publicly supported Prohibition as well.[79] And Father Zurcher was so excited that he discontinued his journal *Catholics and Prohibition*, concluding that the liquor problem had finally been settled once and for all.

Most Catholics were not nearly so enthusiastic. No major American prelate praised the measure. Archbishops Ireland and Keane, the two most likely sympathizers, had both died in 1918. Gibbons for his part was deeply dismayed by the prospect of Prohibition. In 1917 he had been quoted by the *New York Times* as saying that the passage of Prohibition would be a "national catastrophe, little short of a crime against the spiritual and physical well-being of the American people."[80] He reiterated his opposition in 1918 and again in 1919 after the Volstead Act's enactment. A further indicator of the body of bishops' lack of sympathy for Prohibition was their publication of the "Program of Social Reconstruction" in 1920. The letter called for government action to ensure that workingmen received living wages and that the rights of union members were protected. This lengthy document made no mention of the need for government action to protect people from the dangers of strong drink. Indeed, alcohol and temperance were not mentioned at all.[81] This was probably because the principal author of the letter, Monsignor John Ryan, was ambivalent on the subject. As a seminary professor in St. Paul, Ryan had had extensive contact with Archbishop Ireland and shared his opposition to saloons. While he offered qualified support to statewide Prohibition in 1916, he had serious reservations about the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act. And as the years passed he became more critical and more outspoken in his opposition.[82]

Clearly as the temperance movement had become more identified with prohibition, Catholic sympathy for the cause had diminished. Since the days of Father Mathew, teetotalism had been a top priority for many assimilation-minded Irish clergy and laity. To the chagrin of their German coreligionists, many Irish Catholics had denounced saloons and had joined with Protestants in the campaign to eradicate them. For the Americanist clergymen who were an influential force in the 1880s and 1890s, teetotalism was truly a sacred cause. By 1920, though, the Americanists were gone from the scene and their successors were not as interested in the issue. No doubt the subject did not seem as urgent in 1920 as it had in previous decades. For while the Irish had not gained full acceptance in America, they were much more assimilated than their forebears had been in the nineteenth century. Consequently, as America's "noble experiment" was getting underway, most Catholics—Irish included—were lining up on the "wet" side.

79. Clark, pp. 186–187; and Benson, pp. 273–274.
80. Quoted in John Tracy Ellis, *The Life of James Cardinal Gibbons: Archbishop of Baltimore, 1834–1921* (Milwaukee, Wisc., 1952), 2:537.
81. *Pastoral Letters*, pp. 255–333.
82. See John A. Ryan, "The Evolution of an Anti-Prohibitionist," in *Questions of the Day* (Freeport, N.Y., 1931), pp. 29–36.

Messianism, Holiness, Charisma, and Community: The American-Swedish Colony in Jerusalem, 1881–1933

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One of the most interesting Protestant sects that settled in Palestine from 1881 onwards, and that operated successfully for more than fifty years, was the American-Swedish "Colony" in Jerusalem.[1] Known in its early years as the "Spaffordites," the group was also called the "Overcomers," since the members' journey to Jerusalem was spurred by their desire to overcome a series of personal tragedies. The history of the "American Colony," as it was known in Jerusalem, reveals the power of religious beliefs to motivate and shape the lives of adherents. In this case, believers emigrated, built a new community with its own order and sense of purpose, demonstrated dedication, and made sacrifices in following what they considered to be divine commands. The American Colony also exemplifies the limited possibility of sustaining a religious community based upon intense beliefs, as one generation struggles to convey its religious tenets and social principles to the next. To reconstruct the religious influences, principles, and practices of this unique group in Palestine, the American Colony should be placed in the context of nineteenth-century American evangelical Protestantism, which included elements of revivalism, dispensational premillennialism, evangelism, and holiness teachings.

I.

The group originated in Chicago in the 1860s and 1870s. Horatio Spafford, the group's founder, was born in 1828 in North Troy, New York, to a well-to-do family originally from New England. A lawyer by profession, he settled in Chicago in 1856, where he practiced law and became a successful real estate investor. In 1861 he married the Norwegian-born Anna Lawson (Larssen) and they built their home in an affluent neighborhood of northern

1. Ruth Kark, "Millenarism and Agricultural Settlement in the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Historical Geography* 9 (1983): 1–17; and Robert Murray, *Till Jorsala* (Stockholm, 1969), pp. 236–239.

