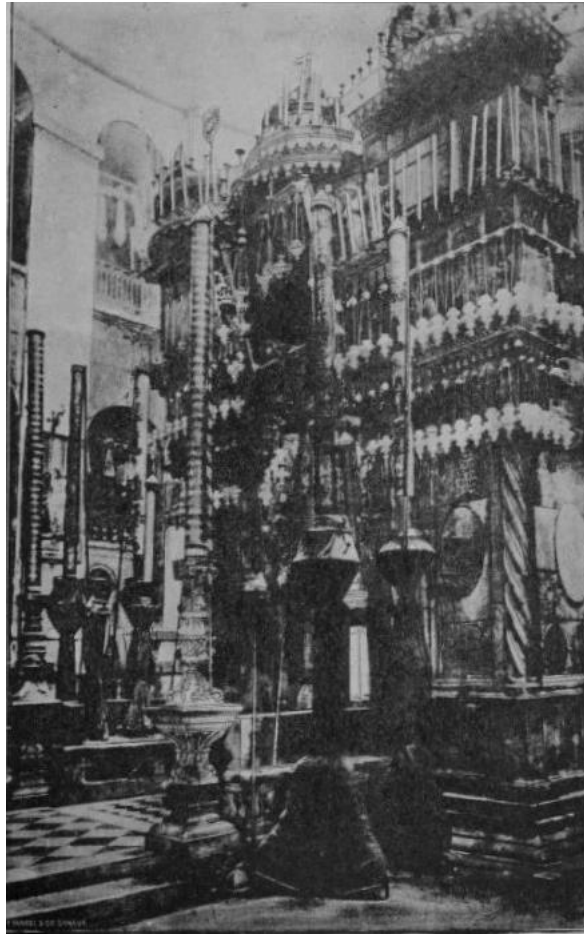


Figure 4.20. Photograph titled “Tomb of the Holy Sepulchre” (unknown artist and date). From Champney, *Three Vassar Girls in the Holy Land*, page 221.

Amid this rising tide of interest in photography, a book appeared in 1894 that fully embraced the photographic medium and radically reimagined what it meant to reproduce the Holy Land. The book was *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee* (1894) (Figure 4.21). In 1894 the Thompson Publishing Company of St. Louis sent a minister and a photographer to the Holy Land to obtain original photographs for the volume.⁶²⁷ A relatively young company, Thompson had already established a reputation for its artfully-produced books of photographs. It issued photographic volumes for both the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair and the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair, one of which had a design virtually identical to *Earthly Footsteps*.⁶²⁸ Thompson’s

⁶²⁷ The imprint N.D. Thompson published *Earthly Footsteps*. Nathan Davis Thompson organized the Thompson Publishing Company in 1888. Thompson had previous publishing experience, including an illustrated livestock encyclopedia that resulted in a protracted copyright battle eventually decided by the U.S. Supreme Court (John W. Leonard, ed., “Thompson, Nathan David,” *The Book of St. Louisans: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Living Men of the City of St. Louis and Vicinity* (St. Louis: The St. Louis Republic, 1906); *Thompson v. Hubbard*, 131 US 123 (Supreme Court 1889).

⁶²⁸ N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., *The Dream City: A Portfolio of Photographic Views of the World’s Columbian Exposition* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Pub. Co., 1893); N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types of the Midway Plaisance: A Collection of*

photographic volumes frequently had an anthropological air. One of its Chicago World's Fair volumes offered a racially-organized, photographic survey of the people participating in the fair.⁶²⁹ Christian values also shaped many of Thompson's projects. The covers of its *Dream City* (1893) depicted the Chicago World's Fair in religious and apocalyptic terms (Figure 4.22).⁶³⁰ A quote from Revelation appeared on the title page, while the volume's cover depicted a host of angels hovering above the fair's famous White City, sunbeams reaching down to the Court of Honor.⁶³¹

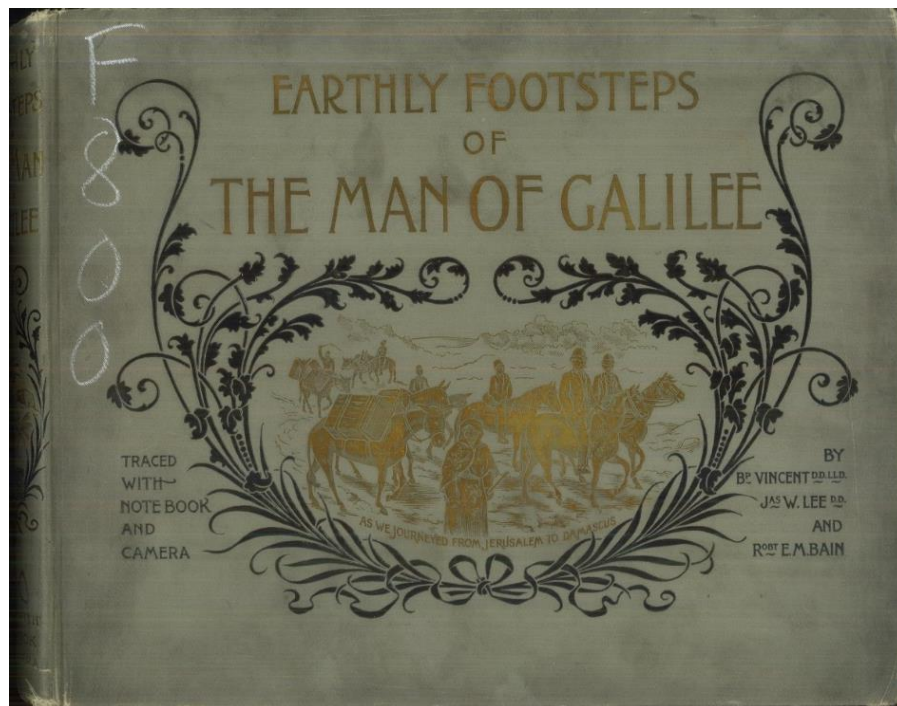


Figure 4.21. Cover of *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee* (1894).

Photographs of Individual Types of Various Nations from All Parts of the World Who Represented, in the Department of Ethnology, the Manners, Customs, Dress, Religions, Music and Other Distinctive Traits and Peculiarities of Their Race (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1894); Walter B. Stevens, *The World's Fair: Comprising the Official Photographic Views of the Universal Exposition Held in Saint Louis, 1904 Commemorating the Acquisition of the Louisiana Territory* (Saint Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1903). The size and format of this final St. Louis Fair volume is virtually identical with *Earthly Footsteps*.

⁶²⁹ N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types*.

⁶³⁰ N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., *The Dream City*. Other volumes published by Thompson related to the Chicago World's Fair included *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types*.

⁶³¹ N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., *The Dream City*. The passage from Revelation was 21:26: "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it."



Figure 4.22. Cover of *The Dream City: A Portfolio of Photographic Views of the World's Columbian Exposition* (1893).

The Thompson Publishing Company essentially organized and financed an expedition to create *Earthly Footsteps*. While the publisher could have obtained stock photographs to illustrate a book on the life of Christ and his apostles, they wanted “fresh and first-hand views.”⁶³² To obtain these new photographs it was “necessary to actually invade Palestine and the regions related to it, not with fire and sword, after the style of the military captain, but with harmless, scientific instruments,” the authors of *Earthly Footsteps* explained.⁶³³ Thompson recruited three individuals for this expedition: the Methodist bishop John Heyl Vincent, who wrote an introduction and some of the volume’s captions; James Wideman Lee, a Methodist minister, who contributed much of the text; and Robert E. M. Bain, a photographer. Only Lee and Bain actually traveled to the Holy Land. Thompson’s undertaking was arduous and expensive. Vincent and Bain departed St. Louis in March 1894, carrying with them letters of introduction, including one from the President of the United States, and more than 600 pounds of glass plates for photographing the Holy Land.⁶³⁴ Thompson reportedly invested \$35,000 in the project upfront, a tremendous sum for the time. The company also stood, though, to profit handsomely from its investment. The Reverend Lee estimated in 1895 that the publisher would clear \$1 million in sales from the work—some \$27 million in today’s dollars.⁶³⁵

⁶³² Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, Lee’s Introduction.

⁶³³ Ibid. Thompson used a similar expedition model for later works, including a photographic volume documenting Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines after the Spanish-American War. See José de Olivares, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, ed. William S. Bryan (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1899).

⁶³⁴ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, Lee’s Introduction.

⁶³⁵ “Rev. Dr. Lee Here: He Is on His Way to Oxford To Deliver an Address,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, June 5, 1895, 7. Lee reported being “paid liberally” for his work.

The authors of *Earthly Footsteps* emphasized the arduousness of the journey—particularly for the photographic plates themselves. “These boxes [of photographic plates] had been carried from place to place by railway cars, by express wagons, by carriages, by steamboats, by row-boats, by porters. They had been in the holds of ships, they had been strapped on the backs of mules, they had been to the pyramids, they had been over the road traveled by our Savior and His Apostles, they had followed in the footsteps of St. Paul in his missionary journeys, they had been to the city of Plato and Aristotle and the home of the Cæsars.”⁶³⁶ It was these plates—perhaps even more so than the authors—that had “brought back the accurate record of our journey,” in Lee’s words.⁶³⁷

The finished volume was impressive. Each interior page had a single, large format photograph with a caption. Art historian John Davis observes that the photographs fill such a large percentage of the page that they take on the appearance of “a panorama painting ... as though aspiring toward a single, continuous vision, an unbroken optical survey of the terrain.”⁶³⁸ The 400 photographs included were quite diverse. Photographs of ancient ruins intermixed with those of a modernizing Palestine. The two most common types of photographs were of architectural exteriors (Figure 4.23) and natural landscapes (Figure 4.24), which constituted almost two-thirds of the images. Among the landscape images, photographs featuring water were quite common (Figure 4.25). Less common photograph types were portraits (Figure 4.26) and interiors (Figure 4.27). Roughly 50% of the photographs were taken in Palestine; the remainder were from Egypt, Greece, Syria, Italy, Turkey, and Lebanon, in descending order of frequency.



Figure 4.23. Photograph titled “Mount of Olives from Temple Plateau” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 260.

⁶³⁶ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, Lee’s Introduction.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁸ Davis, *The Landscape of Belief*, 77.



Figure 4.24. Photograph titled “The Horns of Hattin” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 179.



Figure 4.25. Photograph titled “Source of the Jordan” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps* (1894), page 203.



Figure 4.26. Photograph titled “Dervish Beggars” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 239.

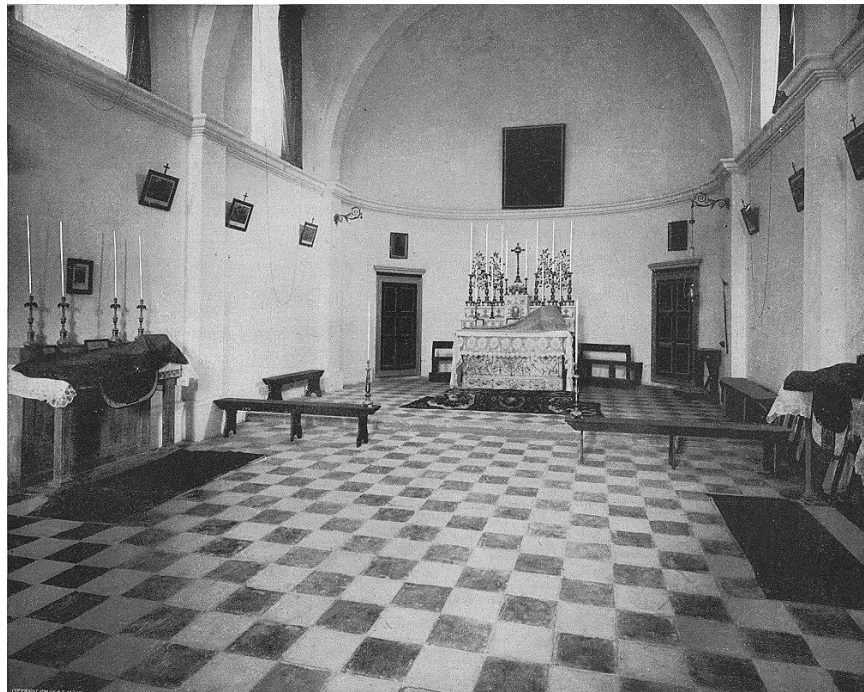


Figure 4.27. Photograph titled “Interior of the Church at Nain” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 180.

The photographs did not divide evenly over the span of Christ's life: certain periods received disproportionate attention. Nearly one quarter of the photographs were intended to show what Mary and Joseph might have seen on their flight to Egypt and return to Nazareth, while Jesus was an infant or toddler.⁶³⁹ Christ's crucifixion and resurrection occurred at approximately the two-thirds mark through the book, with the last third following the footsteps of the apostles through Egypt, Turkey, Greece, and Italy. A relatively small proportion of the book was, thus, actually reserved for Christ's ministry.

The captions for each photograph incorporated extensive biblical, historical, and archaeological research. Captions drew upon a tremendous variety of writings—ancient and modern, devotional and historical. They frequently cited F. R. and C. R. Conder's *A Handbook to the Bible* (1879), itself a compilation of Holy Land research.⁶⁴⁰ The captions also included copious references to biblical chronologies,⁶⁴¹ as well as famous Holy Land works by Dean Stanley, Josiah Leslie Porter, and Selah Merrill.⁶⁴² The explorations of the great Egyptologist Flinders Petrie and of archaeologist Charles Warren appeared.⁶⁴³ Ancient sources—including Strabo, Pliny, Eusebius, Athanasius, Tatian, and Josephus—sat side-by-side with contemporary works, such as those by the American travel writer Bayard Taylor, the popular American author Marion Harland, and the British writer Amelia B. Edwards.⁶⁴⁴ Ernest Renan, of course, also made his requisite appearance.⁶⁴⁵

While Thompson issued *Earthly Footsteps* as a handsome, bound volume, Americans encountered its photographs in other formats. The photographs were repackaged and reproduced under several different titles, including as illustrations in Bibles and children's books.⁶⁴⁶ Americans also encountered the photographs as serialized folios sold by periodicals, newspapers, and businesses. The denominational periodical *The Congregationalist* sold the photographs as part of a 24-part series titled "Palestine Pictures," which they promoted in connection with the periodical's 1895 tour of the Holy Land. The "Oriental Party" followed the same path as the *Earthly Footsteps* authors; by purchasing the photographs, readers would be

⁶³⁹ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 101. Page 101 finally brings Mary and Joseph within view of Nazareth.

⁶⁴⁰ F. R. Conder and C. R. Conder, *A Handbook to the Bible: Being a Guide to the Study of the Holy Scriptures: Derived from Ancient Monuments and Modern Exploration* (London: Longmans, Green, 1879). References to Conder and Conder are found on pages 92, 132, 162, 180, and 227 in *Earthly Footsteps*.

⁶⁴¹ In creating their chronological timeline for the life of Christ, the authors of *Earthly Footsteps* relied heavily upon a recent publication by George Adam Smith: *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land Especially in Relation to the History of Israel and of the Early Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894).

⁶⁴² In Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, see 163, 205, and 256 for references to Stanley; 98, 157, 226, and 293 for Porter; and 181, 208, and 211 for Merrill.

⁶⁴³ In *ibid.*, see 54 for Petrie; and 118 and 236 for Warren.

⁶⁴⁴ In *ibid.*, see 53 for reference to Strabo and Pliny; 323 for Eusebius; 79 for Athanasius and Tatian; 109, 135, 144, 145, 170, and 241 for Josephus; 49 for Taylor; 105, 107, 146, and 189 for Harland, the penname of Mary Virginia Terhune; and 55, 59, 66, and 78 for Edwards.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁶⁴⁶ The Thompson Publishing Company used the photographs in at least two further works: a 4-volume, illustrated Bible titled *The Self-Interpreting Bible*; and James Wideman Lee, *The Romance of Palestine: A History for Young People: Containing over One Hundred and Fifty Original Photographs and Pen Pictures of the Castles, Temples, Cities, Mountains, Rivers, Battle-Fields, Classic Groves, Enchanted Gardens and Great People, Which Illustrate the History, Literature, Art and Legend of the Holy Land* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1897). The photos also appeared in another Bible produced by a Vancouver firm: Josephine Pollard, James Wideman Lee, and Robert E. M. Bain, *Young Folks' Bible: The Sweet Stories of God's Word in the Language of Childhood, Designed to Impress the Mind and Heart of the Youngest Readers and Kindle a Genuine Love for the Book of Books* (Vancouver: J.M. MacGregor, 1894).

better able to follow the letters and reports from the Oriental Party, the editors suggested.⁶⁴⁷ Newspapers also published certificates for discounts on the *Earthly Footsteps* folios—just 10 cents a copy, discounted from the standard rate of 25 cents.⁶⁴⁸ Businesses enticed customers with offers to purchase reproductions of the images for an additional 10 cents with any cash purchase.⁶⁴⁹ This cheap, mass distribution of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs vastly increased their circulation. One of the *Earthly Footsteps*' authors reported that in a little over a year more than a million “parts” of *Earthly Footsteps* had been sold in England alone—“parts” a reference to the work’s serialized form.⁶⁵⁰

Earthly Footsteps was marketed as a devotional, didactic, and artistic object. An advertisement on Christmas Day 1894 in *The Atlantic Constitution* appealed to high ideals. It compared *Earthly Footsteps* to those “Great Preachers, Great Poets, Great Painters, Great Sculptors, [and] Great Architects” that had depicted scenes from the life of Christ.⁶⁵¹ “A Superb Religio-Educational Fine Art Publication” declared an 1895 advertisement in the African-American Methodist newspaper the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* (Figure 4.28). *The Marshall County Independent*, a newspaper serving small communities in northern Indiana, called *Earthly Footsteps* “one of the finest productions of Biblical facts that we have seen for some time” and recommended that “every reader of the Bible should secure a copy.”⁶⁵²

⁶⁴⁷ “Palestine in Pictures Now Complete,” *The Congregationalist* LXXX, no. 19 (May 9, 1895): 706. *The Congregationalist* reportedly received “hundreds of letters” from purchasers pleased with the series (“The Oriental Tour and the Pictures”).

⁶⁴⁸ “The Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, January 31, 1895, 8.

⁶⁴⁹ “A Superb Religio-Educational Fine Art Publication,” *The Columbian*, February 22, 1895, 5. One Ohio retailer offered *Earthly Footsteps* free with any purchase of \$3.50. The advertisement does not indicate whether the offer included the complete portfolio of images (“Next Saturday, for Just One Day, ...,” *The News-Herald*, March 5, 1896, 5).

⁶⁵⁰ “Rev. Dr. Lee Here,” 7. One of Lee’s biographers claimed in 1920 that *Earthly Footsteps* “has had the largest circulation of any book on the Holy Land ever printed” (Lee, *The Geography of Genius*, xiii).

⁶⁵¹ “Great Preachers, Great Poets, Great Painters, Great Sculptors, Great Architects...” *The Atlanta Constitution*, December 25, 1894, 3.

⁶⁵² “The ‘Earthly Footsteps ...,’” *Marshall County Independent*, March 29, 1895, 5.



REV. JAMES W. LEE, D. D.

EARTHLY FOOTSTEPS

OF THE

MAN OF GALILEE,

Retraced in 1894

WITH

NOTE BOOK AND CAMERA



REV. JOHN B. VINCENT, D. D., LL. D.

Being a geographical and historical account in narrative and picture of the scenes of the toils, temptations, and triumphs of Our Savior and His Apostles.

JOINT PRODUCTION OF

Bishop Vincent, Chancellor of Chautauqua, James W. Lee, D. D., and Robert E. M. Bain.

HOW THE WORK WAS ACCOMPLISHED.

IN MAY of the present year Dr. Lee, the well-known divine, and R. E. M. Bain, the celebrated scenic photographer, sailed from New York under a special commission from a big publishing house in wait Palestine and the East, follow in the footsteps of the Savior and His Apostles, and record, in narrative and picture, such historic places and incidents as should reflect the Holy Land as it is, and furnish an "up-to-date" history of the life of the Man of Galilee, his toils, temptations, and triumphs. They took with them the finest photographic outfit procurable in America, including nine boxes of large dry-plates, each box weighing seventy pounds. They were also equipped with letters from the President of the United States, the Secretary of the Interior, and other officials, besides being highly commended in their undertaking by prominent American divines. They landed at Southampton, whence they proceeded by the Peninsular and Oriental Express through England, France, and Italy to Brindisi; thence by steamer to Port Said, after which they proceeded to Cairo, visiting Heliopolis, where Joseph married; Memphis, where Moses lived; the Pyramids, built fifty centuries ago; and Alexandria, for a long time the home of Cleopatra, Egypt's beautiful Queen.

INVALUABLE FOR RELIGIOUS STUDY.

A SUPERB FINE-ART SERIES.



CARAVAN UNDER WAY, MAY, 1894.

AN UNEQUALED EDUCATIONAL ADJUNCT.

AN INCOMPARABLE PERSONAL POSSESSION.

HERE they took the Mediterranean steamer for Joppa, where their pilgrimage really began, the routes there engaged for the expedition numbering one dragoon, ten mules, a camel, a waiter, thirteen mules and horses. They equipped they proceeded to carefully retraced the earthly footsteps of the Man of Galilee, visiting Bethl-hem, Jerusalem, Bethsai, the Plains of Sharon, the Valley of Ajlun, Bethany, Jericho, the Dead Sea, the Jordan, Salomon's Tomb, Nablus, Nazareth, Beth-saida, Sion, Shiloh, Samaria, Shechem, Nain, Nazareth, Capernaum, Damascus, the oldest city of the world, and hundred other places of sacred historic interest in the Holy Land, everywhere making careful and copious notes, and securing hundreds of photographs. These steamers to Smyrna, Thessalonica, Athens, Constantinople, and Rome, in all of which places the camera was in constant activity, necessitating the packing and unpacking of the precious plates numberless times, with the consequent danger of breakage. During this time these plates were carried from place to place by railway cars, express, mules, pack animals, mules, camels, and porters; were handled by Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Italians, Egyptians, Arabs, Turks, and Greeks, yet all were safely landed in a sleeping room at St. Louis, after a three months' trip, covering 15,000 miles, without a single one being broken. When the plates were developed it was found that the work was worth the National Photographers' Association pronouncing them the finest photographs that ever came from the East. These photographs and their descriptions, former by Mr. Bain, the celebrated artist, and the latter by Bishop Vincent and Dr. Lee, form the basis of this paper's most offering to its readers.

A Splendid Religio-Educational Fine-Art Offering to Our Readers.

BEAR IN MIND.

Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee

is a Wholly Unique Offering.

NEVER before has a work of this kind and scope been attempted. The journey of Christ and His Apostles have been thoroughly followed by the eye of author and artist with same fidelity and camera, photographing and describing the scene of every recorded event.

500 Superb Large Plates were secured and from beautiful views from these yielded the production. It is not only a religious, artistic, and striking in every respect. The work is copyrighted in thoroughly scientific and artistic manner, and is offered to this city or other cities through this office.

Part I. Contains:

1. In Camp at Nazareth.
2. Highest View of the Baptism of John the Baptist.
3. Nazareth from the Eastward of the English Dispensary.
4. The Gardens of Bethsai.
5. The Tower of Jericho.
6. Fishing in plain of Jericho.
7. Mill at Dothan.
8. Part of Our Caravan at Dothan.
9. A Tree at Dothan.
10. Rocks Near the Pit Into Which Joseph Was Thrown by His Brothers.
11. Pillars in Samaria.
12. Falls at Nablus.
13. Garden of Bethsai.
14. Mount Ethai.
15. Jerusalem from Scopus.
16. Approaching Bethlehem.



ROBERT E. M. BAIN.

Part II. Contains:

1. Flowers of Palestine.
2. Interior Church of Nazareth.
3. Altar in Church of Nazareth.
4. Entrance to Grotto, Church of Nativity.
5. Place of Birth, Church of Nativity.
6. Mosque of Omar from the South.
7. Road to Bethlehem.
8. Tomb of Rachel.
9. Pool of Bethesda.
10. Entrance to Garden of the Virgin.
11. Tree of the Virgin.
12. Coffee-House Near Virgin's Fountain.
13. Heliopolis and Obelisk.
14. Threshing at Heliopolis.
15. Drying Water on Nile by Bedouins.
16. The Virgin's Fountain.

PART I.

Also contains introduction by Bishop Vincent and Dr. Lee and three pages will be devoted to a reprint of the "Gospel Harmony of the Gospels and Chronological Index," printed by special permission of Dr. Samuel J. Andrews. The portfolio will also contain a new double-page map in eight colors, showing the journeyings of Christ and His Apostles, which route has twice been meticulously gone over by Bishop Vincent and in 1894 has been carefully retraced by Dr. Lee and Mr. Bain for latest facts and photographs with a special view to its publication.

SERIES COMPLETE IN TWENTY-FOUR PARTS OF SIXTEEN VIEWS EACH.

How to Secure the Parts:

Clip a coupon, found in another column of this paper, and send it with ten cents, for each part, to this office, or send a coupon with year's subscription and receive one part free.

Figure 4.28. Advertisement for *Earthly Footsteps* folios (1894). From *Southwestern Christian Advocate* (New Orleans, Louisiana), December 13, 1894, page 2.

There, unfortunately, exists little evidence about the popular reception of *Earthly Footsteps*—far less, certainly, than Tissot’s paintings. There remain, thus, many questions about what Protestants saw in the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs. Did they believe the photographs showed what Jesus had seen? Did they see a people and place unchanged over millennia? Did they see a modern Holy Land? While these are difficult questions to answer, the volume itself offers insight into what must have been competing interpretations of the photographs. The three creators of the volume—Vincent, Lee, and Bain—all, in fact, held markedly different opinions about what the photographs depicted.

The differing opinions of the *Earthly Footsteps* creators about what the photographs showed were produced by two intersecting factors: their particular Holy Land spatial ideologies and their opinions about the “science” of photography. The differing views of the *Earthly Footsteps* creators, thus, can be charted on two intersecting lines (Figure 4.29). On the horizontal axis is a range of potential opinions about the nature of the Holy Land—from romanticist to historicist. The romantic perspective is associated with the timeless land ideology, discussed in chapter 2: the belief that the Holy Land had remained unchanged since the time of Christ. The historicist position, by contrast, acknowledged the evolution of the Holy Land. The vertical axis represents a range of opinions about photography. In Jennifer Green-Lewis’s study of nineteenth-century photography, she identifies two contrasting views of photography during this period: those, on the one hand, who saw photography through a lens of logical positivism and those, on the other, who saw it in terms of metaphysical idealism. These camps regarded photography quite differently.⁶⁵³ Logical positivists saw the photograph as “validation of empiricism in its surface documentation of the world,” while metaphysical idealists held the photograph up as “proof that any visual account inevitably represents the world inadequately,” according to Green-Lewis.⁶⁵⁴ Both logical positivist and metaphysical idealist views of photography are found in *Earthly Footsteps*.

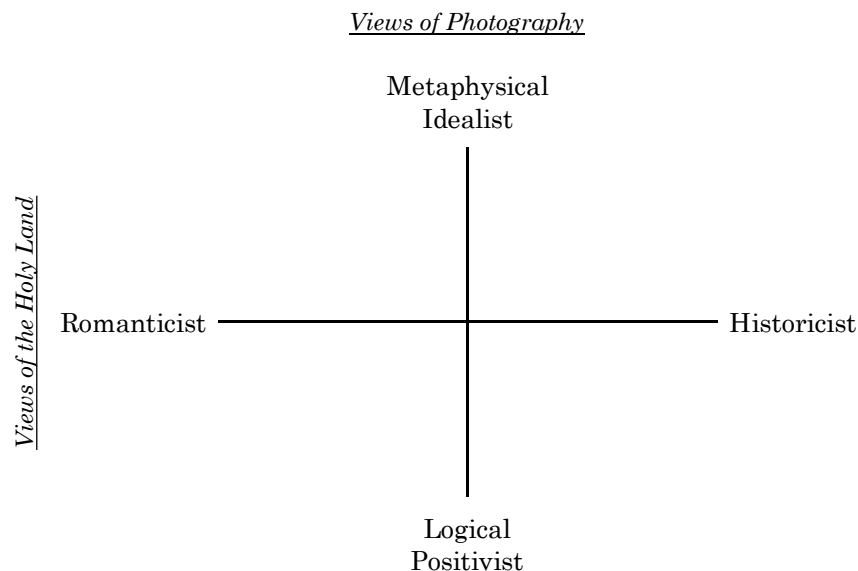


Figure 4.29. Matrix of views about the Holy Land and photography.

⁶⁵³ Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians*, 20.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

Being a historicist with respect to the Holy Land did not necessitate that one be a logical positivist when it came to photography—or vice versa: romantic views of the Holy Land did not necessarily go hand-in-hand with metaphysical views of the camera. Indeed, when the views of the *Earthly Footsteps* creators are plotted on the above graph, these mismatched positions emerge. Vincent romanticized and idealized the Holy Land far more than Lee or Bain, though he regarded photography as an empirical, scientific tool, placing him in the bottom left quadrant; Bain regarded both the Holy Land and photography in logical, positivist terms, placing him in the bottom right quadrant; and Lee, by contrast, tended toward a historicist view of the Holy Land, but held strongly metaphysical opinions about photography, placing him in the upper right quadrant (Figure 4.30). Where the creators fell in such a schema strongly patterned their interpretation of what the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs depicted.

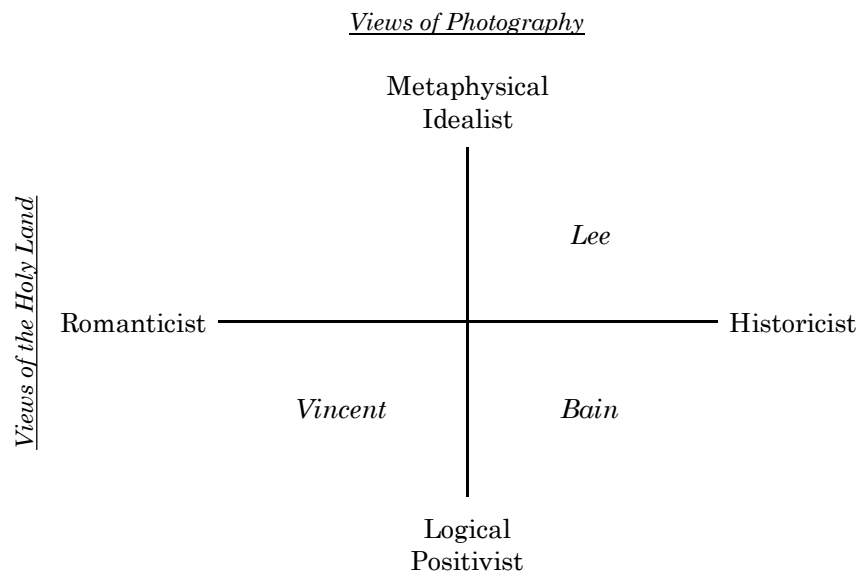


Figure 4.30. Views of *Earthly Footsteps* creators about the Holy Land and photography.

James Heyl Vincent’s name appeared first on the cover of *Earthly Footsteps*—though, arguably, his direct involvement was secondary to that of Lee and Bain. Vincent may have been the source for the initial idea to create the book.⁶⁵⁵ He did not go with Bain and Vincent to the Holy Land but wrote an introduction and some of the captions.⁶⁵⁶ Despite Vincent’s somewhat limited involvement, his name on the cover capitalized on his reputation. His status as a bishop of the Methodist church and co-founder of the Chautauqua Institute turned Vincent’s name into effectively an imprimatur.

⁶⁵⁵ Hallote claims that the “idea for [*Earthly Footsteps*] was almost certainly suggested to the publishing house” by Vincent (“Photography and the American Contribution to Early ‘Biblical’ Archaeology,” 29).

⁶⁵⁶ There are not specific authors listed for each caption, but some captions are clearly Vincent’s work. Vincent traveled to the Holy Land in 1863 and 1887, and several captions reference these trips. References to the 1863 trip can be found in the captions on 33, 48, 120, 145, 147, 166, 233, and 284 and references to the 1887 trip on 33, 102, 156, and 233.

Vincent was a classic romanticist when it came to the Holy Land, seeing it through the timeless land ideology. “The manners and customs of this Eastern country have not changed. People dress and eat and sleep and live and labor as they did two thousand years ago. The scenes of the Bible are reproduced with startling fidelity to the old record. One may find feasting and funeral, seed-sowing and harvest, elders in the gate and veiled women, grass on the housetops, sparrows seeking their nests in holy places, and grass of the field that to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven,” wrote Vincent. This timeless quality of the Holy Land distinguished it from the rest of the eastern world, he argued: “Wars, pestilence, earthquake, and all the sources of devastation which, through the centuries, have swept over the eastern world, have removed many landmarks and destroyed immense quantities of valuable material.” But not Palestine. It, according to Vincent, was frozen in time—an unbroken perpetuation of biblical life that could “shed light upon difficulties” in the Bible.⁶⁵⁷

Vincent makes clear his views of photography in his introduction to *Earthly Footsteps*, stressing the technology’s autonomous, scientific qualities. For Vincent, photography was an empirical tool perfectly adapted to documenting the Holy Land’s unchanged, timeless landscape—a view in line with the logical positivist approach to photography. Vincent emphasized the role of the sun in the production of the photograph: it was the sun that “can copy on the sensitive plate hidden in the camera”—a description that downplayed the role of the photographer in favor of the disembodied, impartial role of the sun as creative engine.⁶⁵⁸ The photograph impartially reproduced the empirical reality before it.

Several of the captions in *Earthly Footsteps* reinforce Vincent’s historicist view of the Holy Land and his logical-positivist view of photography. A caption for a photograph of a water carrier in Egypt reads, “Customs and habits in Egypt are probably very much the same to-day as when Joseph and Mary were there with the infant Jesus” (Figure 4.31).⁶⁵⁹ The implication is that the photograph shows a water carrier as he would have looked during the time of Jesus; the viewer sees what Jesus would have seen. A similar logic is evident in the caption for a photograph of a Jaffa bazar. “Passing through the bazars of any of the cities of Palestine we doubtless witness the very same scenes common in the days of our Savior,” reads the caption. The caption describes items unchanged since the time of Christ, including the objects being bought and sold and even the “disposition” of market-goers “to use many words in buying and selling.”⁶⁶⁰ Vincent’s interpretation of the *Earthly Footsteps* images was fairly straightforward: these empirical photographs of contemporary Palestine showed the biblical world of Jesus.

⁶⁵⁷ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, Vincent’s Introduction. Vincent often wrote of the Holy Land’s unusually fixed and static nature. For another example, see his introduction to Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887. There he described the Holy Land as “memorial lands” that “are now what the Book says they once were” (vi). He attributed the Holy’s Land’s peculiar constancy to the “mummy wrappings of Mohammedan domination” that had “held the far East unchanged through the centuries” (vi).

⁶⁵⁸ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, Vincent’s Introduction.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

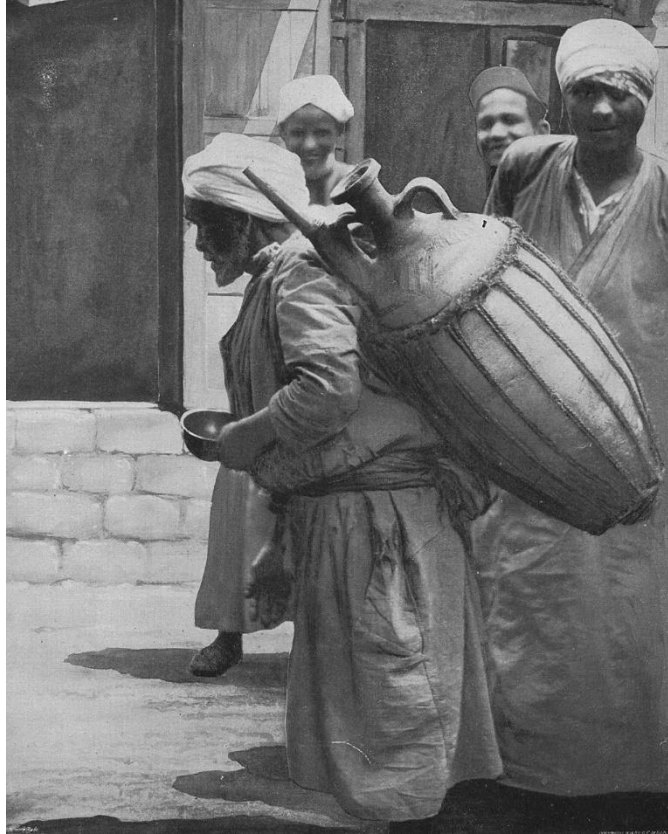


Figure 4.31. Photograph titled “Water Carriers” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 77.

Bain, the photographer for the volume, would have strongly disagreed with Vincent’s assessment of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs. While Bain, like Vincent, was a logical positivist when it came to photography, he saw a creative role for the photographer—and he had a deeply disenchanting view of the Holy Land. When Thompson hired Bain, he was a Jack-of-all-trades: “a bookkeeper, businessman, and well-known amateur photographer,” in the words of one scholar.⁶⁶¹ Prior to *Earthly Footsteps*, Bain had been active in the photographic community, publishing in trade journals⁶⁶² and serving as the President of the St. Louis Photographic Society in the 1890s.⁶⁶³ The press coverage surrounding *Earthly Footsteps* tended to inflate Bain’s previous photographic achievements. “[A] rare artist with the camera,” Lee declared about his travel companion. A newspaper described Bain as “a famous American photographer—a real artist.”⁶⁶⁴ Regardless of Bain’s prior credentials, *Earthly Footsteps* brought him a new

⁶⁶¹ Hallote, “Photography and the American Contribution to Early ‘Biblical’ Archaeology,” 28.

⁶⁶² Robert E. M. Bain, “Three Developers,” *The Photographic Times and American Photographer* XVIII, no. 368 (October 5, 1888): 471–72. Bain continued to publish in trade journals. See, for example, Robert E. M. Bain, “Photography at Sea,” in *The American Annual of Photography 1908*, ed. John A. Tennant, vol. XII (New York: Tennant and Ward, 1907), 257–59; and Robert E. M. Bain, “Civic Exploitation by Photographic Societies,” in *The American Annual of Photography 1913*, ed. Percy Y. Howe (New York: The American Annual of Photography, Inc., 1912), 30–31.

⁶⁶³ “Societies,” *Anthony’s Photographic Bulletin* XXX, no. 1 (January 1899): 30.

⁶⁶⁴ “Rev. Dr. Lee Here,” 7.

level of recognition. The National Photographer's Association declared his photographs "to be the finest that ever came from the East."⁶⁶⁵

To say that Bain was underwhelmed by photographing the Holy Land would be an understatement. In a March 1898 article for *The Photographic Times*, he recounted his struggles to create the *Earthly Footsteps* images. His trip to the Holy Land was "intensely interesting"—except for photographing it. "[F]rom a photographic standpoint," wrote Bain, "the country is of the 'dead and buried' description."⁶⁶⁶ He found "little to attract the camerist outside of the cities, and they are few and far between."⁶⁶⁷ His critiques continued: "Pictorially considered, there is less of interest in this place than in most any other portion of the globe."⁶⁶⁸ Palestine "is the despair of the 'button-pusher."⁶⁶⁹ Native populations' resistance to being photographed also posed problems for Bain.⁶⁷⁰ He recommended that Palestine clean up its historic sites to attract more tourists. If the sites were not "weed-over-grown, there would be a greater influx of artists, photographers and tourists than at the present time."⁶⁷¹ While Bain did not recommend travelers to Palestine simply leave their cameras at home, he warned them against having "great expectations" for what they might capture.⁶⁷²

For Bain, the Holy Land's biblical associations did not make for fine photographs. "[T]he fact that some important personage passed over a certain road lends but little charm to a view, uninteresting otherwise," he wrote.⁶⁷³ That Jesus had touched, seen, or been in a particular place could not be captured by the photograph, according to Bain. Moreover, in Bain's view, any evidences of Jesus' presence had disappeared in this weed-choked, "dead and buried" land. Bain's disenchanted view of the Holy Land brought him into conflict with his co-traveler, the Reverend Lee. Bain, for example, balked at taking one particular photo outside of the Garden of Gethsemane (Figure 4.32). Lee wanted a picture of the rock that tradition said Jesus had leaned upon, but Bain was unmoved by the mundane photographic composition, finding it "not ... attractive at all."⁶⁷⁴ Lee explained that the rock needed to be seen in "relation and association with the life and agony of Jesus Christ All of its significance comes from the fact that the loving and fainting Christ stood by it."⁶⁷⁵ Even if such "associations" existed, Bain would have maintained they could not be captured by the photograph.

⁶⁶⁵ "Robert E. M. Bain," *The Daily Inter Ocean*, February 9, 1895, 5.

⁶⁶⁶ Bain, "Photographic Times," 108.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*, 111.

⁶⁷³ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁶⁷⁴ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 248.

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*



Figure 4.32. Photograph titled “Rock Upon Which Jesus Leaned” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 248.

Lee, as is already apparent in his conflict with Bain over the Gethsemane photograph, held quite different opinions from Bain about the nature of the Holy Land and photography. “We stood amid the scenes of [Jesus’] prayers, tears, sermons and wonderful works, and transferred them, with the blush and bloom of Palestine, to the delicate, sensitive surface of our glass plate,” wrote Lee in his introduction to *Earthly Footsteps*.⁶⁷⁶ The straightforward interpretation of this quote would be that the “scenes” of Palestine were transferred to the glass plate—but Lee’s particular spatial ideology and understanding of photography offers an alternative reading of this quote: that it was not *only* the scenes of Palestine that were transferred to the plate but metaphysical lingerings of the “tears, sermons, and wonderful works of Jesus.” Seen through Lee’s eyes, the seemingly empirical photographs of *Earthly Footsteps* shared, as will be seen, a kinship with contact relics or spirit photograph.⁶⁷⁷

Lee’s view of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs is complex and requires careful attention to his beliefs about the nature of space, place, and materiality. When Thompson hired Lee, he had been recently appointed pastor of St. John’s Methodist Episcopal Church in St. Louis—a church considered “the most influential in the south among the Methodists,” with a congregation composed of “people of wealth and culture,” according to an article on Lee’s appointment.⁶⁷⁸ Lee had spent most of his life in Georgia: he was born there in 1849, graduated from Emory College, and spent the majority of his ministerial career at prominent Methodist

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid., Lee’s Introduction.

⁶⁷⁷ On the popularity of spirit photography in the nineteenth century, see John Harvey, *Photography and Spirit* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007); and Louis Kaplan, *The Strange Case of William Mumler, Spirit Photographer* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 2008).

⁶⁷⁸ “It Is Announced: The Appointment of Dr. J. W. Lee to St. John’s Church, St. Louis,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, October 3, 1893, 2.

churches in Atlanta.⁶⁷⁹ Lee had established a reputation for his endorsement of interdenominational and interreligious cooperation and his profound distaste for the era of “heresy hunting,” as he referred to the 1890s.⁶⁸⁰ Lee was profoundly optimistic about his present age, believing it was one of ever-increasing light and truth. “The boundaries of the known are being enlarged, and nothing is necessary to the enlargement of those boundaries forever but industry in the search for truth and loyalty to its increasing light,” he wrote.⁶⁸¹

One of Lee’s primary focuses was uniting religion, philosophy, and science.⁶⁸² The year before the release of *Earthly Footsteps*, he gave a well-received speech at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions that exemplified his philosophical and scientific orientations toward religion.⁶⁸³ The speech speculated about the nature of God and man, mind and consciousness, and nature and materiality, referencing Leibnitz, Schopenhauer, Kant, and Spencer, a favored English philosopher of the Victorians. The speech was filled with proto-scientific platitudes. “When we look carefully ... we find that environments influence their objects, and objects in turn affect their environments. So events and their environments mutually influence one another,” Lee stated.⁶⁸⁴ Nature, according to Lee, revealed God: “Man can read nature because it contains mind, and mind common to his own mind. Therefore the mind embodied in nature and the mind active in man can come together, because they both are expressions of one infinite mind.”⁶⁸⁵ For Lee, the material world contained discernable traces of the divine.