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Chicago. The Spaffords were respected members of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago on Fullerton Avenue. During the 1860s Horatio and Anna, convinced of Jesus's imminent return, found themselves among the burgeoning ranks of dispensational premillennialists.[2]

In the early nineteenth century messianic expectations among Protestants, especially in the English-speaking world, rose dramatically. It was not uncommon to interpret the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars as signs that an era was ending and that predicted eschatological events had begun.[3] In evangelical circles, the new premillennialist ferment brought about a renewed interest in the Jews, the prospect of their national restoration, and their eventual conversion to Christianity.[4] In this atmosphere dispensationalism, a new school of belief in the Second Coming of Jesus, emerged in Britain. Crystallized in the 1830s by John Nelson Darby (1800–1882) and his group, the Plymouth Brethren, dispensationalists asserted that human history is divided into ages or eras. The last age will be the millennium, Christ's thousand-year reign on earth, and the present era represents the one before the last. Dispensationalists also believed that God's plan for humanity in each successive age can be reconstructed from the biblical text.[5] Contrary to the traditional claim of Christianity to be the new Israel, dispensationalists recognized the Jewish people to be both the historical Israel and the object of the biblical prophecies foretelling a restored Davidic kingdom in the messianic age. Thus Jews play a crucial role in the events of the end times.

Dispensationalism spread throughout America in the 1860s, gaining support among members of major Protestant denominations, including Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, and Baptists.[6] Many of those in Spafford's social circle of prominent businesspeople in Chicago accepted the new eschatological system. An enthusiastic believer in the messianic hope, Spafford associated with well-known premillennialists such as Dwight L. Moody (1823–1899), the leading evangelist in America in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and William E. Blackstone (1841–1935), a businessman who became an evangelist and promoted the idea that the Jews should return to Zion. Horatio Spafford himself became a lay evangelist who

2. Bertha Spafford Vester, *Our Jerusalem* (Garden City, N.Y., 1950), pp. 1–61.
3. See Clarke Garrett, *Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution in France and England* (Baltimore, Md., 1975); W. H. Oliver, *Prophets and Millennialists: The Uses of Biblical Prophecy in England from the 1790s to the 1840s* (Auckland, New Zealand, 1978); and John F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780–1850* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1979).
4. Franz Kobler, *The Vision Was There* (London, 1956); and Barbara W. Tuchman, *Bible and Sword* (London, 1983).
5. See Clarence B. Bass, *Background to Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1960); Dave MacPherson, *The Incredible Cover Up: The True Story of the Pre-Trib Rapture* (Plainfield, N.J., 1975); and Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1978).
6. Yaakov Ariel, *On Behalf of Israel: American Fundamentalist Attitudes toward Jews, Judaism, and Zionism, 1865–1945* (New York, 1991), pp. 25–54.

preached in churches around the country and in Chicago's commercial center during lunch breaks.

As with others in their social circle, the Spaffords also became followers of the holiness movement advocated by Moody and others.[7] For dispensationalists of their circle, the current era—the period they believed to be preceding the messianic age—was also the period of the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit." In addition to the personal conversion experience necessary for salvation, holiness followers sought a "second blessing," "complete sanctification," and "perfection," in which the Holy Spirit would be manifest in their lives; some practiced divine healing.[8] Although churches for which holiness teaching became a major component, such as the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance, sprang up during that period, the movement also attracted many members of mainline denominations. It may have been at that time that the Spaffords became acquainted with Hannah Whitall Smith, who along with her husband, Robert Pearsall Smith, became a major holiness evangelist during the 1860s and 1870s. Hannah Whitall Smith wrote the holiness bestseller, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, and together with her husband was among the founders of the Keswick holiness movement in Britain.[9]

In 1873, following the Great Chicago Fire, the Spaffords decided to vacation in Europe. Anna and their four daughters sailed on the *Ville du Havre* (Horatio was delayed by business). The ship sank en route, and the four children drowned. Horatio Spafford wrote the popular hymn, "It Is Well with My Soul," to help him reconcile his loss: "When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll, Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say; 'It is well, it is well with my soul.' "[10]