Lee’s scientific, progressive sensibilities shaped his perception of the Holy Land. The natural world, for Lee, progressed, evolved, and changed, and, accordingly, he would have rejected Vincent’s romantic views of the Holy Land as a place unchanged over time. Hints at this evolutionary view of the Holy Land are evident in the *Earthly Footsteps* captions. Consider, for example, the caption for a photograph of a marriage ceremony in Cairo (Figure 4.33). The caption explains that the authors included photographs not only of the “tombs and monuments” that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus might have seen during their flight to Egypt “but also ... pictures and descriptions of customs and ceremonies and structures which have grown out of the civilization in the midst of which they spent the time of the flight.”⁶⁸⁶ The caption does not suggest that Egypt remained as Mary and Joseph would have seen it. Instead, it implies that the present civilization has evolved from that earlier period.

⁶⁷⁹ Lee, *The Geography of Genius*, xi.

⁶⁸⁰ James W. Lee, “Patchwork: Dr. Lee Writes an Interesting Letter on the Religions Variety,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, January 15, 1893, 18.

⁶⁸¹ John Henry Barrows, *The World’s Parliament of Religions: An Illustrated and Popular Story of the World’s First Parliament of Religions, Held in Chicago in Connection with the Columbian Exposition of 1893*, vol. II (Chicago: The Parliament Publishing Company, 1893), 851.

⁶⁸² See, particularly, James Wideman Lee, *The Religion of Science, the Faith of Coming Man* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912).

⁶⁸³ For the complete text of Lee’s address, titled “Christ the Reason of the Universe,” see Barrows, *The World’s Parliament of Religions*, II:850–860.

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, II:855.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, II:850. Lee also took up the topic of matter and mind in his later work, *The Making of a Man* (St. Louis: The St. Louis Christian Advocate Company, 1899). There Lee writes, “Matter as plainly bears testimony to the existence of mind, as to the existence of itself” (11).

⁶⁸⁶ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 78.

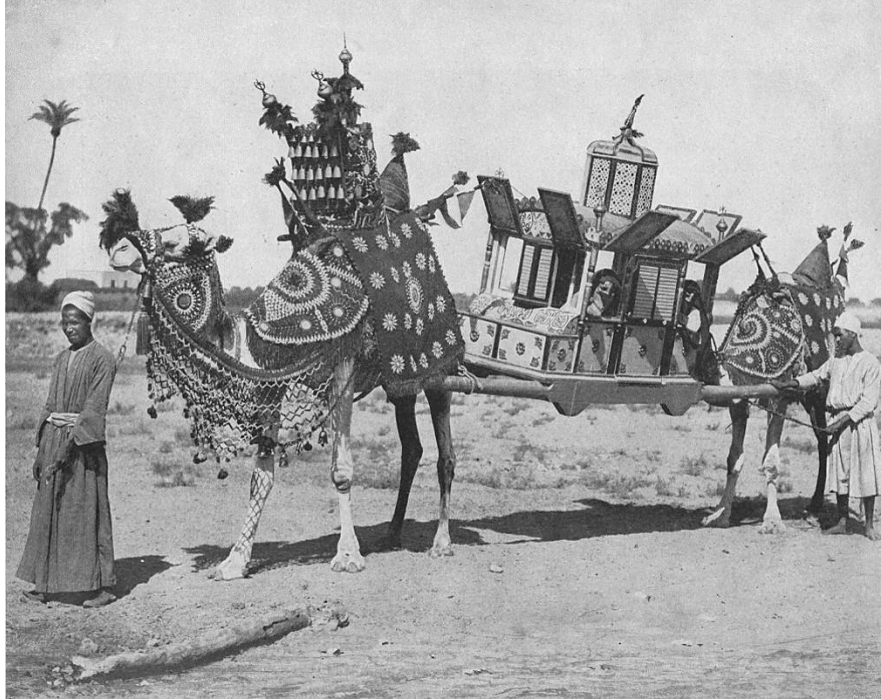


Figure 4.33. Photograph titled “Marriage Ceremony, Cairo” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 78.

Lee’s views on the nature of space, place, and materiality are critical for understanding how he would have seen the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs. His most robust and direct reflections on these topics are found in *The Geography of Genius* (1920), a compilation of 24 essays.⁶⁸⁷ The first five essays are on the Holy Land and track very closely, sometimes even verbatim, the captions in *Earthly Footsteps*; the remaining essays consider a variety of locations, including England, Mexico, Canada, California, and “the Dreamland of Florida.” Based upon this volume, Lee’s spatial ideology can be distilled into what Lee would have regarded as three universal, scientific principles: First, space is an impressionable medium. Second, because space is impressionable, a specific location can “archive” the past. And third, matter acquires the associations of a place through exposure to it.

According to Lee, space was impressionable in that it acquired the spirits of great people. Space is transformed by contact with what Lee calls “genius.” He used a variety of terms to describe this transformation: a place was illuminated, magnetized, transformed, saturated, or, in religiously-laden terms, transfigured, glorified, or consecrated by contact with a spirit of genius. “THE EARTH IS ONLY DUST UNTIL IT IS SATURATED BY SPIRIT,”⁶⁸⁸ Lee declared. Great spirits, like that of Jesus, elevated places above “the dead level of terrestrial monotony,” moving them “from the domain of matter to that of spirit.”⁶⁸⁹ The Holy Land was, for Lee, a preeminently spiritualized place because of the past presence of Jesus and other biblical figures. Upon arriving in Joppa he marveled that “[e]very spot and every object in our

⁶⁸⁷ Lee, *The Geography of Genius*.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 154, emphasis original.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

novel and strange surroundings was interesting from associations which had been gathering about it for thousands of years.”⁶⁹⁰

The “associations” of a place, in Lee’s spatial ideology, preserved the past. Even seemingly empty spaces could have unseen associations. Lee gave no indication that places forgot or lost spiritual associations over time. Furthermore, matter could acquire the spirit of a specific place through exposure to it. Lee used a pseudo-scientific theory of adaption to explain how matter could “copy and reproduce” the spirit of a place. Lee compared exposure to a spiritualized place to that of a polar bear living in the arctic:

The polar bear, by living in the arctic regions, copies its snow in his white skin, and thus gets a kinship and title to his cold abode by becoming like it. Spending all our lives in the presence of the inspirations and hopes and hymns of the people who wrote the Bible, we copy and reproduce by an unconscious process the color and texture of their spirits.⁶⁹¹

The impressionability of space and matter are at the heart of Lee’s spatial ideology. A place recorded associations; matter autonomously reproduced these associations through exposure to a place. This description has notable parallels with photography itself: the polar bear “copies” the snow in its skin. Being in the Holy Land allowed one “by unconscious process” to “reproduce ... the color and texture of their spirits”—recalling Jennifer Lewis-Green’s observation that nineteenth-century photographs were often regarded as “apparently authorless texts.”⁶⁹² In Lee’s worldview, people and material objects were effectively contact relics, continuously and automatically copying the world around them. Or perhaps better said: people and things were like photographic plates.

There were theological implications of Lee’s spatial ideology. Lee considered himself a stalwart defender of mainline Protestantism, and his spatial ideology offered a potential solution to challenges posed by higher criticism. A place—even more so than the Bible, perhaps—became a reliable, permanent, experiential archive of the past. A place was a text without an author—a record written not by men but through scientific principles of space and matter. One did not need to consciously “read” or “interpret” this text; when exposed to it, a human reproduced its spirit automatically. Lee’s spatial ideology fit perfectly with the material gospel theology and opened new possibilities for reproducing the Holy Land.

Lee’s unique spatial ideology casts a decidedly different light on some of the photographs in *Earthly Footsteps*. Consider, for example, “Flocks Near the Pit into which Joseph was thrown by his Brethren” (Figure 4.34), an image that appeared in a series of photographs representing Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem prior to the birth of Jesus. In the foreground a young shepherd boy tends his flocks. The horizon line is sharp, dividing earth from sky. A vacuous, natural landscape fills the image. Lee’s co-creator Vincent would have likely seen this as a timeless image, depicting what Mary and Joseph would have seen as they walked this same path 2,000 years earlier. Vincent might even have argued that the shepherd boy’s clothes, manners, tending of the sheep, and even the sheep themselves had remained virtually unchanged over the centuries. Such a static view of the Holy Land was, however, irreconcilable with Lee’s scientific, evolutionary, and progressive sensibilities. For Lee, this would have been an illuminated landscape, transformed by its contact first with young Joseph of the Old Testament, then Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. For Lee, this young shepherd was his polar bear: he had lived his life exposed to a place spiritually illuminated by these great figures, his spirit transformed by that contact with genius.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 20.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., 17.

⁶⁹² Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians*, 4.



Figure 4.34. Photograph titled “Flocks Near the Pit into which Joseph was thrown by his Brethren” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 20.

Another example of how Lee’s spatial ideology can produce unexpected interpretations of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs is shown in the image “Church of the Holy Table, Nazareth” (Figure 4.35). Tradition identifies this as a place where Jesus and his disciples dined. The caption notes substantial doubt as to the veracity of this tradition—but it does not dismiss the site as inauthentic or false. Instead, the caption directs the reader to recognize that this particular site existed within the broader, illuminated landscape of the Holy Land: “Whatever faith one may place in traditions of localities and ‘things’ connected with the life of Jesus, we may have assurance touching the landscape on which his holy eyes feasted as he walked hither and thither in Galilee,” the caption reads.⁶⁹³ This line of reasoning occurs repeatedly in *Earthly Footsteps*. Lee’s spatial ideology allowed him to sidestep the problem of identifying true, authentic originals because the broader landscape was the real original. His spatial ideology also opened the possibility that sites or objects could be subsequently “sacralized” or “spiritualized” by prolonged exposure to the Holy Land’s illuminated landscape.

⁶⁹³ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 242.



Figure 4.35. Photograph titled “Church of the Holy Table, Nazareth” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 242.

Lee would not have seen all of the photographs in *Earthly Footsteps* as images of spiritualized landscapes. Toward the end of the volume, for example, are a considerable number of photographs of Damascus. Saul’s conversion on the road to Damascus and Jesus’ post-resurrection appearance to Ananias provided a biblical basis for including the city. Images of running water, lush gardens, and coffee houses predominate, showing Damascus to be a supremely beautiful city and a far cry from dusty Jerusalem (Figures 4.36 and 4.37). But while Damascus was beautiful, it was only beautiful and not a spiritualized place, as Lee would later explain in *The Geography of Genius*:

Though the rivers and gardens and trees and flowers in Damascus are so beautiful, they have never been touched with the spirit of any great personality. No person born in Damascus has ever breathed in that town, rich and broad and great enough to transfigure and glorify the city. It has never been consecrated by the presence of any vast spirit living in its neighborhood. ... The airs which blow through the flower gardens there have never become instinct with unseen presences, so as to impress the sense of something infinitely mysterious and great. ... The world of Damascus has no partnership with the spirit ...⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹⁴ Lee, *The Geography of Genius*, 42. The *Earthly Footsteps* captions do not evidence Lee’s critical assessment of Damascus. The captions and text of *The Geography of Genius* otherwise strongly echo one another, sometimes verbatim. One possibility for this dissonance between the two sources is the suppression of Lee’s critical views by Vincent and/or the publisher of *Earthly Footsteps*.

Damascus was beautiful—so beautiful, in fact, that Lee used the Damascus photographs to represent the Garden of Eden in an illustrated edition of the Bible.⁶⁹⁵ But a spiritualized landscape was more than beautiful; it was transfigured, glorified, consecrated, “instinct with unseen presences,” impressed with “the sense of something infinitely mysterious and great.” Damascus was none of these things, according to Lee, and, thus, neither Damascus nor the photographs of it were spiritualized.



Figure 4.36. Photograph titled “Abana River Passing the Gardens” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 274.

⁶⁹⁵ Lee, Cooke, and Brown, *The Self-Interpreting Bible*, 210, 217.



Figure 4.37. Photograph titled “Falls of the Abana” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps*, page 283.

There remain many unanswered questions about Lee’s views of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs. Did he believe that the reproductions from the photographic plates carried with them the same spiritual associations as the plates themselves? If so, did he believe—or even hope, perhaps—that viewers might unconsciously absorb unseen associations through contact with the reproductions? The question also remains whether viewers would have seen the photographs as Lee did. As evident in the above discussion, for Lee these photographs captured far more than met the eye; interpreting them as he would have requires some knowledge of his particular spatial ideology. Lee’s spatial ideology feels very much of its time and place and not *sui generis*—but it is nearly impossible to say how many viewers of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs shared Lee’s opinion about them.

Spatial ideologies profoundly influenced the production and interpretation of Holy Land reproductions, as seen in this comparison of Vincent, Bain, and Lee’s interpretations of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs. Their particular versions—or, in the case of Bain, rejection—of the material gospel theology strongly patterned their “sacred gaze,” which David Morgan describes as that “religious act of seeing as it occurs within a given cultural and historical setting.”⁶⁹⁶ Divergent opinions about the nature of the Holy Land and photography, in the end, significantly complicated Protestants’ hope that photography would be the precise, scientific, and perfect medium for reproducing the Holy Land.

⁶⁹⁶ Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze*, 3.

Conclusion

Measured by artistic skill, the vast majority of Holy Land reproductions are not “great art.” Protestant travelogues could be derivative, boring, and tedious. Among some contemporary critics, Tissot’s “Life of Christ” enjoys a reputation for being “famously awful.”⁶⁹⁷ And many of the *Earthly Footsteps* images do not look substantially different from countless photographs taken by amateur and professional “button-pushers.” But such works did not necessarily aspire to be great art: they aspired to be comprehensive and complete—to construct a panoramic, all-encompassing view that moved readers or viewers from point to point through the Holy Land. American Protestants embraced those works that best exemplified this aim of a comprehensive and complete reproduction of a sacred and holy place.

This focus on comprehensiveness had some unusual effects in nineteenth-century Holy Land travelogues. Specifically, as travelers sought to relate the whole of their journey, from departure to return, Protestant Holy Land travelogues came to include a range of geographies that went far beyond the Holy Land. The inclusion of these wider geographies, particularly in the later decades of the nineteenth century, would have important consequences for the material gospel theology, as considered in chapter five.

⁶⁹⁷ John Russell, “Gallery View: Tissot’s Religious Works Rediscovered,” *The New York Times*, March 7, 1982, sec. Arts, <http://www.nytimes.com/1982/03/07/arts/gallery-view-tissot-s-religious-works-rediscovered.html>.

CHAPTER V

UNEXPECTED WITNESSES: BEYOND THE HOLY LAND

A pall of mist had hidden the rough and unilluminated rocks; but when that mist grew thin as a veil of delicate lace, I saw the Alps beyond and they appeared to me as if on fire. I cried out in ecstasy, 'Behold Mount Zion.' Through the mists of earth I saw the splendors of heaven.

— John Heyl Vincent, introduction to *Manual of Biblical Geography* (1887)⁶⁹⁸

In the fading light of an October 1896 afternoon, Mary S. Allen boarded a Pullman car in San Francisco, California.⁶⁹⁹ She was bound for the Holy Land. Relatively little is known about Allen, who would later write a small book based on her travels titled *From West to East, Or, The Old World as I Saw It* (1898).⁷⁰⁰ A single photograph of her appears in the book. It shows a sober, middle-aged woman, attired in the fashion of the late Victorian period, standing beside a camel with the Sphinx and Giza pyramids looming in the background (Figure 5.0). Some additional information about Allen can be gleaned from the records of the Free Methodist Church in southern California, where her fervent support of foreign missions is documented.⁷⁰¹ She, in fact, earmarked the profits from the sale of her travelogue for the support of foreign missionaries.⁷⁰²

While comparatively little is known about Allen herself, the details of her journey—including her complete itinerary from San Francisco to the Holy Land—are laid out in *From West to East*. From San Francisco, Allen traveled by train across America, from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic: over southern California's Tehachapi Pass, the mountains of Colorado, the prairies of Kansas, the mighty Mississippi, and arriving in Chicago. After a brief layover, Allen continued by train through Indiana and Ohio, over the Alleghany Mountains, and arrived in Washington, DC. From the nation's capital, she continued to New York City, where she boarded Cunard's *Lucania* for Europe. Her journey then took her from Liverpool to London, Dover to Paris, the Swiss Alps to Rome, Naples to Crete, Port Said in Egypt to, finally, the Port of Jaffa. The subtitle of her book emphasized that it encompassed the entirety of her journey—from the far west of America to the far east of the Holy Land: *Being a Description of a Journey from California to the Holy Land and Egypt, by the way of England, France, Switzerland, and Italy*. Allen wrote of her experiences in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Hebron in the same volume that she described the U.S. Capitol building, George Washington's Mount Vernon, Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the graves of John Wesley and Isaac Watts, the British Museum, the cafes

⁶⁹⁸ Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, vii.

⁶⁹⁹ Allen, *From West to East*, 7.

⁷⁰⁰ Allen, *From West to East*.

⁷⁰¹ A 1903 *Los Angeles Times* article lists Mary S. Allen as an officer of the advisory board for the Bible Training School for Christian Workers, the predecessor of Azusa Pacific University ("Crown Hills," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 1903, 5). Mary S. Allen was also listed as a "Conference Evangelist" in the annual minutes of the Southern California Conference of the Free Methodist Church held in Los Angeles, California, June 13-17, 1906. A later biography of Clara Leffingwell, a Free Methodist missionary, notes that Allen was also Conference President of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society (Walter Ashbel Sellew, *Clara Leffingwell, a Missionary* (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1913), 227).

⁷⁰² Allen, *From West to East*, Introduction.

of Paris, and the Gotthard Pass. Just under half of Allen's *From West to East* describes locations before she ever reached Palestine.

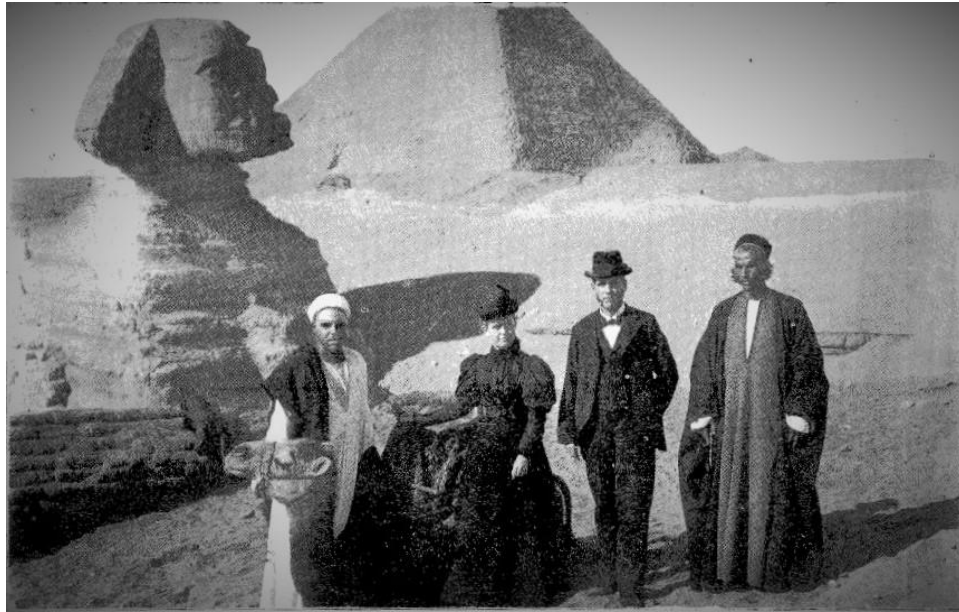


FIGURE 5.0. Photograph of Mary S. Allen at Giza Pyramids (1896-1897). In *From West to East, Or, The Old World as I Saw It: Being a Description of a Journey from California to the Holy Land and Egypt, by the Way of England, France, Switzerland and Italy* (1898).

Holy Land travelogues increasingly looked like Allen's *From West to East* in the closing decades of the nineteenth century: they paid substantial attention to the journey *to* the Holy Land. While nineteenth-century American Protestants did imagine the boundaries of the Holy Land quite expansively, Holy Land travelogues routinely included locations that both writers and readers would have deemed not the Holy Land. Writers narrated their journeys from the moment they departed home, bringing together their recollections of the byways—the train rides across America, the visits to New York City, the streets of Paris, even the wilds of Alaska—with their accounts of climbing Mars Hill, praying at the Garden of Gethsemane, or seeing Bethlehem. To an extent, this is an old phenomenon: pilgrimage accounts from the earliest days of Christianity include descriptions of journeying to sacred sites. At the same time, the attention to the journey in the late nineteenth century represents a shift: compared to earlier nineteenth-century accounts, writers spent far more time describing their journeys—so much so that the non-Holy Land material, at times, threatens to swamp that of the Holy Land.

Unsurprisingly, Holy Land scholarship has typically focused on what Protestants felt, thought, and said about the Holy Land. Consequently, little attention has been paid to this significant presence of non-Holy Land material within Holy Land accounts. This chapter explores this non-Holy Land material, making several interrelated arguments about the causes of its increased presence and its effects. Re-seeing American Protestant reflections on the Holy Land within this broader geographic context enriches and deepens an understanding of how Protestants saw the Holy Land itself. This chapter unfolds in three parts. Part one describes the presence of non-Holy Land material within Holy Land travelogues and identifies several factors that contributed to its increased presence, including practicalities of travel, growing interest in the Grand Tour, and the financing of Holy Land trips. The prospect of seeing the great sights of

America and Europe on the way to the Holy Land excited many travelers—but it was also a source of anxiety, with travelers worrying over the potentially corrupting effects of secular travel during a supposedly religious journey. Part two considers how Protestant travelers negotiated between the two parts of a Holy Land trip: travel *to* the Holy Land, often associated with leisure, luxury, and secularity, on the one hand, and travel *within* the Holy Land, imagined as an austere, pious, and religious pursuit. To further explore the relationship between non-Holy Land and Holy Land materials, part three analyzes in detail one specific travelogue—the Reverend Beverly Carradine’s *A Journey to Palestine* (1892). Carradine’s travelogue shows a unity in how he saw the American, European, and Holy Land landscapes. More critically, what Carradine saw on his journey to the Holy Land influenced his impression of the Holy Land. His journey to the Holy Land cannot be separated from his interpretation of it.

For the American Protestants discussed in this chapter, the Holy Land continued to be a material gospel. At the same time, this chapter foreshadows emerging fissures in the material gospel theology. The vision of the Holy Land as a fifth gospel always contained within it the seeds of potential heresy: if there was a fifth gospel, why not a sixth, seventh, or eighth? Protestants who rallied to the idea of the Holy Land as a fifth gospel answered this question by pointing to the Holy Land’s utter singularity: it was the only place where Jesus had walked. And, yet, increasingly, the singularity of the Holy Land as a material gospel appeared in question. The material gospel theology lent itself to other locations, as seen in Protestant travelogues. Spiritual and religious encounters for many Protestants were not limited to the Holy Land—a fact made strikingly evident as Protestants bundled accounts of such encounters together with Holy Land narratives. The hints of an unraveling of the material gospel theology—discussed more fully in chapter six—were present.

Pilgrims on the Grand Tour

For centuries Christian pilgrimage narratives have incorporated descriptions of journeys to sacred destinations. Medieval pilgrims, for example, often included in their pilgrimage accounts chilling descriptions of their difficult passages over the Mediterranean Sea.⁷⁰³ The experience on the road to the Holy Land could, in some cases, eclipse the destination itself. Nicole Chareyron argues that Venice was the “enchantress” that “took pride of place over Jerusalem” for many medieval pilgrims, for example.⁷⁰⁴ The realities of travel help account for some of this attention to the journey: for only but the most recent period of history, after all, was it possible for European and American pilgrims to go directly to the Holy Land without making stops at several ports-of-call. In this respect, the experiences of nineteenth-century Holy Land travelers bear more in common with earlier pilgrims than contemporary American travelers who today may travel directly to the Holy Land, accomplishing a transatlantic crossing in a matter of hours that took earlier pilgrims several weeks.

While journey descriptions are a long-standing component of pilgrimage accounts, the attention given to journeys has varied. Some accounts paid little mind to how a traveler reached the Holy Land, as in the case of *Yusef, or, The Journey of the Frangi: A Crusade in the East* (1853) by the Irish-born American writer John Ross Browne.⁷⁰⁵ Portions of *Yusef*, one of the most popular Holy Land books of the first half of the nineteenth century, initially appeared in

⁷⁰³ For a compelling account of medieval pilgrims’ grueling five-week overseas journey from Venice to reach Jaffa or Alexandria, see Chareyron, *Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, 47–67.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁷⁰⁵ Browne, *Yusef*.

*Harper's New Monthly Magazine*⁷⁰⁶ and as letters published in a Washington D.C. newspaper.⁷⁰⁷ Browne's path to the Holy Land was circuitous and highly unorthodox: it involved whaling in the Indian Ocean, a mutiny in Zanzibar, travels to South America, and a government job in California and Oregon.⁷⁰⁸ But Browne passes over all this pre-travel in less than a page. Chapter 1 of *Yusef* opens in Sicily, on the cusp of the Holy Land.⁷⁰⁹ Other travelogues from the early- to mid-nineteenth century show a similar tendency to pass over the journey leading to the Holy Land. Edward Robinson, for example, allotted less than three pages in *Biblical Researches* for his journey from New York through England, Germany, and Italy.⁷¹⁰

American Protestants in the latter half of the nineteenth century more commonly began their pilgrimage narratives in America and provided grand, sweeping accounts from their moment of departure to their return (though they rarely gave as much attention to their return compared to their outbound trip). Writers sought to craft unbroken, continuous narratives of all they saw and did. S. Dryden Phelps, pastor of the First Baptist Church in New Haven, Connecticut, noted in his 1863 Holy Land travelogue that he purposely related his "whole tour"—from the moment he embarked in New York, his journeys through Europe, and then on to the Holy Land.⁷¹¹ Book titles like Carradine's *A Journey to Palestine* (1892) or Allen's *From West to East* (1898) reflected the fact that these works were not simply about the Holy Land; they were also about travels to the Holy Land.

The goal of providing a comprehensive, first-person, eye-witness account of a "whole tour," as the Reverend Phelps wished to do, recalls the compulsion for totalizing description and linearity discussed in chapter 4. This goal of comprehensiveness led some books ostensibly about the Holy Land to include quite disparate geographies, such as travel writer L. D. Luke's *A Journal of Travels in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land* (1891). A reader basing his expectations for Luke's book on this main title alone might be surprised by its full geographic scope, which Luke enumerated in an extended subtitle: *Describing the Principal Historic Places Recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, the Cities of Damascus and Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, Sea of Galilee, Nazareth, Gethsemane, Holy Sepulcher, Mount of Olives, Mount Calvary, and Many Others: Also, the Grecian Isles, Where Sacred Scenes Transpired, Back through North Wales, and Then Away to That Far-off Region of Alaska, Where Eternal Winter Reigns, Giving an Explicit Description of That Weird Country*. In a single book, Luke's readers could imagine themselves in ancient Palestine and that "weird country" of Alaska—not an expected pairing.⁷¹²

What is also distinctive about later nineteenth-century Holy Land travelogues is a marked increase in the space devoted to describing travels outside the Holy Land. Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* gave substantial attention to the entirety of his trip, including the Moroccan city of Tangier, Paris, and the Bermuda islands.⁷¹³ The subtitle "Approaching the Holy Land," in fact, appears well past the halfway point of Twain's book, in chapter 41 of 60 chapters. Other works show a similar tendency. In Carradine's approximately 500-page *Journey to Palestine*,

⁷⁰⁶ J. Ross Browne, "Journey of the Frangi," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 6, no. 32 (January 1853): 212–17.

⁷⁰⁷ Browne, *Yusef*, iii.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, v–vi.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷¹⁰ Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, 5.

⁷¹¹ Phelps, *Holy Land with Glimpses of Europe and Egypt*, preface.

⁷¹² L. D. Luke, *A Journal of Travels in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land: Describing the Principal Historic Places Recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, the Cities of Damascus and Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, Sea of Galilee, Nazareth, Gethsemane, Holy Sepulcher, Mount of Olives, Mount Calvary, and Many Others: Also, the Grecian Isles, Where Sacred Scenes Transpired, Back through North Wales, and Then Away to That Far-off Region of Alaska, Where Eternal Winter Reigns, Giving an Explicit Description of That Weird Country* (Utica, N.Y.: Press of L.C. Childs & Son, 1891).

⁷¹³ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 76, 132, 640.

the first 200 pages document his travels to reach Egypt and Palestine, with reflections on his time in New York City, London, Paris, Switzerland, and Italy.⁷¹⁴

Several factors account for this increased focus on travel to the Holy Land. First, it reflects a growing enthusiasm for travel and tourism both at home and abroad. The late nineteenth century was a pivotal moment in the development of mass, commercial tourism. Americans created an indigenous network of tourist sites, flocking, in particular, with an almost religious devotion to places of awe-inspiring natural wonder, including Niagara Falls, Mammoth Cave, the Connecticut and Hudson Valleys, Yosemite, and Yellowstone.⁷¹⁵ Protestants responded to this new enthusiasm for travel and leisure. The mid- to late-nineteenth century saw a boom in religious summer resort communities; two of the most well-known—Ocean Grove, New Jersey and the Chautauqua Institution—were founded by Methodists within a decade of each other, in 1869 and 1874, respectively (Figures 5.1 and 5.2). These beautiful resort communities reimaged the rustic, temporary camp meeting. Places like Ocean Grove and Chautauqua prioritized the idea of “holy leisure”—enabling participants “to move seamlessly between play and devotion.”⁷¹⁶ Mark Twain sardonically noted his period’s taste for the fusion of religion and leisure when he described his 1869 Holy Land trip as a “Holy Land Pleasure Excursion.”⁷¹⁷



Figure 5.1. Map of Ocean Grove, New Jersey in 1881 by Thaddeus Mortimer Fowler (1842-1922). Popular Graphic Arts Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC. LC-USZC4-12145.

⁷¹⁴ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*.

⁷¹⁵ On these and other nineteenth-century American tourism sites, see Sears, *Sacred Places*.

⁷¹⁶ Troy Messenger, *Holy Leisure: Recreation and Religion in God's Square Mile* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 26.

⁷¹⁷ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 353.



Figure 5.2. Photograph of the Athenaeum Hotel in Chautauqua, New York (c. 1898). Detroit Publishing Company Photograph Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC. det1994000110.

The increased presence of non-Holy Land materials also reflects the merging of the European Grand Tour and Holy Land pilgrimage. Though a reality for only a small minority, Americans embraced the romanticism of the Grand Tour—that trapeze through Europe that served as a mark of refinement and education for upper-class European men.⁷¹⁸ Tour operators marketed European trips to Americans under the moniker “The Grand Tour.” In 1896 the tour operator Gaze & Sons offered several versions of the “Grand Tour”—each itinerary encompassing a combination of travel to England, France, Switzerland, or Italy.⁷¹⁹ The itineraries of organized Holy Land tours blended with those of the Grand Tour, as seen in an 1874 advertisement for a Holy Land trip in a Chicago newspaper: travelers were to depart New York City by steamship and arrive in Europe where they would tour Spain, France, the Alps, and Italy. Passengers would then rejoin their ship, sailing along the coast of Sicily, visiting Greece and Constantinople. Only then would passengers arrive in Joppa, visiting Jerusalem, the Jordan, the Dead Sea, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Bethany. Many tours also stopped in Egypt before or after Palestine—and on the long voyage home a ship might visit the ports-of-call of Malta, Algiers, or Bermuda.⁷²⁰ All told, a tour of Europe and the Holy Land often took three to four months, with just a month, or sometimes less, in Palestine and Syria.⁷²¹

⁷¹⁸ Lynne Withey, *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750 to 1915* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1997); John Towner, “The Grand Tour: A Key Phase in the History of Tourism,” *Annals of Tourism Research* 12, no. 3 (1985): 297–333.

⁷¹⁹ “Gaze’s Escorted Parties for 1896,” *Gaze’s Tourist Gazette* 8, no. 12 (October 1896): 15.

⁷²⁰ “Few Persons Who Have Laughed,” *The Daily Inter Ocean*, November 6, 1874, Friday Morning edition, 4.

⁷²¹ “The Congregationalist’s Oriental Tour,” 2. Independent travelers who forewent organized tours often spent a similar amount of time abroad. The Reverend Beverly Carradine, for example, who

Tour operators and travelers alike sought ways to bring together and rationalize these two sides of a Holy Land tour—the Grand Tour of Europe, on the one hand, and Holy Land pilgrimage, on the other. Gaze & Sons suggested that its “Popular Tour through Bible Lands,” which included many stops in Europe, remained a Holy Land tour because its “objective point” was the Holy Land.⁷²² Others relied upon spatial imaginings that brought together Europe and the Holy Land. Such was the case for the Californian Mary Allen, who deemed her trip a journey to the “Old World”—a region that for her encompassed not only Europe’s great cities but the most sacred sites of the Holy Land.⁷²³

Nineteenth-century travel culture also influenced the types of sites and activities that Americans sought out within the Holy Land. Some locations attracted interest in ways that seem disproportionate with their biblical significance. Consider, for example, the prominence of Damascus in late nineteenth-century travelogues. The city of Damascus did have biblical associations: Thomas DeWitt Talmage noted that the city had been “founded by the grandson of Noah” and was “the oldest city under the sun.”⁷²⁴ “It is worthwhile to cross the Atlantic and Europe to see it,” he wrote.⁷²⁵ The story of Saul’s blinding on his way to Damascus, as recounted in Acts 9:3-9, also made the city of interest to Christian pilgrims,⁷²⁶ who sought the House of Ananias and the street called Straight, both mentioned in connection with Saul’s conversion.⁷²⁷

Damascus, though, assumed a very large role in many late nineteenth-century travelogues. As discussed in chapter 4, a significant portion of the photographs in *Earthly Footsteps* were of Damascus—nearly 10% of all the photographs, in fact, a number roughly equal to the number of photographs of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Tiberias combined. These photographs reveal what many visitors may have found so alluring about the place: images of flowing water, lush gardens, and coffee houses predominate (Figure 5.3). American Protestants discovered in Damascus an idyllic retreat for “taking the waters”—reminiscent of the spa culture of Hot Springs, Arkansas, French Lick, Indiana, Saratoga Springs, New York, or numerous other American spas that attracted great numbers in the nineteenth century.⁷²⁸

prided himself on his solo travel, took four months to make his journey, with only three weeks in the Holy Land (Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 485, 477).

⁷²² “Season—1896-1897,” 8.

⁷²³ Allen, *From West to East*.

⁷²⁴ “Talmage: A Review of the Journey through Palestine,” *The Los Angeles Times*, February 10, 1890, 6.

⁷²⁵ Ibid.

⁷²⁶ Acts 9:3–9

⁷²⁷ Acts 9:10-11

⁷²⁸ Theodore Corbett, *The Making of American Resorts: Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa, and Lake George* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000).



Figure 5.3. Photograph titled “Suphaniah, Damascus” (1894) by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps* (1894), page 292.

In addition to popular leisure culture and the fusion of Holy Land pilgrimage with the Grand Tour, there is another factor that may help explain the significant attention late-nineteenth century writers paid to their journeys to the Holy Land: namely, how such trips were financed. Many congregations sponsored Holy Land trips for their ministers as rewards for good and faithful service. Ministers often wrote travelogues with those home congregations in mind, sometimes expressly dedicating their travelogues to their supporting congregations.⁷²⁹ The Disciples of Christ minister John William McGarvey even planned to reimburse those who financed his trip with proceeds from the sale of his travelogue.⁷³⁰ Since the actual time in the Holy Land might be a relatively small portion of the time a minister was away, documenting the whole of the trip—from departure to return—allowed ministers to share their experiences with their congregations, conscientiously account for their time away, and demonstrate good stewardship of their gift. The Reverend Beverly Carradine’s 1890 trip to the Holy Land, for example, was supported by “friends who sent [him] abroad to realize the dream of [his] life.”⁷³¹ He was away for four months from his congregation, with only three weeks spent in the Holy Land.⁷³² Carradine boasted of his frugality in his travelogue, paying just \$60 for a six foot by one foot berth for his eleven-day Atlantic crossing aboard the aging Cunard steamer the *Bothnia*.⁷³³ His congregation and generous friends could rest assured that the Reverend Carradine was not traveling in too high a style.

⁷²⁹ For an example of a travelogue dedicated to a congregation, see *From Joppa to Mount Hermon* by Robert Edwards, the rector of the Church of Saint Matthias, an Episcopal Congregation in Philadelphia.

⁷³⁰ McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, 14.

⁷³¹ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 489.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, 485, 477.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, 26.

Other Sacred Grounds?

The travel required to reach the Holy Land aroused both excitement and concern among Protestant travelers. While many dreamed of the wonders of the Grand Tour, its seductive sights also produced anxiety. The Reverend Carradine, for example, worried that the journey to the Holy Land might prove more impressive, beautiful, and awe-inspiring than the Holy Land itself. What if Rome's Coliseum overshadowed the temple of Solomon? Or if Mount Calvary paled in comparison to Mount Blanc?⁷³⁴ Might the juxtaposition of Europe's wonders with the Holy Land's potential disappointments plant irritating seeds of doubt? "It is unquestionably a risky thing for a preacher to travel abroad. ... The man beloved of the congregation who goes abroad never comes back," Carradine warned.⁷³⁵ Travelers negotiated the tensions produced by travel to the Holy Land in different ways. Some, for example, embraced the secular aspects of the Grand Tour but dedicated substantial time to visiting religious sites and attending religious services, effectively sacralizing their leisure travel. For others, places outside the Holy Land proved to be yet another source of divine revelation—perhaps as moving as the Holy Land itself.

Travelers rarely shied from visiting popular tourism destinations on their way to the Holy Land, and they incorporated their reflections on such places within their travelogues. Mary Allen, the Free Methodist from California who went to the Holy Land in 1896, visited London's most popular tourist attractions, including the British Museum's Rosetta Stone and the crown jewels at the Tower of London.⁷³⁶ *Earthly Footsteps* included several photographs of the new National Museum for Egyptian antiquities, allowing readers to take a virtual stroll through its exhibits (Figure 5.4). Macabre sites captured the attentions of other travelers. Holy Land writers regaled their readers with accounts of some of Europe's most gruesome offerings. Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* contains harrowing descriptions of catacombs, dead bodies, and a visit to the Paris morgue (Figure 5.5).⁷³⁷ The Parisian morgue also made an appearance in Reverend Carradine's Holy Land travelogue. As Carradine surveyed the bodies of suicide victims awaiting identification, he reflected on how the scene graphically illustrated, for him, Paris's low morals: "Poor, giddy, wine-drinking, pleasure-loving, Sabbath-breaking Paris continues to lead all the other cities in the matter of suicides," he noted.⁷³⁸

⁷³⁴ Ibid., 13.

⁷³⁵ Ibid., 12.

⁷³⁶ Allen, *From West to East*, 16–17, 20–21.

⁷³⁷ Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, 295–296, 132–133. Some scholars consider *Innocents Abroad* an exemplification of nineteenth-century thanatourism—dark or black tourism. See Avital Birna, Kenneth F. Hyde, and Tony Johnston, "Mark Twain and The Innocents Abroad: Illuminating the Tourist Gaze on Death," *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 7, no. 3 (August 2, 2013): 199–213.

⁷³⁸ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 133.

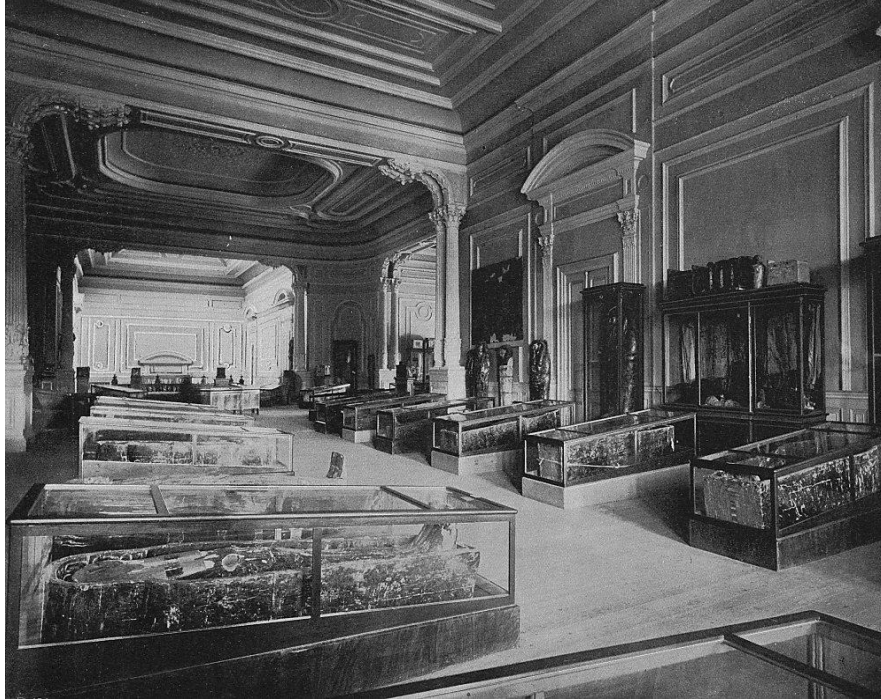


Figure 5.4. Photograph of mummies in Egypt's Giza Museum in 1894 by Bain. From *Earthly Footsteps* (1894), page 60.

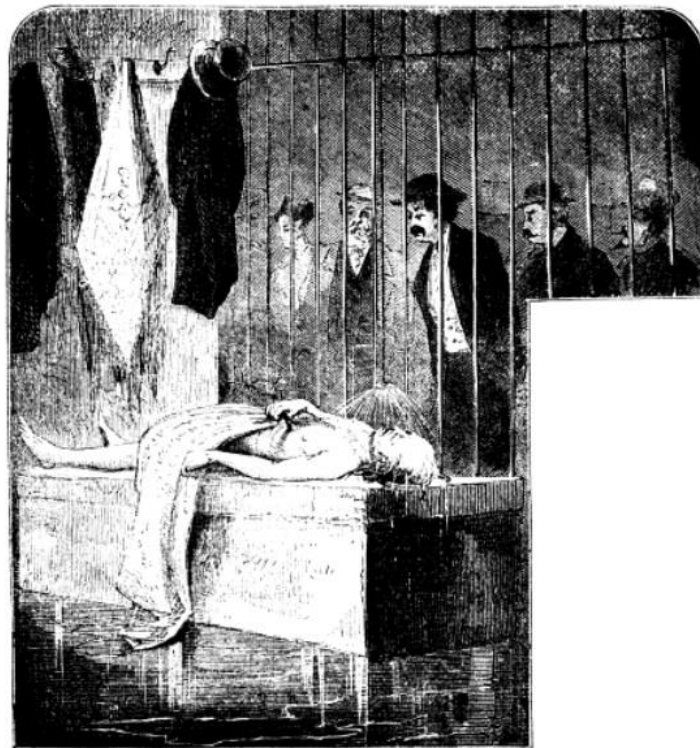


Figure 5.5. Illustration of Holy Land pilgrims viewing a body in Paris morgue (unknown artist and date). From Twain, *Innocents Abroad* (1869), page 132.

Writers on occasion sought to justify the inclusion of seemingly areligious materials within Holy Land travelogues. In the case of the *Earthly Footsteps* photographs, for example, the authors explain the inclusion of the Egyptian museum photographs: “these works of art get their chief interest from their association with and relation to the history of the Israelites and the Savior of the world.”⁷³⁹ In other words, the inclusion of these photographs, despite appearances to the contrary, was justified based on their connection to biblical history. Depending on the object or site in question, the reasoning about the relationship of contemporary tourism sites to biblical history could be more or less tenuous. The authors of *Earthly Footsteps*, for example, did not attempt to explain the biblical basis for including a photograph of the newly constructed, neo-classical Academy of Sciences in Athens (Figure 5.6).



Figure 5.6. Photograph of the Academy of Science in Athens in 1894 by Bain. Photograph from *Earthly Footsteps* (1894), page 361.

While Protestant travelers enjoyed popular tourism sites on their way to the Holy Land, many made a concerted effort to learn about and experience Christianity, wherever it could be found. In good Methodist spirit, the Californian Mary Allen made Wesley’s Chapel—the Methodist church built by John Wesley—her first stop in London.⁷⁴⁰ Her London itinerary also included visits to the graves of religious figures like John Wesley, John Bunyan, and Isaac Watts, as well as stops at St. Paul’s Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.⁷⁴¹ Like Allen, other Methodist travelers reported their hearts strangely warmed by England’s religious sites.

⁷³⁹ Vincent, Lee, and Bain, *Earthly Footsteps*, 408.

⁷⁴⁰ Allen, *From West to East*, 15.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 16–18.