After this tragedy, the Spaffords became even closer to Moody, who arranged for Anna to carry on charitable work in reforming prostitutes in Chicago. Between that time and their departure for Jerusalem, the Spaffords gathered a small group of relatives and friends around them that eventually became a religious group of its own. These included Horatio's sister, Margaret Lee; John C. Whiting, an affluent businessman originally from Massachusetts, and his wife; and William H. Rudy, a mill owner from Chicago. Lee, considered to be an intermediary between the group and God, became their spiritual leader at that time. In 1876, God had first spoken to the group through Mrs. Lee, "giving us truth and telling us that this coming was the coming of Elias, or Christ coming as a thief." The group believed that God

7. George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870–1925* (New York, 1980), pp. 72–80.
8. See Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1987), pp. 101–106.
9. Melvin E. Dieter, "The Smiths—A Biographical Sketch with Selected Items from the Collection," *Asbury Seminarian* 38 (1983): 7–42.
10. Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 45–46. See also Alfred B. Smith, comp., *Inspiring Hymns* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1951), no. 271.

was speaking to them, calling them to live a holy life. By claiming *direct* communication with the divine through a charismatic leader, this group stepped beyond customary holiness teaching and anticipated later pentecostal practices.[11]

Misfortunes continued to befall the Spaffords. In 1880 their son, born after the *Ville du Havre* tragedy, died of scarlet fever. As well, the "Overcomers"—as they were then called—began to believe in universal salvation, and Horatio Spafford claimed that there was no hell, no devil, and that children in particular would not suffer eternally. Because of these outspoken beliefs, the Presbyterian church tried Spafford for heresy and expelled him. The Overcomers did not think that universalism contradicted their messianic premillennialism, though most premillennialists held more conservative views of sin and punishment. Some friends severed their connections to the Spaffords, so it is remarkable that leading premillennialists such as Moody, Ira D. Sankey, and Blackstone continued to maintain ties with the Spaffords. In addition to their personal suffering and their expulsion from the church, the Spaffords might also have had financial difficulties in 1881, when the group decided to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The Colony's antagonists claimed in 1896 that the Spaffords' decision to leave Chicago might have been influenced by their being in debt. However, their departure in 1881 was hardly secretive; a contemporary newspaper article described the Spaffords and their plans to go to Jerusalem. The Spaffordites themselves considered the journey to be not an escape from debts but rather a pilgrimage, explained in spiritual, moral, and messianic terms.[12]

2.

Upon their arrival in Jerusalem, the Spaffords and their friends decided to live a communal life similar to that described in Acts, with property held in common. They settled in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City and lived with intense expectation of the arrival of the Lord. They did not work on a regular basis or send their children to school, since God had told them to "sit still" until being endued with power from above. The community also practiced sexual abstinence; husbands and wives lived in separate quarters, and for over two decades, marriages were forbidden.

11. This is evident among other things from the correspondence between Anna Spafford and Hannah Whitall Smith: "We were surprised . . . and grieved beyond measure that you should so misunderstand God's work through us." Anna Spafford to Hannah Whitall Smith and others, 25 January 1883, Hannah Whitall Smith Archive, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. The pentecostal movement officially came into being in the early twentieth century, although many of its components were practiced even before it became an organized movement; see Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*.
12. *Chicago Daily News*, 5 January 1898; and Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 54–61, 156–158.

Although new to the city, the members of the Colony were the only community in Jerusalem to offer assistance to several hundred Yemenite Jews who had departed Yemen as the result of messianic fervor, arriving destitute in Jerusalem in 1882. The Spaffordites provided the newcomers, who were living in the open fields outside the city wall, with tents, medical care, food, and a soup kitchen. The arrival of the Yemenites furnished them with a "sign of the time" (Matthew 16:3) that indicated that the present era was terminating and the Messiah's coming was near; it was a divine duty to assist them. The Spaffords considered the Yemenite Jews to be descendants of the "Ten Lost Tribes" of Israel and referred to them as "Gadites," descendants of the tribe of Gad (Deut. 33:20–21).[13]

A short time after the group's arrival in Jerusalem, Lee's role as a spiritual leader came to an end. Perhaps she tried to obtain a position of authority in the group that the Spaffords were determined to keep for themselves. Anna Spafford wrote: "Mrs. Lee took glory to herself after we left home, but on the Mount of Olives the Lord exposed it all . . . she was to us Moses and here Satan was using her."[14] Despite this, Lee remained a member of the Colony. After Horatio Spafford's death in 1888, his wife Anna became the undisputed spiritual and moral leader of the Colony. Her authority as the revered "Mother" of the community did not derive from being Horatio's widow, but stemmed from her own charisma, and moral and religious strengths. She claimed to have had visitations of the Spirit, and the Colony's members considered her to have spiritual power, an ability to heal, and the aura of a messenger of God. She took little interest in financial and commercial affairs, which were in the hands of William H. Rudy, and later her sons-in-law, Frederick Vester and John Whiting.[15]

Parallel to the crystallization of the Overcomers in Chicago, a Swedish-American, Olof Henrik Larson (1842–1919), established another religious commune there. Larson, raised as a Lutheran, left the fishing village of Uddevalla in the 1860s to be trained as a ship's captain in England and the United States. While at sea sometime between 1869 and 1873, he decided to devote his life to God's service. He moved to Chicago, at that time the leading "Swedish" metropolis in North America, and joined the Methodist church, but soon found that he disagreed with some of its teachings. Around 1880 he purchased a plot of land on Madison Avenue, where he built his independent Svenska Evangeliska Kyrkan (Swedish Evangelical Church), with an adjoining house. The Swedish-speaking "Larsonites" lived there as one family,

13. Spafford to Smith, 25 January 1883, Smith Archive. A copy of the *Mi SheBe'rach* blessing composed by the Yemenites for Spafford is on display in a historical exhibition organized by the American Colony Hotel, Jerusalem.
14. Spafford to Smith and others, 25 January 1883, Smith Archive.
15. Ruth Kark, "William H. Rudy and his Route from Chicago to The American-Swedish Colony in Jerusalem," *Ariel* 100 (1994): 33–43 (in Hebrew).

sharing their earnings and directed by their charismatic leader.[16] In 1889 Larson accompanied his second wife to visit her birthplace near Nås in central Sweden, where he soon began conducting revival meetings—an activity that was not new to the Dalarna region. Two years later Olof returned to Chicago, leaving two local elders in charge of his fifty "Larsaners."[17] Larson urged his "twin assemblies" to follow the Master's footsteps and to take the narrow and difficult road in life that leads to heaven. "Come to the Light," he called out, "that your deeds may be known to have been wrought in righteousness."[18] He believed that the Day of Judgment was at hand; Christ was returning to establish peace on earth, and Christians would meet him on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem at the place from which he had departed. Larson ran his two communities with a strong hand, punishing wrongdoers and threatening those who did not believe in the imminent return of Christ. Larson also relied on divine healing; when his daughter fell ill (and later died), he refused medical care for her, declaring that "only God can heal her if it be His will."[19]

In 1895, through a mutual friend of Larson's wife and the Spaffordites, Larson and his followers learned about and began to admire the group that had gone to settle in Jerusalem.[20] In that year a group from the Colony including Anna Spafford visited Chicago. The Larsonites attended a Spafford-ite Sunday service, after which the Jerusalem group was invited to attend one of Larson's the following Sunday. Some of the Larsonites were most im-pressed with Anna's charismatic personality and supreme self-confidence; others, including Larson himself, had mixed feelings. Anna Spafford saw Olof Larson as a type of John the Baptist, the prophet who preceded Christ, to be followed by "one mightier than I" (Mark 1:7). Indeed, even in an early stage of their relationship in Chicago, Larson lost the leadership of his own community to her.[21] When the Chicago Health Department evicted the Spaffordites from their congested quarters, Larson invited them to stay with his commune. From 22 November 1895 until their departure together on 5