Standing in Wesley's bedroom, the Reverend Carradine noted that he felt he was on "holy ground."⁷⁴²

In England, particularly, there were efforts underfoot in the late nineteenth century to build interest in non-Catholic, Christian pilgrimage sites. Edward Walford, author of *The Pilgrim at Home* (1886) discussed in chapter 3, listed an eclectic mix of "English shrines" that he believed all Christians—Catholic or not—should visit.⁷⁴³ The sites included those with strong Protestant associations, such as the church of the religious reformer John Wycliffe, the home of the English poet and hymnodist William Cowper (a site already popular with many American pilgrims, Walford noted), and the birthplace of John Bunyan. Walford's list of shrines had a definitive Anglican-centric viewpoint, neglecting, for example, sites associated with John or Charles Wesley, which already attracted many American pilgrims. English shrines with less overt Protestant pedigrees also made Walford's suggested itinerary, including Iona, the site of Saint Columba's tomb, and Lindisfarne, associated with Saints Aiden and Cuthbert. Sites such as these, Walford felt, made for appropriate pilgrimage destinations outside of the Holy Land.

Protestant travelers also sacralized their journeys to the Holy Land by attending religious services—sometimes compulsively so. Some travelers approached religious services with a competitive voraciousness, seeking to attend as many services as possible in a single day. The more internationally known the preacher, the better. "London has much to offer in the way of good preachers," wrote Mary Allen, noting, in particular, Joseph Parker (1830-1902), a Congregational minister at the City Temple; Mark Guy Pearse (1842-1930) of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, who "fills a large, fine hall at the West End every Sunday"; and Thomas Spurgeon (1856-1917), a British Reformed Baptist preacher continuing the work of his father at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.⁷⁴⁴ Reverend Carradine's tour of leading religious lights began before he even left America. His stopover in New York City allowed him to visit the churches of some of the country's most influential and well-known pastors—including Thomas DeWitt Talmage's Brooklyn church and Henry Ward Beecher's Plymouth Tabernacle, then led by Lyman Abbott (and whom Carradine judged to be very much still laboring in the shadows of his illustrious predecessor).⁷⁴⁵ That same evening, Carradine attended yet another service led by a young, unnamed Baptist preacher.⁷⁴⁶ In London, Carradine managed on a single Sunday to attend the services of the "three great lights of London": the British Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892), who preached to a crowd of 5,000; Anglican cleric Frederic Farrar (1831-1903), author of the popular *The Life of Christ* (1874) and future Dean of Canterbury; and the Congregationalist minister Joseph Park, who preached to 4,000.⁷⁴⁷ Carradine's frenetic pace of religious consumption continued in Paris where he aimed to attend "as many church services as [he could] well manage"⁷⁴⁸—including one at Notre Dame Cathedral where Carradine noted a paltry attendance of only 200 people in a space he claimed could accommodate 25,000.⁷⁴⁹ Carradine showed little allegiance to one denomination over another: he worshipped with Congregationalists in Paris, Waldensians in Venice, and Wesleyan and Roman Catholic congregations in Naples.⁷⁵⁰ Carradine approached attending religious

⁷⁴² Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 116.

⁷⁴³ Walford, *The Pilgrim at Home*, 22.

⁷⁴⁴ Allen, *From West to East*, 21.

⁷⁴⁵ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 14. Carradine was disappointed to discover that Talmage was on vacation when he visited. "What a kind congregation [Talmage] has!" remarked Carradine, referring to the fact that Talmage had recently traveled to the Holy Land and then was given "a vacation upon the top of that" (14).

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 88–90.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁷⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 126, 167, 192–193.

services as a research project: “In the various cities in which I stop, I put the question: What is being done to save the people and bring them to Christ? I investigated the matter.”⁷⁵¹ Carradine’s journey to the Holy Land served as his own, private anthropological study of Christianity.

Carradine sought religion at church services on his way to the Holy Land. Protestants, though, also found religion in other places—particularly among the awe-inspiring natural landscapes of America and Europe. Carradine himself recorded several powerful “mountain top” experiences before reaching the Holy Land. Washington Irving’s Sunnyside Estate in Tarrytown, New York elicited from Carradine a reverent outpouring of praise: he found “the mountains voicing thoughts of eternity, the flowing river speaking of time, and all the beauties and solemnities of distant landscapes arousing the soul to appreciation and reflection.”⁷⁵² Carradine reported a similarly moving experience on the summit of Ben Lomund in Scotland: “I shall carry through eternity with me the memory of the glorious view I obtained at noon of July 16, from the summit of majestic Ben Lomund,” he wrote. Seeing the mountains before him as the “[g]reat altars of God,” Carradine removed his hat and “worshiped God in their company.”⁷⁵³

The Reverend John Heyl Vincent also wrote about a sacred experience in the natural landscape of Europe. In Vincent’s introduction to Rand McNally’s *Manual of Biblical Geography* (1884), he chose an example from Europe to illustrate what he described as the Holy Land’s “strange blending of the natural and supernatural.”⁷⁵⁴ He described standing in the Alps, looking up at Mount Blanc: “A pall of mist had hidden the rough and unilluminated rocks; but when that mist grew thin as a veil of delicate lace, I saw the Alps beyond and they appeared to me as if on fire. I cried out in ecstasy, ‘Behold Mount Zion.’ Through the mists of earth I saw the splendors of heaven,” he wrote.⁷⁵⁵ This, coincidentally, was exactly Carradine’s worry: that the grandeur of the Alps might surpass the Holy Land’s mountains. In Vincent’s description, Mount Blanc has replaced Mount Zion. The substitution of one for the other is striking: Mount Blanc, one of the world’s highest peaks, would dwarf Jerusalem’s Mount Zion—more a modest hill than mountain. It is difficult to pin down Vincent’s precise purpose with this illustration. Did Mount Blanc better match his expectations for Mount Zion, it being a grander vista than the real one? Whatever Vincent’s purpose, it is clear that, for him, the comingling of the natural and supernatural was not limited to the Holy Land.

In sum, American Protestants sought to unify their non-Holy Land and Holy Land journeys. For some Protestants this meant sacralizing their leisure travel, be it through visiting religious sites or attending church services. Others found religion in the natural world on the way to the Holy Land. In crafting their Holy Land travelogues, Protestants sought to convey the integrity and wholeness of their journey. Moreover, the meaning and experiences they took away from the Holy Land were often closely related to their travel experiences on the way there. This interdependency of non-Holy Land and Holy Land narratives is explored in the following section with a close reading of Carradine’s *Journey to Palestine*.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid., 192.

⁷⁵² Ibid., 24.

⁷⁵³ Ibid., 50.

⁷⁵⁴ Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1884, vii.

⁷⁵⁵ Hurlbut, *Manual of Biblical Geography*, 1887, vii.

Reverend Carradine's Journey

The Reverend Beverly Carradine left his New Orleans home for the Holy Land on June 23, 1890.⁷⁵⁶ He was 42 years old—a Methodist preacher for the previous 15 years.⁷⁵⁷ A gift from his congregation, his trip would take him away from his home for four months.⁷⁵⁸ Immediately prior to his departure, two developments had significantly enhanced Carradine's national reputation. First, his vociferous attack on the Louisiana lottery earned him widespread attention.⁷⁵⁹ He detailed his Christian objections to gambling and vice in a small book, which was his first book in a long and varied writing career. Carradine would eventually pen more than two dozen books—from traditional theological tracts to folksy short stories. The second development that brought attention to Carradine was his emergence as a leading figure in the pietistic, holiness movement at the end of the nineteenth century. Almost exactly a year before Carradine's departure for the Holy Land, he received "the Baptism with the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost "filled and rolled over [his] soul in billows of flame and glory!" wrote Carradine.⁷⁶⁰ Sanctification and holiness became major focuses for the minister. His writings connected him with important centers in the holiness movement. Carradine's *Sanctification* (1890) was released the same year as his Holy Land trip by a denominational press of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.⁷⁶¹ Other works followed, including *The Sanctified Life* (1897), published at the office of the Cincinnati holiness journal *The Revivalist*,⁷⁶² and a number of works printed by the Christian Witness Company, a center of the Methodist holiness movement in Chicago.⁷⁶³ Carradine's substantial oeuvre earned him the nickname the "Prince of Holiness Writers."⁷⁶⁴

Carradine's skills as a writer are evident in *A Journey to Palestine*. Compared to many nineteenth-century Holy Land travelogues, his is engagingly written. His personal voice is clear and strong; his account is, at least on the surface, not a bricolage of other Holy Land books. He does not overtly rely on other Holy Land writers, mentioning, for example, the venerable Edward Robinson only a single time.⁷⁶⁵ The book also does not include images: it includes no pictures to compete with its narrative descriptions. Carradine is the reader's authoritative guide, with the reader experiencing the Holy Land with and through him. The intimacy between Carradine and reader is affirmed in the closing pages of *A Journey to Palestine* when Carradine addresses the reader directly, breaking the fourth wall. He hopes that "God may grant that the reader of these lines and the writer shall take part in that coming blessed

⁷⁵⁶ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 1.

⁷⁵⁷ See Gene Long, *Beverly Carradine: Prince of Holiness Writers* (Salem, Ohio: Allegheny Publications, 2003), 79–93 for an account of Carradine's conversion and licensure to preach.

⁷⁵⁸ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 1; "Rev. Carradine, Retired Pastor, Evangelist, Dies," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 24, 1931, 30.

⁷⁵⁹ Beverly Carradine, *The Louisiana State Lottery Company, Examined and Exposed*. (New Orleans: Mitchel, 1889).

⁷⁶⁰ As quoted in Long, *Beverly Carradine*, 138.

⁷⁶¹ Beverly Carradine, *Sanctification* (Nashville, Tenn.: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South, Barbee & Smith, Agents, 1891).

⁷⁶² Beverly Carradine, *The Sanctified Life* (Cincinnati: M.W. Knapp, Revivalist Office, 1897). On the history of *The Revivalist* and its holiness associations, see Charles Edwin Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936*, ATLA Monograph Series 5 (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1974), 100–101.

⁷⁶³ Beverly Carradine, *A Church Yard Story* (Chicago: Christian Witness Co., 1904); Beverly Carradine, *Living Illustrations* (Chicago: The Christian Witness Co., 1908). On the Christian Witness Company as a center of Methodist holiness in Chicago, see William Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers: Evangelicals and Radicals in Progressive Era America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 51.

⁷⁶⁴ Long, *Beverly Carradine*.

⁷⁶⁵ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 269.

reunion of the skies.”⁷⁶⁶ It is his parting words to the reader now that their shared journey is over.

Carradine traveled to the Holy Land alone, further fostering a sense of intimacy between writer and reader: Carradine’s only travel companion is the reader. Absent are the antics, buffoonery, and tribulations of hapless travel companions—à la Twain’s *The Innocents Abroad*. Carradine’s decision to travel alone proved more expensive and sometimes difficult. “It is hard to be seeing constantly striking objects, and have no one to commune with on the subject,” he wrote.⁷⁶⁷ Carradine, though, praised the pietistic potential of solo travel. He characterized his travel as a meditation⁷⁶⁸ and used his loneliness and difficult travel conditions to connect with the suffering of Christ.⁷⁶⁹

Carradine spent significant time documenting his travels in New York, London, Paris, and other places before reaching the Holy Land. There is substantial narrative continuity between this early non-Holy Land and later Holy Land material, particularly in two respects. First, there is significant continuity in how Carradine encounters non-Holy Land landscapes and how he subsequently engages the Holy Land. As he travels through America and Europe, he uses techniques to read landscapes that he will later use in the Holy Land. The early portion of his book effectively teaches readers how to interpret and experience landscapes. Second, the story that Carradine unfolds about his journey to the Holy Land matters in his interpretation of the Holy Land itself. His narrative constructs a story of the geographic, temporal, and soteriological interdependency of America, Europe, and the Holy Land.

From the moment Carradine boarded his Pullman train car in New Orleans for his journey northward to New York City, he saw the landscape as a witness to and cipher for history. His travels through the American South brought to mind the not so distant Civil War. Carradine’s father had been a slave-owner,⁷⁷⁰ and, at the age of 16, Carradine had enlisted in the Confederate Calvary.⁷⁷¹ Carradine imagined the South’s many great, crisscrossing rivers as forming the edges of enormous picture frames. These frames had once contained a “living painting” before the “balls and bayonets of 1861-’65 tore [it] away,” he wrote. The “pebbly edges” and “willow margins” of the rivers brought to mind, “the pictures which they once encased.”⁷⁷² For Carradine, Jerusalem was not the only landscape of lament and loss that he encountered on his journey.

Carradine also sees the physical landscape as spirit-filled. As Carradine’s train followed the east bank of the Hudson River from Albany toward New York City, he imagined the river’s edge as populated by great figures from the past. “How History and Fiction, and Legend, and Poetry, and great characters and lovely scenery all come down together to its banks and wave their hands in greeting to the passing traveler,” he wrote.⁷⁷³ While visiting New York City, Carradine journeys just north of the city to the home of early American writer Washington Irving. Carradine found that Irving and his fictional characters took on a vivacity and realness in the physical places associated with Irving’s life. “[T]he character of fiction cannot be buried—he always seems alive,” he wrote.⁷⁷⁴ In later chapters Carradine would similarly describe the Scottish and English countrysides as alive with the spirits of Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, John Knox, Queen Elizabeth, and Shakespeare.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid., 488.

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid., 366, 218.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid., 455, 488.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid., 219.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁷¹ Long, *Beverly Carradine*, 59–64.

⁷⁷² Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 4.

⁷⁷³ Ibid., 8–9.

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid., 21.

Physical landscapes became gateways for Carradine to imaginatively participate in great historical events. As Carradine approached Rome, he described being transported to the Roman Empire: “I peopled the plain with the armies of Hannibal and Caesar and Charlemagne, and Attila with his hordes of Northern savages,” he wrote. Carradine does not simply recall the history that took place there but imagines himself as a participant in it. He describes hearing the noises of the battle: “It was their legions in rapid advance or tumultuous retreat that I heard in the air. It was their trampling, the beating of millions of feet that hardened the plain.”⁷⁷⁵ Before Carradine ever reaches the Holy Land, his travelogue suggests that the past is alive in the places where it occurred.

The early portions of Carradine’s travelogue also establish the practice of reading a landscape through texts. When he reaches the Holy Land, Carradine, like many Protestant pilgrims, deliberately and carefully compared the Holy Land to the Bible. Carradine, though, practices comparing texts and places even before reaching the Holy Land. He sees the European landscape through the works of Scott, Byron, Burns, Shakespeare, and Thomas Gray, among many others. Carradine models the careful comparison of text and place when he seeks out the actual locations described in Gray’s “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” (1751). Carradine takes delight in finding the exact scenes described by Gray’s poem, including a lowing herd, the ivy-mantled tower, and the yew tree in the churchyard. “It is worthy of note that there is but one yew tree in the church yard, and if the poem is examined, it will be noticed that but one is mentioned. This faithfulness to facts and correctness of description strikes the heart of the observer very gratefully,” wrote Carradine.⁷⁷⁶ The early portions of *A Journey to Palestine* reinforce the virtuous harmony of word and place.

Carradine also has experiences on his journey to the Holy Land that foreshadow his later experiences at biblical sites. Consider, for example, the parallels between Carradine’s description of the birthplace of the Scottish poet Robert Burns (1759-1796) and Jesus’ birthplace. Carradine was one of thousands of late-nineteenth-century tourists who visited Burns’s birthplace. Nineteenth-century Americans valorized Scotland’s bard—so much so that scholars have described a nineteenth-century “cult of Burns.”⁷⁷⁷ Burns enjoyed particular popularity among Masons, who well into the early twentieth century regarded him as “the eternal Poet Laureate of Masonry.”⁷⁷⁸ The poet’s admirers often spoke of communing with his spirit, in ways not dissimilar to the ways that Protestants imagined walking and talking with Jesus. “On my lonely walks, I have often thought how fine it would be to have the company of Burns. And indeed he was always with me, for I had him by heart,” wrote the naturalist John Muir (1838-1914).⁷⁷⁹

This “cult of Burns” helps contextualize Carradine’s reverential state when visiting Burns’s boyhood home. “I stood in the room where the child of genius was born,” wrote Carradine.⁷⁸⁰ His description parallels the nativity story. Like Jesus’ birth in the manger, Burns’s home was modest—just a low-stone cottage. “How strange and often humble are the places in which the prodigies of the world first see light,” Carradine would later remark regarding Shakespeare’s birthplace.⁷⁸¹ Reminiscent of the focus on Mary’s interior experience in Luke 1:46-55, Carradine meditates on Burns’s mother while at his birthplace: “How little did

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid., 176.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid., 104–105.

⁷⁷⁷ On the nineteenth-century “cult of Burns,” see Carol McGuirk, “Haunted by Authority: Nineteenth-Century American Constructions of Robert Burns and Scotland,” in *Robert Burns and Cultural Authority*, ed. Robert Crawford (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997), 136–58.

⁷⁷⁸ “Robert Burns and Freemasonry,” *The Builder: A Journal for the Masonic Student* VII, no. 8 (August 1921): 235.

⁷⁷⁹ As quoted in McGuirk, “Haunted by Authority,” 138.

⁷⁸⁰ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 41.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid., 81.

the mother think that day, as she heard the first cry of her babe, that the time would come that the poor, dimly-lighted room, would become the cynosure of millions of eyes, and that thirty thousand persons annually would visit it, and stand meditating upon its rough stone floor, because of the child born to her on that morning.”⁷⁸² Admirers of Burns knew there were other parallels between the lives of Jesus and the poet, with Burns also dying in his 30s. The biblical narrative replays itself in unexpected places in Carradine’s travelogue.

Aside from priming his readers for how to interpret a material landscape, Carradine’s extended descriptions of his travel to the Holy Land plays several important functions within his text. First, it creates a spatial network linking America and the Holy Land. In narrating his point-to-point travel—from New Orleans to Jaffa—Carradine constructs a line of continuity between America and the Holy Land; two distant places are brought into connection. His narrative description also builds a temporal connection between these locations. As he travels eastward, his narration of European history reaches further and further back in time, through the history of the Tudors of England, the Doges of Venice, and the emperors of Rome. A critical temporal moment occurs when Carradine crosses the Mediterranean Sea and sees Mount Vesuvius: Paul, he claims, saw Vesuvius as he came to Rome, and, thus, as Carradine sails across the Mediterranean Sea, he is reversing Paul’s route and crossing into biblical time.⁷⁸³ Carradine’s narration of his travel eastward weaves American, European, and biblical history into a single, unified timeline.

There is a second critical function of Carradine’s descriptions of his travel to the Holy Land: the social conditions he sees on his journey bolster his argument about the pressing need for Christianity in the contemporary world. Carradine’s time in New York City, for example, arouses his social conscious. Resembling Social Gospeler’s critiques of urban life, Carradine wrote of riding New York City’s elevated railway and peering into the city’s many garment factories. His “heart bled” as he saw the “stooping forms and pale faces” of hundreds of workers through factory windows.⁷⁸⁴ In the heat of the summer, Carradine reported that disease was killing New York City’s children “like Herod of old.” White ribbons—indicating the death of the young, as opposed to the black ribbons reserved for adults—billowed from hundreds of doorways. Another ride on the elevated railway gave Carradine a glimpse of a young mother tending to her baby on the roof of a tenement. Carradine imagined that the mother was attempting “to give the poor little dying one a breath of fresh, pure air.”⁷⁸⁵

The situation did not improve as Carradine’s journey continued. Each new place brought new and dreadful conditions. For Carradine, Paris was a city of unbelief—wine glasses merrily clinking at its many cafes even on a Sunday evening.⁷⁸⁶ In Switzerland, Carradine observed women forced into laborious and unbecoming work.⁷⁸⁷ He believed the Roman Catholic Church had impoverished Italy—Venice made a city of tyranny and Rome a city of falsehood.⁷⁸⁸ Even the donkeys in Naples were weighed down and abused, noted Carradine.⁷⁸⁹ “Human nature is the same in all ages and countries,” he wrote—by which he meant depraved and lusting for power.⁷⁹⁰

When Carradine finally arrived in the Holy Land, it did not prove a foil to the death, poverty, and abuse he had witnessed on his journey thus far. “The voice that spoke the word of eternal life over this country is heard no more; the gracious presence is not here; the glory is

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, 42.

⁷⁸³ *Ibid.*, 209.

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁷⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 193–194.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 171.

departed,” wrote Carradine about Palestine.⁷⁹¹ Carradine uses Palestine as an object lesson—a sign of America and Europe’s future if they fail to change their ways. Palestine “refused to receive the Son of God, and the hand of judgment has fallen heavily and unmistakably on it,” he wrote.⁷⁹² Carradine’s solution for Palestine’s ills was the same for New York, Paris, or Rome: “Preaching is what Jerusalem needs,” he wrote.⁷⁹³ He prayed that Palestine might receive “an apostolic ministry and a church on fire with the Holy Ghost.”⁷⁹⁴

Nineteenth-century American Protestants could be deeply and unfairly critical of the Holy Land and its people. Carradine’s journey to Palestine is a reminder that such Protestants could be equally critical of America and Europe. The Holy Land and its people, according to Carradine, needed redemption—but so, too, did America and Europe. Poverty, disease, and death were as much the province of New York City as Jerusalem. While the Holy Land’s children begged for “Baksheesh!” Carradine bristled at some of New York’s wealthiest churches making untoward solicitations for money.⁷⁹⁵ Carradine’s critiques of the Holy Land were part of a much larger jeremiad.

While Carradine had worried how travel abroad might change him, it was his circumstances at home that actually shifted while he was away. He received a telegram upon his return to New York informing him of his transfer from his congregation in New Orleans to Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church in St. Louis—one of that city’s wealthiest churches.⁷⁹⁶ Carradine embraced the challenge with his characteristic aplomb: “But what is a thousand miles to a person who has just traveled twenty thousand!” he optimistically wrote.⁷⁹⁷ Carradine’s tenure at Centenary Methodist proved rocky, though. His dogged commitment to fighting immorality and vice—which had earned him national recognition with his opposition to the Louisiana lotteries—was a liability when powerful members of St. Louis society found themselves the targets of Carradine’s reforming spirit. His pointed attacks on church fairs, freemasonry, and secret societies—in a congregation filled with prominent freemasons, no less—proved disruptive.⁷⁹⁸ The conflict boiled over in 1893 when Carradine’s son was caught waltzing in the church in mixed company; his son allegedly struck a parishioner who attempted to intervene. The salacious event made the front page of *The New York Times*.⁷⁹⁹ Carradine was reassigned to pastor the poorest Methodist congregation in St. Louis—and shortly thereafter he left the Methodist ministry to become an independent evangelist.⁸⁰⁰ He would spend more than two decades preaching, leading revivals, and spreading the message of sanctification,⁸⁰¹ seeking

⁷⁹¹ Ibid., 380.