16. Edith Larsson, *Dalafolk i Heligt Land* (Stockholm, 1957), pp. 1–8; Ulf Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago: A Demographic and Social Study of the 1846–1880 Immigration* (Växjö, Sweden, 1971), pp. 264–265; and Paul Elmen, "The American-Swedish Kibbutz," *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* 32 (1981): 205–218.
17. Edith Larsson, untitled and undated English MS, pp. 8–14, Helga Dudman's archive, Tiberias, Israel (this was based on her memoirs and some of her father's letters, and served as the basis for her book); and "Jerusalem in Prose," MS V519 (1933), pp. 1–18, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem. This is part of the book by Laura Petri, *På Heliga vägar* (Stockholm, 1931), pp. 120–165.
18. Larsson, English MS, p. 17.
19. Ibid., p. 18; Olof Fahlén, *Nåsbönderna i Jerusalem, Berättelsen om en marklig utvandring* (Lund, Sweden, 1988), p. 23; and Anon., *Järna, Nås, Apelbo, ur tre socknars Historia* (Malung, Sweden, 1979), 1:187–189.
20. Larsson, English MS, pp. 20–27.
21. Ibid., pp. 36–37.

March 1896, the Larsonites shared all they had with the thirty or so Spaffordites. Convinced that they shared the religious beliefs of the Jerusa-lem group, they decided to join the Americans. They sold the church, the house, and other properties for twenty thousand dollars and proceeded to "hasten to the Holy City to await the second coming of the Lord and witness the fulfillment of Prophecy."[22] The Larsonites paid for the journey to Jerusalem of seventy-seven people (including twenty-five children).

A letter from Larson to his assembly in Nås, informing them of the wonderful events in Chicago, arrived in February 1896. Although Larson did not call on them to do so, the Swedish villagers immediately began selling their farms, hoping to join the Larsonites and the Americans. They believed that the "Approach of the Last Day was imminent and they must hurry to meet their Lord in Jerusalem."[23] It took longer than expected to arrange the farm sales (at a considerable financial loss); the proceeds were put into a common fund. Sometime after mid-July 1896, thirty-seven Swedes, includ-ing twenty-two children, left Nås singing revival songs about going to Zion, God's wonderful and heavenly city.[24]

Although the Swedes now formed the majority, the American founders continued to direct the Jerusalem community in all spheres. The Swedes acknowledged Anna's authority, and Larson was pushed into an uninfluen-tial position. The Colony moved from the Muslim Quarter to their main building on Nablus Road that was rented, and later purchased, from the Muslim Husseini family; it became the center of the American Colony complex.[25] The Colony now numbered more than 150 people. Most of the Swedes were hardworking artisans and peasants, and soon the Colony developed a number of economic enterprises, including agriculture, a dairy farm, a bakery, a furniture shop, a guest house, a tourist shop, and a commercial photography studio. The Colony became a major economic and charitable organization in Jerusalem, leaving its mark on the city's development.[26]

Swedish clergymen who visited the American Colony often disapproved of what they saw: an American elite, they contended, ruled the Colony. English was the language of choice, the Colony celebrated the Fourth of July, and the

22. Ibid., pp. 20–27, 33–34. The Whiting trial, which brought the Spaffordites to Chicago, received wide newspaper coverage and was much discussed in religious circles.
23. [Petri], "Jerusalem in Prose," p. 6.
24. K. E. Forslund, *Nås* (Stockholm, 1925), 2:126; Fahlén, *Nåsbönderna*, pp. 20–30; and Murray, *Till Jorsala*, p. 243.
25. Larsson, English MS, pp. 35–36, 50–56; Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 174–177, discusses the Swedish group without mentioning Larson.
26. Dov Gavish, "The American Colony and its Photographers," in *Zev Vilnay's Jubilee Volume*, ed. Ely Schiller (Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 127–144; and Aaron Yaffe, "The Creation and Development of the American Colony in Jerusalem at the End of the Ottoman Period," (seminar paper, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1978). The American Colony complex is today the American Colony Hotel.