⁷⁹² Ibid., 384.

⁷⁹³ Ibid., 263.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid., 302.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid., 17–18.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid., 489; Long, *Beverly Carradine*, 150.

⁷⁹⁷ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 489.

⁷⁹⁸ “No Church Fairs for Him,” *New York Times*, February 28, 1891, 1; “Freemasons Are Angry: Minister Carradine of St. Louis Denounces Fraternal Societies,” *New York Times*, December 28, 1890, 2.

⁷⁹⁹ “Clergyman’s Son in Disgrace: He Danced in Church and Knocked down a Man Who Objected,” *New York Times*, February 28, 1893, 1.

⁸⁰⁰ Long, *Beverly Carradine*, 157, 162.

⁸⁰¹ Newspapers across the country reported on Carradine’s spirited revivals—not usually with approval. *The Nashville American* reported in April 1896 that Carradine had incited a “‘sanctification’ fad” in Franklin, Tennessee, sowing seeds of discontent among local Methodists (“A ‘Sanctification’ Fad: Seems to Have Fair Franklin in the Toils,” *The Nashville American*, April 12, 1896, 7). In North Carolina in September 1897 Carradine’s sanctification message was blamed for “a veritable religious panic” that led to the institutionalization of several individuals (“Religious Fever Rages: North Carolina Negroes Wrought Up Over a New Doctrine,” *The Washington Post*, September 6, 1897, 7).

to establish that “apostolic ministry” and “church on fire with the Holy Ghost” that he believed was the cure for the world’s ills.⁸⁰²

Conclusion

Protestant belief in the Holy Land as a material gospel depended upon its uniqueness: that it was the only site of biblical history. The increased focus on the Protestant journey to the Holy Land in the late nineteenth century had complicated impacts on the material gospel theology. On the one hand, Carradine’s text shows how easily aspects of the material gospel theology could be transferred to other locations. Carradine deployed a consistent spatial ideology throughout his journey. The world takes on a certain enchantment in his account—haunted by spirits of great writers, thinkers, and leaders. The material gospel theology aided Carradine in weaving American, European, and biblical history into a single, cohesive narrative.

But when Protestants turned the material gospel theology toward other parts of the world, there were risks. When Reverend Vincent located Mount Zion in the Alps, how did that impact the perceived importance of the real Mount Zion? Did it undermine the singularity of the Holy Land’s gospel, in potentially problematic ways? Some would say yes. The second half of the nineteenth century had seen a period of remarkable consensus among American Protestants about the Holy Land’s status as a material gospel. Across denominational lines, Protestants spoke in similar, reverential and hopeful terms about the Holy Land. By the close of the nineteenth century, though, some questioned the idea of the Holy Land as a material gospel. Holy Land Mania began to give way to Holy Land Malaise.

⁸⁰² Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 302.

CHAPTER VI

HOLY LAND MALAISE

Pilgrim, it was long ago;
None remains who saw that band;
Grass and forest overgrow
Every path their footing wore.
Men are wise; they seek no more
Roads that lead to the Holy Land.

— Sophie Jewett, “The Pilgrim” (1896)⁸⁰³

The Reverend Beverly Carradine believed the Holy Land was a material gospel—a witness to biblical history and repository of divine revelation. And yet, perhaps surprisingly, Carradine did not express a strong emotional attachment to the Holy Land. In rather apocalyptic terms, he meditated on its future destruction, imagining the day when Lake Galilee “is dried up forever by the fires of the last day.”⁸⁰⁴ While surveying Jericho, Carradine wrote, “We can stand the pulpit being knocked to pieces if the great saving sermon has been preached Time has destroyed the poor Jericho pulpit, but heaven holds the preacher, and immortal souls and eternity have the sermon.”⁸⁰⁵ For Carradine, that “great saving sermon” and had been preached; it was an eternal, spiritual gospel that outlasted the temporal, material gospel of the Holy Land.

Carradine’s meditations on the destruction of the Holy Land reveal a certain tepidness toward it. The nineteenth century had seen unprecedented efforts to preserve and reproduce the Holy Land—and yet, for Carradine, the Holy Land was an ephemeral, dispensable gospel. Hints of a cooling toward the Holy Land are, in fact, detectable throughout American Protestant culture as the nineteenth century drew to a close. Detached appreciation replaced white hot, emotional enthusiasm. For decades American Protestants had agreed on the unique and unparalleled value of the Holy Land as a material gospel; critical voices were few and far between. Increasingly, though, at the close of the century critics questioned Protestants’ passion for the Holy Land and their vision of it as another gospel. The backlash came from those at the center of American Protestantism, as well as those at its margins. The Protestant consensus about the Holy Land’s potential to save the Bible had begun to fracture.

Holy Lands

One attack on the material gospel theology came from those who felt Protestants had effectively idolized the Holy Land—privileging its unique status as a revelation from God at the cost of ignoring other possible revelations in the world. Pilgrimage to the Holy Land was outmoded and passé, a relic that deserved to be abandoned, these critics argued. Two poems about Holy Land pilgrimage—both published in popular magazines in the mid-1890s—capture

⁸⁰³ Sophie Jewett, *The Pilgrim: And Other Poems* (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1896), 3–5.

⁸⁰⁴ Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine*, 385.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 334.

some of these critiques of idolizing the Holy Land as the *only* material gospel. The first poem, titled “The Pilgrim,” appeared in the January 1895 issue of the *Century Illustrated Magazine*.⁸⁰⁶ Published under the penname Ellen Burroughs, the poem was the work of Sophie Jewett (1861-1909), a 33-year old English instructor at Wellesley College.⁸⁰⁷ Since her early 20s, Jewett had published poetry in popular magazines and periodicals. “The Pilgrim” would be republished a year later as the title poem in Jewett’s first major poetry collection.⁸⁰⁸

“The Pilgrim” brought together two prominent themes in Jewett’s oeuvre: travel and Christianity. Jewett had been born in Moravia, New York in 1861 to a family with deep New England roots.⁸⁰⁹ At the age of 20, she began traveling abroad, spending time in England and Italy, which strongly influenced her poetry.⁸¹⁰ The landscapes of Pompeii, Campagna, Venice, and Umbria appear regularly in her verse.⁸¹¹ Pilgrimage also featured prominently in Jewett’s scholarly research: she was a specialist in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*. The same year that *The Pilgrim* appeared, she published a guide to Chaucer’s classic collection of pilgrimage stories.⁸¹²

Christian themes also featured prominently in Jewett’s work. As a child, a preceptress from Buffalo Seminary had mentored Jewett, and after the death of her parents Jewett came to regard the home of the Reverend Wolcott Calkins, a Presbyterian minister, as her “second home.”⁸¹³ Jewett’s poetry addressed Christian topics, including Easter, communion, and the Madonna.⁸¹⁴ The Christian tenor of Jewett’s poems made them popular with Christian periodicals: *The Congregationalist*, *The Churchman*, and *The Christian Union* published many of her earliest poems.⁸¹⁵ Her work sometimes wedded her travel experiences with Christianity—such as *God’s Troubadour* (1910), a cycle of children’s poems about St. Francis of Assisi that drew upon her time in Italy.⁸¹⁶

Jewett’s “The Pilgrim” is a dialogue between a pilgrim and a stranger who meet on the road. The stranger speaks the majority of the poem’s lines. The poem opens with the stranger asking the pilgrim where he is going: “Pilgrim feet, pray whither bound? / Pilgrim eyes, pray whither bent?”⁸¹⁷ The pilgrim explains that he is bound for the Holy Land. Upon hearing this, the stranger sets out to dissuade the pilgrim from continuing his journey. The stranger tells the pilgrim that “Men are wise” and “seek no more” the Holy Land.⁸¹⁸ The stranger compliments the pilgrim’s appearance—describing the pilgrim as “fair of face” and “made for tenderness”⁸¹⁹—and suggests that a person of such a soft appearance is not made for the difficulties of Holy Land pilgrimage. The stranger also tells the pilgrim that the real Holy Land is “Not o’er sea and

⁸⁰⁶ Ellen Burroughs, “The Pilgrim,” *Century Illustrated Magazine* XLIX, no. 3 (January 1895): 410.

⁸⁰⁷ Sophie Jewett, *The Poems of Sophie Jewett*, Memorial Edition (New York: T. Y. Crowell & Company, 1910), x.

⁸⁰⁸ Jewett, *The Pilgrim*.

⁸⁰⁹ Jewett, *The Poems of Sophie Jewett*, v–vi.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ix.

⁸¹¹ See “Pompeii (Unfinished),” “Sunset on the Campagna,” “Venice in April,” and “In Umbria,” for example, in Jewett, *The Poems of Sophie Jewett*.

⁸¹² Sophie Jewett, *English Literature: Chaucer: Outlines and References* (Boston: Press of S.G. Robinson, 1896).

⁸¹³ As quoted in Jewett, *The Poems of Sophie Jewett*, viii.

⁸¹⁴ See “Easter,” “Communion,” and “The Madonna” in Jewett, *The Poems of Sophie Jewett*.

⁸¹⁵ For a list of Jewett’s poems, including the publications in which they appeared, see *ibid.*, xxi–xxv.

⁸¹⁶ Sophie Jewett, *God’s Troubadour: The Story of St. Francis of Assisi* (New York: T.Y. Crowell & Co., 1910).

⁸¹⁷ Jewett, *The Pilgrim*, l. 1–2.

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 10–11.

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 14, 19.

Eastern strand.”⁸²⁰ Instead, it is where the pilgrim and stranger are now: “God’s green world is fair and sweet” and “where friend and lover meet / Lies the way to the Holy Land.”⁸²¹

The pilgrim is unswayed by the stranger’s initial attempts to dissuade him from his path, so the stranger tries a new tactic and attacks the idea of pilgrimage itself. Pilgrims in the past had base motivations, argues the stranger, as they sought fame or atonement.⁸²² For what did the pilgrim possibly need atonement, asks the stranger.⁸²³ The pilgrim whispers in reply that “*Sin and shame are in my scrip*”⁸²⁴—the scrip referring to a pilgrim’s bag. With this reply, the stranger relents and bids the pilgrim well on his journey.⁸²⁵ The stranger, nonetheless, offers some parting advice: the stranger predicts that the pilgrim will not find the Holy Land while “Bowed upon the tropic sand” but “within the city gate, / In the struggle of the street,” when the pilgrim’s eyes meet those of another person.⁸²⁶

Jewett’s “The Pilgrim” embodies a debate over the virtues of pilgrimage and the definition of the Holy Land. The stranger regards Holy Land pilgrimage as archaic, unnecessary, and wearisome. The stranger also seeks to disassociate the idea of the Holy Land from a specific, faraway place. The stranger first suggests that the Holy Land is “God’s green world,” a striking contrast with the stranger’s characterization of the Holy Land that the pilgrim seeks as “tropic sand.”⁸²⁷ If the pilgrim would see the broader world as the Holy Land, he would have already reached his destination. The stranger also seeks to redefine the Holy Land by suggesting that a holy place is created by the communion of human beings. The stranger describes the Holy Land as the fellowship among humans at two separate points in the poem—first as a place “where friend and lover meet”⁸²⁸ and second when the stranger predicts that the pilgrim will find the Holy Land “[i]n the struggle of the street” when the pilgrim sees another “whose look is Holy Land.”⁸²⁹

The stranger is a modern figure who knows that “[m]en are wise” and “seek no more / Roads that lead to the Holy Land.” The pilgrim, by contrast, is an archaic figure who no longer fits with his time. It is not necessarily the case that Jewett intended readers to be convinced by the stranger’s critiques of pilgrimage; the tired pilgrim who cannot be dissuaded is, after all, a deeply sympathetic figure. Regardless of whether Jewett wanted readers to identify with the pilgrim or the stranger, her poem places the value of pilgrimage and the definition of the Holy Land under debate.

William Brunton (1865-1901) took up similar questions about the definition of the real Holy Land in a poem published shortly after Jewett’s “The Pilgrim.” “In 1897 “Love’s Holy Land” appeared in the periodical *Harmony*.⁸³⁰ Brunton, a transplant from England, had graduated from Harvard Divinity School and been ordained to the Unitarian ministry. His poetry—on both religious and non-religious themes—frequently appeared in popular periodicals, such as *Godey’s Lady Book* and *Arthur’s Home Magazine*.⁸³¹

Brunton’s “Love’s Holy Land” opens with the familiar theme of desiring to walk where Jesus once walked: “My heart hath longed with love’s devoted pain—/To walk the ways of light

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*, l. 21.

⁸²¹ *Ibid.*, l. 22–23.

⁸²² *Ibid.*, l. 28, 36.

⁸²³ *Ibid.*, l. 36.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 38–39, italics original.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 40–43.

⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*, l. 47–53.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 20, 49.

⁸²⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 22.

⁸²⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 51–53.

⁸³⁰ William Brunton, “Love’s Holy Land,” *Harmony Magazine* 10, no. 1 (October 1897): 7.

⁸³¹ William Brunton, “Five Foolish Virgins,” *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 125, no. 745 (July 1892): 40; William Brunton, “Discoverers,” *Arthur’s Home Magazine* 62 (November 1892): 1005.

the Christ has trod, / To see that vale where lilies decked the sod.”⁸³² The poem, however, quickly reverses course: instead of praising the Holy Land as the place where Jesus walked, the poem suggests that divine presence is not limited to the Holy Land. Rather, God’s grace is “common round where I may move,” writes Brunton.⁸³³ Lake Galilee or the Judean hills do not warrant special, exalted status, concludes the poem, when the wider world “o’erflows with God’s eternal love!”⁸³⁴

Brunton had explored similar ideas in his earlier poem “Water-Lilies.” The poem opens by recalling Jesus’ address to his disciples that they should “[c]onsider the lilies”: if God adorns even the grass so beautifully, surely he will take care of them.⁸³⁵ After recalling this biblical passage, the poem switches perspective to a narrator, who holds a water lily in his hand: “These water-lilies now within my hand; / They grew from depths of mire to lilies grand.”⁸³⁶ The narrator suggests that these lilies he holds reflect the best aspirations of humans—that we might “rise from earth and rich in beauty grow.”⁸³⁷ The gospel—once illustrated by a lily long ago in a far off place—is written anew in the present moment in the narrator’s hand. The poem attributes the qualities of a gospel to the water lily that the narrator holds: it can “preach the upward life” and “repeat” the “gospel word from God.”⁸³⁸ The flower is a real, immediately present material gospel.

Both Brunton’s “Love’s Holy Land” and “Water-Lilies” argue against the exceptionality of the Holy Land. In Brunton’s poems, focusing too intently on the sacrality of the Holy Land—whether through desiring to walk in the steps of Jesus or fetishizing Holy Land objects—leads one to overlook the sacrality of the ordinary landscape. Just as the stranger argued in Jewett’s poem, Brunton’s poems suggest that the Holy Land is here: the present world—not simply the ancient, biblical world—records the good news.

Brunton’s poems exemplify how beliefs about the nature of space and materiality shape one’s view of the Holy Land. In particular, Brunton’s poems reflect the spatial and materialist views of Transcendentalism and Divine Science. *Harmony*—the periodical in which “Love’s Holy Land” appeared—was a Divine Science publication, a new religious movement of the late nineteenth century.⁸³⁹ Among the core beliefs of Divine Science was the close relationship between the mundane, physical world and the heavenly spiritual realm. “All down through the ages it has been thought that the Kingdom of Heaven was a special place, located somewhere in space,” wrote Malinda Cramer (1844-1906), a founder of the group. “But now that Divine Science has proven the infinity and omnipresence of God, and we are conscious of His presence everywhere, we know that the special place where heaven is to be found is here,” she continued.⁸⁴⁰ These views about the divine presence—or, more precisely, omnipresence—invited a radical reevaluation of what constituted sacred space. Cramer’s thought displaced the sacred from a limited, ethereal realm and diffused it into the world. Brunton’s poems did the same: the Holy Land was not simply where Jesus walked or the lilies he saw but everywhere and here.

The backgrounds of Jewett and Brunton are quite different from the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and others—many from the Midwest and South—who most often wrote about the Holy Land as a material gospel during the second half of the nineteenth century.

⁸³² Brunton, “Love’s Holy Land,” l. 1–3.

⁸³³ *Ibid.*, l. 13.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 14.

⁸³⁵ Matthew 6:28-29; Luke 12:27

⁸³⁶ William Brunton, “Water-Lilies,” in *Daisies* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1879), l. 4–5.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 10.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 13–14.

⁸³⁹ For a history of the emergence of Divine Science, see Catherine L. Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 423–425.

⁸⁴⁰ Malinda E. Cramer, “In Earth as In Heaven,” *Harmony* 10, no. 1 (October 1897): 3.

Jewett was a highly-educated, female, northeastern academic; Brunton, a Unitarian who dabbled in Divine Science. But Protestants had long seen the academic and spiritualist worldviews as handmaidens of the material gospel theology. Jewett and Brunton's poems suggested that did not have to be the case.

Weary Sundays

Other attacks on the material gospel theology came from those who questioned its effectiveness and authenticity. Proponents of the material gospel theology had long praised the Holy Land's didactic and salvific potential. Holy Land books, maps, and photographs, they hoped, might stem the growing tide of unbelief. The expectations placed on Holy Land works could be extreme. A reviewer of Frank S. DeHass's *Recent Travels and Explorations in Bible Lands* (1880) wrote that works like DeHass's might "correct in some degree the infidel tendencies of the age, and strengthen the faith of all believers in the reality of these events, and the authenticity of *God's word*."⁸⁴¹ These were high, high hopes.

The enthusiasm of Christian ministers and educators for the Holy Land was not shared by all Protestants. The Reverend John Heyl Vincent, one of the greatest proponents of Holy Land education, encountered resistance to his love of the Holy Land early in his career. In 1864, Vincent's "enthusiasm for singing Biblical Geography did not elicit a favorable response" from his "small and rather fashionable congregation in Chicago," the Baptist minister John Richard Sampey (1863-1946) would later recall.⁸⁴² A relentless focus on the Holy Land struck others as quite dull. Ada Goodrich-Freer (1857-1931), a colorful figure who was a medium and psychic researcher, recalled Sunday afternoons in her childhood spent bored by Holy Land geography. "[T]he memory of many a weary Sunday afternoon spent in the enforced society of works not less accurate in observation nor learned in research, provokes the reflection that there are persons, ignorant and indifferent, who are but imperfectly responsive to discussion upon points remote from experience, and description of places which they never heard before," wrote Goodrich-Freer. She specifically pointed to some of the greatest nineteenth-century Holy Land works as sources of her childhood "torment": "We recall unregenerate days when we hated *Biblical Researches*, were bored by *The Giant Cities of Bashan*, fled from *The Land and the Book*, and looked down upon *The Wars of the Jews* as a special cruelty devised for the torment of young Christians who lived two miles from church, beside a road inches deep in mud on wet Sundays."⁸⁴³ Ironically, Goodrich-Freer went on to produce her own Holy Land book—*Inner Jerusalem* (1904), which was, no doubt, far more exciting.

The material gospel theology also suffered as some voiced suspicions about its potential biases. A distrust of religiously-fueled reproductions of the Holy Land motivated, for example, Margaret Thomas (1843-1929) to create *Two Years in Palestine & Syria* (1900).⁸⁴⁴ Both London and New York-based publishers printed Thomas's illustrated narrative, which included more than a dozen full-color reproductions of paintings she had produced. An Australian born in England, Thomas had cemented a reputation as a gifted artist—particularly in sculpture—and

⁸⁴¹ "Recent Travels and Explorations in Bible Lands," *Christian Advocate* 55, no. 1 (January 1, 1880): 5, italics original.

⁸⁴² John Richard Sampey, *The International Lesson System: The History of Its Origin and Development: Lectures Delivered before the Faculty and Students of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary February 6-10, 1911* (Nashville: Fleming H. Revell Company, for The Sunday School Board Southern Baptist Convention, 1911), 60.

⁸⁴³ Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, 2.

⁸⁴⁴ Margaret Thomas, *Two Years in Palestine & Syria: With Sixteen Illustrations Reproduced in Colours in Facsimile of the Original Paintings by the Author* (London: J.C. Nimmo, 1900). The New York publisher Charles Scribner's Sons also issued Thomas's work.

as a travel writer.⁸⁴⁵ Though on the surface Thomas's *Two Years in Palestine & Syria* appeared similar to other Holy Land books, she distanced herself from their confessional viewpoints. She described her work's distinct approach: "I propose to depict by means of pen and pencil a likeness, as it were, of the Palestine and Syria of to-day, and so far as is possible from a *purely secular point of view*," she wrote.⁸⁴⁶ She aimed to "record just the simple impressions and experiences of an artist," eschewing the "profound reflections of an archaeologist, the conclusions of a historian, or the romantic visions of a poet."⁸⁴⁷ Thomas's tools for this task were simple: "sketching materials and note-book."⁸⁴⁸ Absent was the basic tool most Protestants would have included: the Bible.

To achieve her unromanticized depiction of the Holy Land, Thomas had to shake off the religious worldview she took for granted. This proved more difficult than she had anticipated. "[T]he sense of being on the site of such tremendous events as those recorded in the Scriptures is at first too overpowering to allow one's taking anything resembling a dispassionate view of the scenes in which they were enacted," she wrote. With time, though, "the mind grows clearer as the preconceived impressions become dim in the presence of a perhaps somewhat disappointing reality, and the mind can begin to seize and assimilate the actualities which surround it." These later impressions were "if less romantic, truer and therefore more permanent," wrote Thomas.⁸⁴⁹

Thomas's work was not entirely devoid of religion. She visits Bethlehem on Christmas Day, the tomb of Lazarus, the Mount of Temptation, and other biblical sites. She also affirmatively cited Renan's famous passage on the Holy Land as another gospel—though she ended the quote at Renan's observation that the land was "a revelation," stopping short of where he deemed it a fifth gospel.⁸⁵⁰ Thomas's goal of creating a secular depiction of the Holy Land was also lost on some of her readers. *The Biblical World* gave Thomas's work an unreservedly positive review—making no mention of her desire to depict the Holy Land from a demystified, areligious viewpoint.⁸⁵¹

Producers of Holy Land works faced another problem at the close of the nineteenth century: Americans did not always respond with the anticipated enthusiasm to efforts to bring the material gospel to Americans—even when those efforts were quite spectacular. The 1898 exhibition of Tissot's paintings in New York, while quite popular, did not draw the crowds hoped for by its boosters. *The Christian Advocate* expressed dismay that Tissot's paintings had drawn larger crowds in Europe than New York. The periodical chided Americans for being too consumed by the "wild rush after the commercial, the exciting, and the amusing" to see Tissot's images.⁸⁵² By comparison to their European brethren, Americans appeared unbelieving. *McClure's* also found itself with a surplus of Tissot's *Life of Our Saviour Jesus Christ*, eventually reducing the cost of the volume to one quarter of its original price.⁸⁵³

Perhaps the most ambitious of the turn of the century attempts to bring the material gospel of the Holy Land to Americans—the Jerusalem Exhibit at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition—also ended in similar disappointments. A full-scale replica of Jerusalem was

⁸⁴⁵ For a brief biography of Thomas's artistic work, see State Library of Victoria, *The Art of the Collection* (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, State Library of Victoria, 2007), 26–27. Thomas's previous travel writings included *A Scamper through Spain and Tangier* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1892).

⁸⁴⁶ Thomas, *Two Years in Palestine & Syria*, x, italics added.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, x.

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵¹ Clyde Weber Votaw, "Review of Two Years in Palestine and Syria by Margaret Thomas," *The Biblical World* 16, no. 2 (August 1, 1900): 149–50.

⁸⁵² "Art: The Life of Christ," 2099.

⁸⁵³ "One Quarter Former Price," front matter.

constructed at the exposition, more commonly known as the St. Louis World's Fair (Figure 6.0). This new Jerusalem spanned 11 acres, with over 300 buildings and 22 streets.⁸⁵⁴ The construction of the exhibit was an ecumenical project—its advisory board composed of influential Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders.⁸⁵⁵ Visitors to Jerusalem in St. Louis saw all the city's greatest sites: the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Temple Mount, a Jewish synagogue, Solomon's Stables, the Golden Gate, the Via Dolorosa, the Wailing Wall, and a marketplace. The exhibit also included reproductions of more recently constructed buildings, including the New Grand Hotel and the American Consulate.⁸⁵⁶ For added authenticity, 1,000 residents from the real Jerusalem were brought to St. Louis to live and work inside the replica.⁸⁵⁷



Figure 6.0. Stereograph of Jerusalem Exhibit at Louisiana Purchase Exposition (c. 1904). H.C. White Company, Bennington, Vermont. Stereograph Cards Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC. LC-USZ62-11912.

The exhibit would be a perfect copy of Jerusalem—a city, in the words of scholar Lester Vogel, designed to “educate, enlighten, and spiritualize.”⁸⁵⁸ The organizers described their vision:

When the visitor enters the gates of the city, he shall be made to feel as though he were in actual Jerusalem, with its streets, bazaars, buildings, and people forming a picture of supreme interest to those who have never been there and surprisingly familiar to those

⁸⁵⁴ Major J. Lowenstein, *Official Guide to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at the City of St. Louis, State of Missouri, April 30th to December 1st, 1904* (St. Louis: Official Guide Co., 1904), 136.

⁸⁵⁵ Vogel, *To See a Promised Land*, 214.

⁸⁵⁶ Rehav Rubin, “When Jerusalem Was Built in St Louis: A Large-Scale Model of Jerusalem in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition 1904,” *The Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 132, no. January to June (2000): 64.

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁸ Vogel, *To See a Promised Land*, 214.

who have. There will be peasant women who will vend from native baskets the luscious oranges, lemons, dates, and grapes which so attracted the spies of Israel. These peasants will be seen in their tattered, yet picturesque garments. The native merchant will offer you from his bazaar such goods as he sells the Frank from across the seas, and unless he looks far beyond the confines of the street where his shop is located, he will see nothing unfamiliar to his eyes. There will be Bedouins from the desert, with their camel's hair fillets, bound round their heads, native Christians in blue dresses and embroidered veils, Copts, Muslims, Turks, and priests. ... This display ... shall be free from anything which will in the least detract from its dignity and solemnity.⁸⁵⁹

“Jerusalem itself” would be built in St. Louis, allowing visitors to go on pilgrimage without ever leaving the confines of the fair. The project, in the words of scholar Milette Shamir, was “a hybrid entity of tourism *as* pilgrimage.”⁸⁶⁰

Construction of the exhibit was expensive. A Jerusalem Exhibit Company was created and offered \$1,000,000 in bonds for the exhibit's construction. The company promised investors a healthy return on their money—a “conservative estimate” of a 200% return, according to one advertisement (Figure 6.1).⁸⁶¹ “There is practically no risk. ...No investment ever offered to the public came more highly recommended,” the advertisement promised. The project had been “enthusiastically” backed by ministers, U.S. Senators and Representatives, “and men and women in all the highest walks of life.”⁸⁶²

⁸⁵⁹ From the Prospectus for the Jerusalem Exhibit Company, as quoted in *Ibid.*, 215.

⁸⁶⁰ Milette Shamir, “Back to the Future: The Jerusalem Exhibit at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair,” *Journal of Levantine Studies* 2, no. 1 (Summer 2012): 95.

⁸⁶¹ “[Advertisement for Jerusalem Exhibit Company Stock],” *World's Fair Bulletin* 4, no. 3 (January 1903): 37.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*

JERUSALEM

THE HOLY CITY, TO BE REPRODUCED IN EVERY
DETAIL AT THE WORLD'S FAIR IN ST. LOUIS.

A Safe and Profitable Investment

One of the principal features of the coming World's Fair, which will be conducted on a scale of magnificence and grandeur never even attempted heretofore in any of the world's expositions, will be the reproduction of the City of Jerusalem by the JERUSALEM EXHIBIT CO. This exhibit will be an exact reproduction of the **HOLY CITY**, every detail being brought out perfectly. Some idea of the enormousness of this display can be gained from the fact that **THE EXHIBIT WILL COVER TEN ACRES**. The surface of the ground will be changed until it is exactly the same as that of Jerusalem, and the exhibit will be enclosed by a faithful reproduction of the walls of the city. The entrances to the exhibit will be through exact copies of the several gates of the city. Inside, the visitor will see its buildings, bazaars, shops, streets and homes faithfully reproduced, and hundreds of its actual inhabitants walking the streets, following their usual avocations and living the daily life of the city. **The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, The Temple, Solomon's Stables, The Golden Gate, The Via Dolorosa, The Mount of Olives, The Garden of Gethsemane and The Jew's Walling Place**, will all be shown exactly as they are to-day, even to the smallest details. When the visitor enters the gates he will forget that he is living in the Twentieth Century, and will feel that he has been carried back 2,000 years to the time when **CHRIST** moved upon earth and made Jerusalem the most hallowed spot on earth for all time to come. Everything possible will be done to give an educational value to the exhibit, and **THIS WILL BE THE FEATURE** of the World's Fair, and therefore the most generously patronized. The JERUSALEM EXHIBIT CO. is incorporated, having a **CAPITAL STOCK OF \$1,000,000**, fully paid and Non-Assessable, divided into shares of One Dollar each. In order to quickly raise the large sum necessary, the stock is being offered to the public.

On a Conservative Estimate

**This Stock Will Pay
200 PER CENT**

and will in all probability pay a much larger per cent than this. It undoubtedly offers one of the best opportunities for **SAFE and PROFITABLE INVESTMENT** ever offered to the public. There is practically no risk, as the sale of the stock will insure the exhibit being presented in first-class style, and an enormous attendance is already assured. The reliability of the Company is beyond all question. No investment ever offered to the public came more highly recommended. Ministers of all denominations, United States Senators, United States Representatives, and men and women in all the highest walks of life enthusiastically endorse it. The officers of the Advisory Board are men whose honesty and integrity are absolutely beyond question. They are: **Rev. Dr. W. B. Palmer, President; Rev. Dr. J. C. Armstrong, Fr. Jas. T. Coffey, Dr. H. Burnham, Rev. E. Duckworth, Rev. Frank G. Tyrrell, Dr. F. L. Ferguson, Dr. Leon Harrison, Vice-Presidents; Rev. Samuel I. Lindsay, Secretary.**

FREE Send your name and address and receive free of charge our New Book, "Jerusalem, 1904," which not only gives a description of this, the grandest spectacle of modern times, but by comparative figures you will find your investment and profits absolutely assured. The booklet also gives the names of ministers of the gospel, U. S. Senators, etc., who endorse the proposition.

ADDRESS
JERUSALEM EXHIBIT COMPANY
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

Figure 6.1. Advertisement for Jerusalem Exhibit Company Stock (1903). From *World's Fair Bulletin* 4, number 3 (January 1903), page 37.

Organizers emphasized Jerusalem's didactic qualities. "Everything will be done to give an educational value to the exhibit," read one advertisement.⁸⁶³ "The Fair's Greatest Educator" declared another.⁸⁶⁴ A small guidebook produced for the exhibit exemplifies this focus on education and instruction (Figure 6.3). Its small pages, filled with dense type, walked visitors through a massive sweep of time—from the enigmatic mention of Melchizedek in the book of Genesis through the 1898 Holy Land pilgrimage of William the Second, Emperor of Germany.⁸⁶⁵ If this Jerusalem was entertainment, it was serious fun.

⁸⁶³ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁴ "See Jerusalem," *The St Louis Republic*, September 9, 1904, 7.

⁸⁶⁵ James Wideman Lee and James M. Dixon, *The History of Jerusalem: A Record of Four Thousand Years of Battle, Tragedy, Sacrifice, Devotion, Romance and Legend, from the Time of Melchizedek to the Pilgrimage of William the Second, Emperor of Germany* ([S.L.]: [s.n.], 1904). This small book, part of Vanderbilt Divinity School's Judaica Collection, was co-written by James Wideman Lee, the St. Louis minister and co-author of *Earthly Footsteps*. A biography of Lee mentions he wrote a guide to the Jerusalem exhibit with the same title (Lee, *The Geography of Genius*, xiv). The book in Vanderbilt's collection is signed by Lee and dated October 15, 1904, which coincides with the fair.

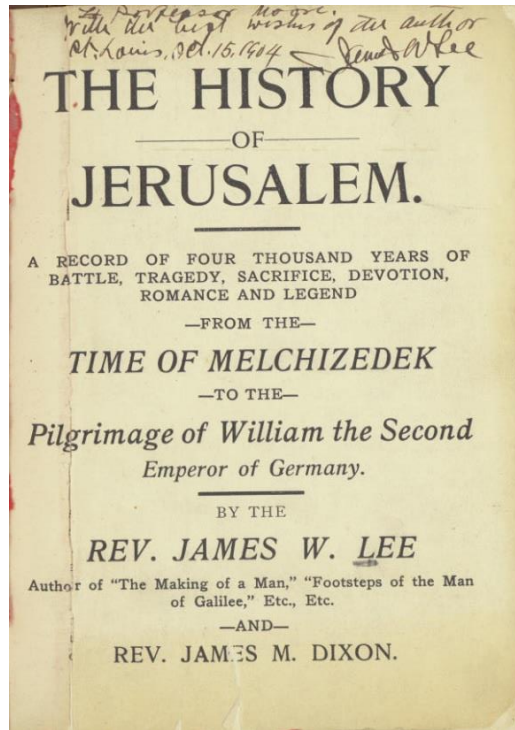


Figure 6.2. Title page of *The History of Jerusalem* (1904?). Mary and Harry Zimmerman Judaica Collection, Vanderbilt University Divinity Library, Nashville, Tennessee.

Some exhibit visitors undoubtedly had the religious and educational experiences that the organizers hoped. John Brisben Walker, owner of *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, described one such moving experience. While wandering the streets of Jerusalem, he was swept up in a procession to the Holy Sepulchre. “[A] crowd came surging in from a side way much as it must have done round the Galilean bearing His cross, in days of old,” he wrote. Walker followed the crowd to the Holy Sepulchre, where he then listened to a lecture.⁸⁶⁶ Others, though, were drawn to the exhibit’s lighter offerings, from camel rides to shopping in the souk. Undoubtedly to the chagrin of the exhibit’s organizers, fortune tellers did a brisk business in Jerusalem. Nearly 40 of them were “kept busy by a gullible and curious public,” Walker noted.⁸⁶⁷

In spite of Jerusalem’s wonders and its aggressive marketing, attendance at the exhibit was lower than expected.⁸⁶⁸ The holy city competed for visitors against innumerable other wonders at the fair, including replicas of the Alps, mirror mazes, geishas serving tea, and an “Infant Incubator” where babies could be seen “through the glass doors of their strange nests.”⁸⁶⁹ Advertisements for Jerusalem emphasized the value of the exhibit’s half-dollar admission cost, noting that every attraction inside the exhibit was free—even its “Commodious, Clean Toilet Rooms” (Figure 6.4).⁸⁷⁰ Further setbacks occurred when the exhibit was beset by labor troubles and a fire swept through, causing extensive damage.⁸⁷¹ Jerusalem’s ultimate

⁸⁶⁶ John Brisben Walker, *The World’s Fair* ([New York]: [Cosmopolitan Publishing Company], 1904), 575.

⁸⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁸ Shamir, “Back to the Future,” 108.

⁸⁶⁹ Lowenstein, *Official Guide to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition*, 134–135.

⁸⁷⁰ Shamir, “Back to the Future,” 108.

⁸⁷¹ Long, *Imagining the Holy Land*, 66.

legacy would be a tangle of lawsuits: employees, contractors, and merchants sued the Jerusalem Exhibit Company, and the company, in turn, sued fair organizers.⁸⁷²

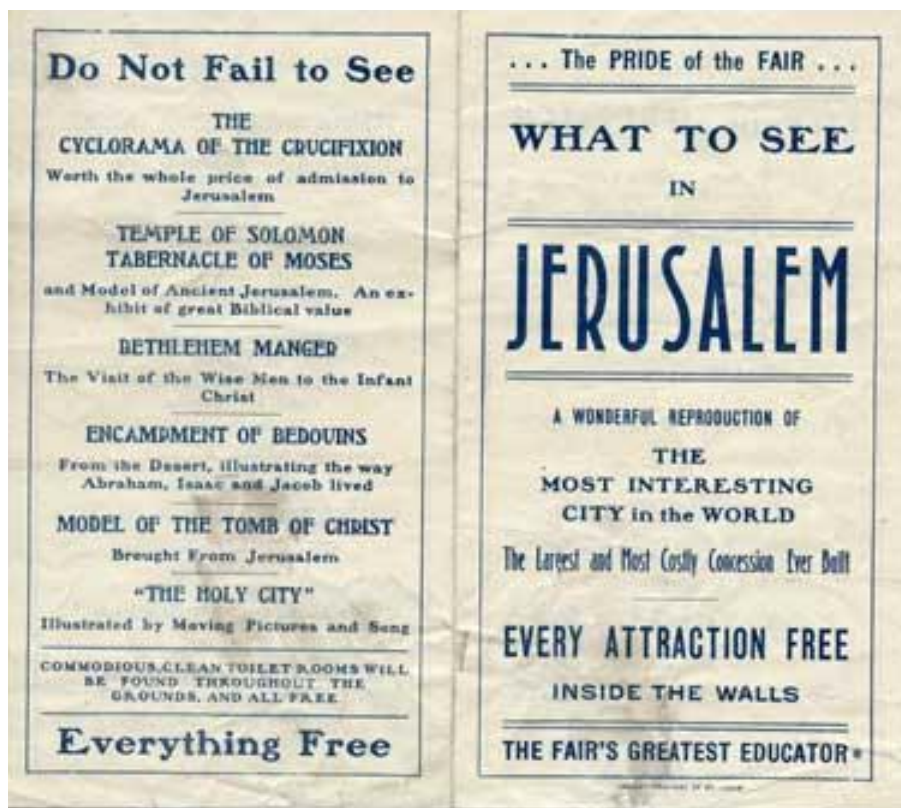


Figure 6.3. Leaflet for Jerusalem Exhibit (1904). Special Collections Department, St. Louis Public Library.

Protestant ministers and educators hoped that the Holy Land could be a better gospel—an engaging and realistic gospel that would capture the attention of modern American audiences. They believed that experiencing the Holy Land might prove more effective than reading the Bible, even if that experience came through books and other replicas for most Americans. Clearly, for not all Protestants did the Holy Land hold such tantalizing possibilities. Maps, place names, geographies—even fantastical replicas—could make for weary Sundays—and the allures of the Holy Land still had to compete for Americans’ attention with a wider, enchanted world. The lost record rediscovered, heralded with such enthusiasm only a few decades earlier, had begun to lose its luster.

No Book but the Book

The most serious assault on the material gospel theology came from those that critiqued the idea that the Holy Land was comparable to the Bible. The Holy Land was a place, the Bible a sacred book; they were not equivalent, according to these critics. While Protestants for the last

⁸⁷² Ibid.; Shamir, “Back to the Future,” 108.

fifty years had constructed a rich theological and material tradition based around the Holy Land as a fifth gospel, tensions at the end of the nineteenth century would make this logic increasingly untenable.

The critical response to a “Life of Christ” series published by *McClure’s Magazine* in 1900 captures some of the emerging lines of fissure in the material gospel theology. *McClure’s Magazine* was one of the most popular and important monthly magazines at the close of the nineteenth century. It had quickly gained a following after its founding in June 1893 by S. S. McClure and John Sanborn Philips.⁸⁷³ By 1900 it enjoyed a wide circulation—some 350,000 subscribers.⁸⁷⁴ It published a wide range of genres—adventure, fiction, science, history, and political pieces. Advertisers flocked to the newly successful magazine, whose pages reflected a developing mass consumer culture. While reading about X-rays or a poem by Rudyard Kipling, readers could peruse advertisements for shoes, soap, photography courses, boarding schools, stammering cures, and watches.⁸⁷⁵

Three aspects of *McClure’s* warrant specific note. First, *McClure’s* used images to powerful effect. Its articles were richly illustrated with drawings and photographs—even occasionally utilizing color reproductions by 1900. Second, *McClure’s* developed a reformist bent, addressing social, political, and corporate abuses. Ida Tarbell’s exposé of Standard Oil, originally published in *McClure’s*, would become emblematic of late nineteenth-century muckraking journalism.⁸⁷⁶ Finally, like Tarbell’s Standard Oil piece, *McClure’s* had great success with serially-published works. Longer pieces—both fiction and non-fiction—were subdivided and printed in sequential monthly issues. Serial articles turned a further profit when they were assembled into books and sold by McClure’s publishing arm. Book publishing successes in the 1890s included *McClure’s* Napoleon series, of which they sold more than 100,000 copies, and its Abraham Lincoln series, also written by Tarbell.⁸⁷⁷

As the 1890s came to a close, *McClure’s* sought to build upon its success with illustrated, serialized articles with a new topic: Jesus Christ. Jesus would join Napoleon and Lincoln in receiving the *McClure’s* treatment. The editors explained their reasoning for choosing Jesus: “[T]he time was ripe for a life of Christ that should combine high scholarship with profound faith; that should present the divine story so vividly that its holy characters would live and move before the minds of the readers,” wrote the magazine’s editors.⁸⁷⁸ To re-tell the familiar story with a new vivacity, the editors knew they would need an accomplished writer and a gifted illustrator.

McClure’s approached Dr. John Watson (1850-1907) to author this new “Life of Christ.” Watson, a Scottish Presbyterian minister and theologian, was better known to most Americans by his penname—Ian Maclaren. Watson’s novel *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1894) had been a runaway hit. Its depictions of rural Scottish life came to define the Kailyard School, of which Maclaren is considered a founder.⁸⁷⁹ Nearly a half million copies were sold in America—

⁸⁷³ For a history of McClure’s, see Harold S. Wilson, *McClure’s Magazine and the Muckrakers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).

⁸⁷⁴ Fred F. Endres, “The Pre-Muckraking Days of McClure’s Magazine, 1893-1901,” *Journalism Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (Spring 1978): 154–57.

⁸⁷⁵ W. W. Keen, “The Use of the Rontgen X Rays in Surgery,” *McClure’s Magazine* VI, no. 6 (May 1896): 579–88; Rudyard Kipling, “The Merchantmen,” *McClure’s Magazine*, July 1893, 163–165. Advertisements for these products appeared in the October 1899 issue of *McClure’s Magazine*.

⁸⁷⁶ Ida M. Tarbell, *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (New York: McClure, Phillips & Co., 1904).

⁸⁷⁷ “Editorial Notes,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (February 1900): 387.

⁸⁷⁸ “The Life of the Master: Editor’s Introduction,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 2 (December 1899): 100.

⁸⁷⁹ Richard Blaustein, *The Thistle and the Brier: Historical Links and Cultural Parallels Between Scotland and Appalachia* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2003), 29.

outselling the book even in Britain.⁸⁸⁰ *McClure's Magazine* boasted that "Maclaren's first book has had a larger sale in England and America than any book of stories published in the past ten years."⁸⁸¹ An advertisement suggested that "[f]or opinions of [*Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*]," you simply needed to "ask your neighbors."⁸⁸²

Americans were enamored with the unlikely story of Watson, the minister-cum-novelist. Two years after the release of *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*, Watson gave the prestigious Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching at Yale University.⁸⁸³ A reviewer for *The American Journal of Theology* remarked on the shift represented by Watson's selection: "A far cry it is from the day when preachers denounced the novel to the day when Ian MacLaren crosses the ocean to instruct the American students in the art of preaching!"⁸⁸⁴ Following Watson's success with *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*, *McClure's* published several of Watson's short stories,⁸⁸⁵ as well as an extended profile about the minister in its October 1896 issue.⁸⁸⁶ The magazine proposed that Watson was a "preacher who has now a wider circle of readers than almost any living minister."⁸⁸⁷ It remained to be seen "whether in the long run he will wield a stronger influence as a *littérateur* than as a spiritual teacher," the magazine speculated.⁸⁸⁸

McClure's was banking on Watson's unusual success as a novelist when it hired him to author their life of Christ series. The editors saw a risk in dedicating valuable magazine real estate to a religious series. "[R]eligious books no longer occupy the attention of readers as formerly," wrote the editors. But they felt buoyed by two facts in selecting Watson. First, aside from Watson's fictional works, he also wrote religious books that readers had continued to buy.⁸⁸⁹ Second, the editors were encouraged by Watson's ecumenical sensibilities. Watson "enters into no controversy over questions of dogma, but dwells instead upon the great ethical teachings which Christ gave to the world," wrote the editors.⁸⁹⁰ Watson's literary and catholic touch appeared to be key to producing a life of Christ of interest to the magazine's modern American audience.

With Watson secured as its author for the series, *McClure's* needed an illustrator. Considering the priority *McClure's* placed on images, locating the right illustrator was imperative. *McClure's* settled on Corwin Knapp Linson (1864-1959), whom the magazine introduced to its readers as a young, ambitious, and hardworking artist.⁸⁹¹ He spent substantial

⁸⁸⁰ William Robertson Nicoll, *"Ian Maclaren": The Life of the Rev. John Watson* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1908), 158.

⁸⁸¹ "McClure's Magazine for 1896," *McClure's Magazine* VI, no. 6 (May 1896): 45.

⁸⁸² "[Advertisement for *The Days of Auld Lang Syne* and *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*]," *Outlook* 52, no. 17 (October 26, 1895): 2.

⁸⁸³ John Watson, *The Cure of Souls: Yale Lectures on Practical Theology, 1896* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1896).

⁸⁸⁴ W. H. P. Faunce, "Review of *The Cure of Souls* by John Watson," *The American Journal of Theology* 1, no. 4 (October 1, 1897): 1096.

⁸⁸⁵ See, for example, Ian Maclaren, "A Master of Deceit: A Drumtochty Story," *McClure's Magazine* V, no. 5 (October 1895): 470-74; and Ian Maclaren, "A Government Official," *McClure's Magazine* VI, no. 3 (February 1896): 241-46.

⁸⁸⁶ D. M. Ross, "Dr. John Watson - 'Ian Maclaren': His Distinguished Career as a Minister - How He Was Persuaded into Authorship - A Prince of Story-Tellers from His Youth," *McClure's Magazine* VIII, no. 5 (October 1896): 387-400.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 387.

⁸⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 388.

⁸⁸⁹ "The Life of the Master: Editor's Introduction," 99. Watson's religiously-themed books included *The Upper Room* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1895); *The Mind of the Master* (New York: Dodd, Mead and company, 1896); and *The Potter's Wheel* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1898).

⁸⁹⁰ "The Life of the Master: Editor's Introduction," 99.

⁸⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

time in Palestine when producing his illustrations, and he “knew [the Bible] intimately,” reported the editors.

Watson’s prologue for “The Life of the Master” series appeared in the December 1899 issue of *McClure’s*.⁸⁹² The remainder of the series followed in 12 consecutive monthly issues, from January through December 1900.⁸⁹³ Some 200 illustrations by Linson accompanied Watson’s narrative. The magazine took the unusual step of reproducing some of Linson’s images in color—the first time that color images had been used in a magazine on such a large scale, the editors claimed.⁸⁹⁴ As for the text of the series, Watson defied expectations and did not transform the life of Christ into a novel. The text lacked a narrative style. Unlike Watson’s novels, the series was largely written in the past tense. Watson alternated between describing the events of the biblical narratives and interjecting broader reflections on life and Christianity. Watson also did not completely ignore biblical controversies quite to the extent that the editors suggested. As to the question, for example, as to whether the site of the crucifixion was where the Holy Sepulchre stood, Watson wrote, “the exact position of the spot does not greatly concern the pious heart.”⁸⁹⁵ Watson did his best to smooth over points of disagreement.

Linson’s accompanying illustrations looked similar to images typically found in nineteenth-century illustrated Holy Land works. Images of the Holy Land were used to fill out and complement the story of Jesus. There were images of ruins, crowds, individual people, and historical objects. Landscape images were a substantial part of the collection, with sweeping views of the Palestinian countryside (Figures 6.4 and 6.5). Some images showed Palestine as Linson saw it; others depicted biblical times, with images reminiscent of somewhat less artful versions of Tissot’s “Life of Christ” watercolors, such as Jesus casting the moneylenders from the temple (Figure 6.6) and Jesus’ baptism (Figure 6.7).

⁸⁹² John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Prologue - The Inevitable Christ,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 2 (December 1899): 101–5.

⁸⁹³ John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part I - Childhood and Youth,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 3 (January 1900): 199–212; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part II - John the Baptist - The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (February 1900): 295–308; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part III - The Calling of the Disciples - The Beginning of Jesus’ Ministry,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900): 391–404; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part IV - Jesus’ Ministry at Capernaum - His Rejection by Nazareth,” *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 6 (April 1900): 486–98; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part V - The Relations of Jesus with the Samaritans and the Pharisees,” *McClure’s Magazine* XV, no. 1 (May 1900): 2–14; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part VI - Jesus’ Sympathy with the Outcasts - A Typical Day in His Earthly Life,” *McClure’s Magazine* XV, no. 2 (June 1900): 177–85; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part VII - Jesus in His Relations with Children and in His Dealings with Men,” *McClure’s Magazine* XV, no. 3 (July 1900): 278–88; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part VIII - A Warning to the Rich - The Home at Bethany,” *McClure’s Magazine* XV, no. 4 (August 1900): 369–80; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part IX - A Last Encounter,” *McClure’s Magazine* XV, no. 5 (September 1900): 450–58; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part X - Jesus Before the Council - Before Pontius Pilate,” *McClure’s Magazine* XV, no. 6 (October 1900): 535–43; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part XI - The Crucifixion of the Messiah,” *McClure’s Magazine* XVI, no. 1 (November 1900): 42–49; John Watson, “The Life of the Master: Epilogue - The Four-Fold Christ,” *McClure’s Magazine* XVI, no. 2 (December 1900): 116–21.

⁸⁹⁴ “The Life of the Master: Editor’s Introduction,” 99. The *McClure’s* editors claimed that the inclusion of Linson’s color reproductions was the “most important achievement in the magazine world which the past twenty-five years have witnessed” and “the first time absolute reproductions of pictorial originals [were] given in any magazine” (“Editorial Notes,” February 1900, 388).

⁸⁹⁵ Watson, “The Life of the Master: Part XI,” 45.

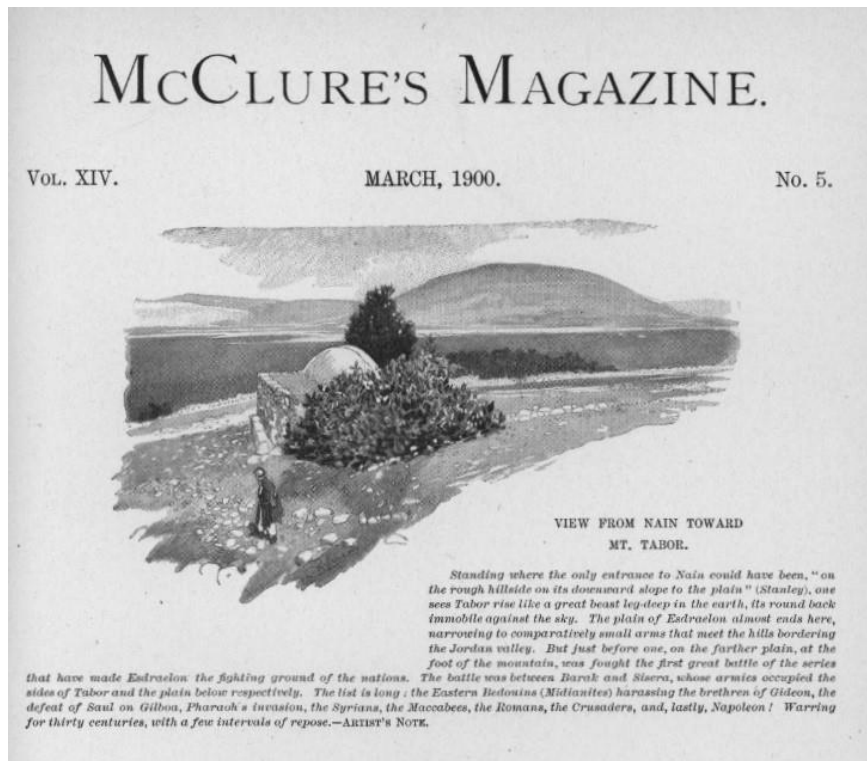


Figure 6.4. Illustration titled “View from Nain Toward Mount Tabor” by Linson. From *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900), page 391.



Figure 6.5. Illustration titled “Cana (Kefr-Kenna) from the Road to Nazareth” by Linson. From *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900), page 392.



Figure 6.6. Illustration titled “The First Purification of the Temple” by Linson. From *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900), page 395.

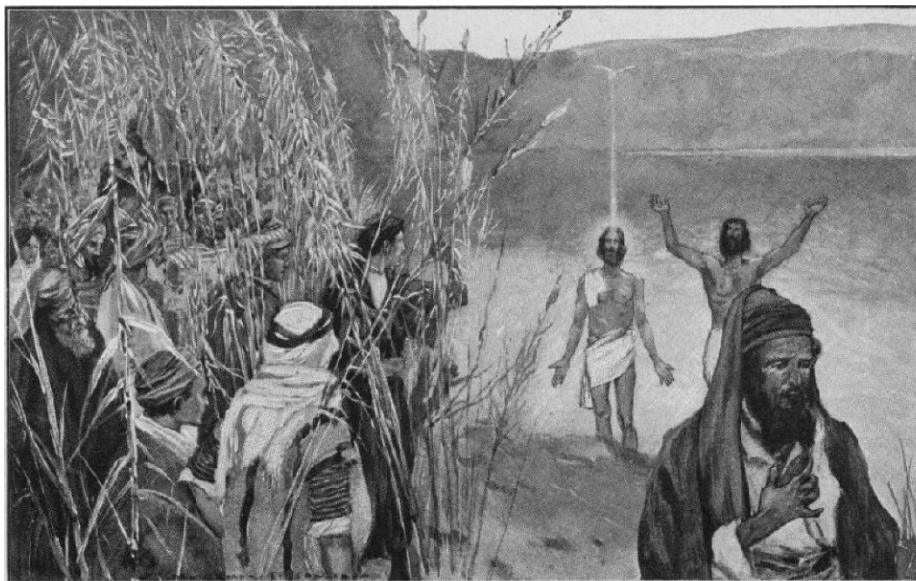


Figure 6.7. Illustration titled “The Baptism” by Linson. *McClure’s Magazine* XIV, no. 4 (March 1900), page 399.

McClure's reported a welcome reception of the series by its readers. After only the first installment, the magazine received hundreds of supportive letters.⁸⁹⁶ The series was well-suited for youth, noted one reader, who used the copiously-illustrated and colorfully written series to hold the attention of a Sunday school class of boys.⁸⁹⁷ Another reader described copies of the magazine being circulated among church members, as well as Linson's illustrations being cut and pinned to a wall.⁸⁹⁸ One reviewer praised Watson's work as "not a critical one but an historical 'appreciation' of Jesus"—one that surely would not offend.⁸⁹⁹

On the whole, the series appeared to be a success—though perhaps not quite to the degree *McClure's* had hoped. The first five parts of the series appeared as the lead story in each issue of the magazine. Beginning with the June 1900 issue, though, the installments were moved further back in the magazine. With the June issue, the number of pages for each installment was also reduced. The first 5 parts of the series averaged approximately 13 pages each, while the remaining parts averaged around 9 pages. The final installment of the series—the crucifixion of Christ—was given only 8 pages.⁹⁰⁰ And while *McClure's* did release Watson's series as a book the following year, they did not heavily advertise it.⁹⁰¹ At the same time as Watson's series, the publishing arm of *McClure's* had, in fact, partnered with Tissot to release a volume of his collected paintings. The magazine extensively marketed Tissot's book with full page ads—some, in fact, appearing in the very same issues as Watson's series.⁹⁰² There would not be, however, a comparable push for Watson's book. Perhaps *McClure's* worried its readers were suffering from "Lives of Christ" fatigue by the time Watson's book appeared.

The *McClure's* series also elicited a critical response from some readers who did not find its "appreciation" of Jesus so innocuous. Its lyricism and colorful pictures obscured its theological failings, these critics worried. More troubling, these critics charged Watson's work with being extra-biblical, straying too far from the *only* source of information about Jesus: the Bible. With the critical response to Watson's series, emerging fault lines in the material gospel theology are evident. The Protestant imagining of the Holy Land as another record, a holy book, and a revelation in stone would prove a liability in an increasingly fractious environment where battles would be waged over the infallibility and literalness of the Word.

One of the most scathing critiques of Watson's series came from a successful Illinois businessman. Edwin A. Wilson was a leading figure in the civic life of Springfield, Illinois. His influence extended to Springfield's religious community. Upon his death Wilson was remembered as "very conservative"—a believer "in verbal Plenary inspiration," a premillennialist and "pessimist as to the world's condition," and a defender of "the absolute inerrancy of the Sacred Scriptures, in the Divinity of Christ, and in the personality of the Holy Ghost."⁹⁰³ Wilson was active in his local Presbyterian church, serving as both a Sunday school superintendent and an elder.⁹⁰⁴ He also served as President of the Illinois YMCA.⁹⁰⁵ Wilson was

⁸⁹⁶ "Editorial Notes," February 1900, 388.

⁸⁹⁷ "Editorial Notes," *McClure's Magazine* XIV, no. 6 (April 1900): 579.

⁸⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁹ "Work and Workers," *The Biblical World* 15, no. 1 (January 1, 1900): 72.

⁹⁰⁰ Watson, "The Life of the Master: Part XI."

⁹⁰¹ John Watson, *The Life of the Master* (New York: McClure, Phillips and Co., 1901).

⁹⁰² "Tissot Pictures in Color"; "Religion, History, Art Combined Have Made Tissot's Life of Christ the Most Interesting and Beautiful Book in the World," *McClure's Magazine* XIV, no. 6 (1899): 6.

⁹⁰³ Newton Bateman and Paul Selby, eds., "Wilson, Edwin Augustus," *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Sangamon County* (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Company, 1912), 1728–1729.

⁹⁰⁴ For brief biographies of Wilson, see *History of Sangamon County, Illinois* (Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Company, 1881), 730; Joseph Wallace, *Past and Present of the City of Springfield and Sangamon County, Illinois* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1904), 241; and Bateman and Selby, "Wilson, Edwin Augustus."

⁹⁰⁵ Bateman and Selby, "Wilson, Edwin Augustus," 1729.

active in religious publishing, writing several small books on topics such as “Inspiration,” “The Word of God,” “The Lord’s Day,” and “Christianity vs. Judaism.”⁹⁰⁶ He also published two religious newspapers—one a weekly paper titled *Food for the Lambs* and another a monthly publication titled *Labor of Love*, with a circulation of 50,000 in the 1870s.⁹⁰⁷ He did “everything in his power to promote the growth of the church and extend its influence,” recalled a contemporary of Wilson’s.⁹⁰⁸

In 1903—more than two years after the final installment of Watson’s series appeared in *McClure’s*—Wilson self-published a small book attacking “The Life of the Master.”⁹⁰⁹ The opening lines of his book made clear Watson’s error:

There is but *one* authentic source from which to gather into story, anything that is helpful and trustworthy as ‘a life of the Master.’ The Sacred Scriptures contain all that is revealed of the Father concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. Any attempt of the imagination which undertakes to more than set forth the divine utterance in its relation to the Godman, is but a work of supererogation, and every effort to produce a life of our Lord which does not involve every line that is written by Him by the divine penman, and no more, is incomplete, misleading, and satanic.⁹¹⁰

Wilson’s attack on Watson’s series focused on the singularity of the Bible. The Bible was the *only* source for information about the life of Jesus. Watson should have limited himself “to the ancient and honored Record, the Holy Scriptures.”⁹¹¹ Wilson repeatedly came back to this point. “‘The Life of the Master’ can get its conception from one source only, just one Book,” Wilson wrote.⁹¹² Christians should rely solely upon the facts revealed in the Bible: “Dear reader do not permit yourself to accept anything about the Word of God which is not found in the Word of God,” Wilson implored.⁹¹³

Watson’s creative powers had led him away from the Bible, argued Wilson. “Dr. John Watson’s language, it is readily confessed, is most chaste and elegant, his imagery is charming, but when he becomes a mere romancer and indifferently invades the sacred precincts of divinity, he becomes a factor for evil and not for good,” Wilson wrote.⁹¹⁴ The *McClure’s* series was nothing more than “pabulum for the popular taste”—vapid entertainment, according to Wilson.⁹¹⁵ *McClure’s* got what it asked when it had hired a novelist to write a life of Christ: “This ‘Life of the Master’ is fiction; it reflects the man Watson, not the man Christ,” wrote Wilson.⁹¹⁶

Wilson did not directly attack Watson’s use of the Holy Land in the series. The word Palestine does not, in fact, appear a single time in Wilson’s book. The absence itself, though, is revealing: for Wilson, Palestine did not stand on equal ground with the Bible. Wilson’s logic, in fact, stood in complete opposition to the material gospel theology. The material gospel theology emphasized the plurality of the Bible: the Bible was composed of many books and Palestine was

⁹⁰⁶ Edwin A. Wilson, *Review of Rev. John Watson’s (Ian Maclaren) “Life of the Master” as Published in McClure’s Magazine (May 1900, Etc.)* (Springfield, Ill.: [s.n.], 1903), 52.

⁹⁰⁷ *Pettengill’s Newspaper Directory and Advertisers’ Hand-Book for 1877* (New York: S. M. Pettengill & Company, 1877), 46.

⁹⁰⁸ Wallace, *Past and Present of the City of Springfield*, 241.

⁹⁰⁹ Wilson, *Review of Rev. John Watson’s (Ian Maclaren) “Life of the Master.”*

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3, italics added.

⁹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹¹² *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹¹³ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

another such book. For Wilson, the Bible was singular: “one authentic source,” “the ancient and honored Record,” “one Book.” The material gospel theology saw God’s message inscribed in both words and objects—revelations written on pages and in stones. For Wilson, there was a “divine penmen”—and he wrote only on parchment. The material gospel theology stressed the experiential dimension of the Holy Land’s scripture. Protestants who had never been to the Holy Land could experience its witness through imaginative encounters with books, images, and replicas. For Wilson, imagination improperly restrained could lead one astray from the Word. According to Wilson, there was a book—a real book—and it was the only book.

Wilson’s searing critique was a harbinger of things to come. As the lines of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy hardened in the first two decades of the twentieth century, heralding the Holy Land as a material gospel became an increasingly risky prospect for Protestants on both sides of the aisle. For conservatives, reconciling the material gospel theology with their emphasis on the singularity and uniqueness of the written Word would prove difficult. And for liberals, speaking of “other gospels” or “other books” was guaranteed to draw the ire of theological conservatives. The material gospel theology had reached unprecedented heights in the second half of the nineteenth century because it offered a creative solution to critical questions about the Bible; despite the best hopes of Protestants, though, the Holy Land would not prove strong enough to hold the center together.

Conclusion

For nearly fifty years, American Protestants had shown a nearly insatiable enthusiasm for the material gospel of the Holy Land. The prospect of recovering another record of God’s revelation motivated a tremendous outpouring of popular Holy Land works. As the nineteenth century ended, however, the Protestant infatuation with the Holy Land dimmed. It weakened as some questioned whether Protestants had idolized the Holy Land, to the neglect of other places that might contain God’s revelation. It weakened as some rejected the notion that Holy Land education and leisure was as true or as enjoyable as its proponents believed. And it weakened as increasingly virulent debates over the Bible forced a more literal return to what a book was and how it was to be read. The spectacular flourishing of the material gospel theology in the second half of the nineteenth century had ended.

EPILOGUE

What disappeared in the opening decades of the twentieth century was not the material gospel theology itself but the broad, optimistic Protestant consensus about the Holy Land's potential to re-enliven the Bible and unify the faithful. Twentieth-century Protestants continued to travel to the Holy Land, write travelogues, and create reproductions—but their hopeful imagining of the Holy Land as another sacred book dimmed considerably. The zenith of the material gospel theology in the nineteenth century, nonetheless, had lasting impacts on American Protestantism. It placed a new value on experience and the physical world, while also loosening the bounds of what was imagined to be scripture. The Holy Land would continue to hold a vaunted place in Sunday school curricula well into the twentieth century.⁹¹⁷ The large-scale, aging maps that even today continue to grace the walls of countless church and seminary classrooms speak to a time when Protestants saw the Holy Land as the key to uniting the faithful.

The material gospel theology persists today. Indeed, it may, in fact, be experiencing a resurgence in certain corners of contemporary American Protestantism, evidenced by an abundance of recent books focused on walking in the footsteps of Jesus⁹¹⁸ and theologians debating the value of pilgrimage for modern Christians.⁹¹⁹ The material gospel theology has waxed and waned throughout Christian history but has always been a constant presence. Time will tell when this creative and adaptable theology might re-emerge with revived strength to address both new and old questions of faith.

⁹¹⁷ “A good *Map of Palestine* should be hung in the classroom,” advised a 1910 curriculum on Christ published by the Young Men’s Christian Association (James McConaughy, *The Great Events in the Life of Christ: In Twenty-Five Studies Arranged for Daily Reading and Weekly Class Work* (New York: Young Men’s Christian Association Press, 1910), 199–200).

⁹¹⁸ Bargil Pixner, *With Jesus through Galilee: According to the Fifth Gospel* ([S.l.]: Corazin Publishing, 1992); Hela Crown-Tamir, *How to Walk in the Footsteps of Jesus and the Prophets: A Scripture Reference Guide for Biblical Sites in Israel and Jordan* (New York: Gefen Books, 2000); R. Wayne Stacy, *Where Jesus Walked: A Spiritual Journey Through the Holy Land* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2001); Ken Duncan, *Where Jesus Walked* (Nashville: Integrity Publishers, 2006); Peter Walker, *In the Steps of Jesus: An Illustrated Guide to the Places of the Holy Land* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007); Wayne Stiles, *Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus: A Journey Through the Lands and Lessons of Christ* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 2008). For an example focused on the Old Testament, see Bruce S. Feiler, *Walking the Bible: A Journey by Land through the Five Books of Moses* (New York: Morrow, 2001).

⁹¹⁹ Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes, eds., *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2004).

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