Swedes were obliged to Americanize.[27] A number of second-generation Swedes who grew up in the Colony later wrote accounts of their lives. No longer sharing the Colony's religious ideals, they expressed resentment over what they described as an authoritarian rule, restricted life, and the inferior position of the Swedes. An especially bitter exposé was published by Lars Lind, who had come to the Colony as a young boy. Edith Larsson (the daughter of Olof Larson, who married Lewis or Hol Lars Larsson, another second-generation Swedish member of the Colony) in her account of the Colony's history emphasized the Swedish role in the Colony and accused Anna Spafford of ruling the Colony tyrannically. In contrast Anna's daughter, Bertha, portrayed the life of the Colony as one of harmonious coexistence.[28] One favorable Swedish description of the Colony was written by the Nobel Prize-winning author, Selma Lagerlöf, in her novel *Jerusalem*, published after her visit to the Colony in 1899. While Lagerlöf described the harsh sides of life in the Colony, she also showed much respect for the Colony's religious goals and for its leader.[29]

3.

Like others in religious and socialist communes who believed that "it was possible to redeem oneself by undertaking a journey, that migration in both a physical and a psychological sense could create community," the Colony's members also made a pilgrimage.[30] Bertha Spafford Vester claimed that they had left partly out of religious fervor as well as a wish to avoid religious persecution. They came to Jerusalem, the city where Jesus had taught and suffered, to which they believed he would soon return, hoping that the city would have a profound effect on their moral and spiritual well-being, and convinced that they had a role to play in the millennial scheme. However, it appears that the move was initially intended to be temporary. Anna Spafford had written that the pilgrimage was motivated by a desire to draw very near to God, to find the truth, to remain unified as the community in Chicago disintegrated, and to account for personal losses and deep affliction.[31]

The Spaffordites, like many other American premillennialists in the post-Civil War years, adopted dispensationalism. However, their settlement in the Holy Land and their perception of themselves and their role there was

27 Fahlén, *Nåsbönderna*, pp. 175–185, 199–202.
28. Lars Lind and Tord Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna* (Stockholm, 1981); Larsson, *Dalafolk*; Larsson, English MS; and Vester, *Our Jerusalem*.
29. Selma Lagerlöf, *Jerusalem*, 2 vols. (London, 1913); and Lagerlöf, "Address to the Universal Christian Conference in Stockholm" (Stockholm, 1925), pp. 1–4.
30. Robert Fogarty, *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860–1914* (Chicago, 1990), p. 19.
31. Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 55–61; Spafford to Smith, 25 January 1883 and 17 January 1900, Smith Archive and *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895.

unique, since American dispensationalists did not generally advocate moving to the Holy Land. Several sources indicate the Spaffords' interest in calculating the end times, also an uncommon practice among American dispensationalists during the period. They were influenced, for example, by Piazza Smith, Royal Astronomer of Scotland, who expected the return of Jesus in 1881, based on his (erroneous) calculations of the measurements of the Great Pyramid of Giza.[32] The Spaffordites noticed several "signs" soon after their arrival in Jerusalem, including a rare summer rainfall, the premature blossoming of an almond tree in their garden, the arrival of the "Gadites," and the growth of Jerusalem's Jewish population. Although the end times did not materialize, there was no crisis in the group's life or views. The expected date of Christ's return was recalculated to 1897. The Larsonites, who also believed that the coming of the Lord was at hand, were much influenced by Anna Spafford's thinking.[33]

For the Colony's founders, the restoration of Israel to the Holy Land was a material prerequisite. A Chicago newspaper wrote that "They believe that the restoration of Israel will come soon, and do much good for them, trying to get close to the future 'princes.' " Anna Spafford described the group's motivation: "We wished to go there when God brought the Jews back; we wanted to see the prophecies fulfilled."[34]

The community saw itself as Christ's chosen "Bride" awaiting the bridegroom's arrival. "We do still hold that belief and that when there is a Bride, which is unity," wrote Anna Spafford in 1900, "Xt [Christ] will come,—to us there has been no delay, anymore than there has to Xt who could not go to the Father until He had finished the work which the Father has given Him to do."[35] Laura Petri found in Anna's Bible many marginal notes referring to the Bride. She was told that Mrs. Spafford had always said that "the 'Bride's,' the Colony's mission was to bring the whole world back to God, to set the world an example of love, purity and peace."[36]

In the Colony's early years, the sense of proximity to Christ's return led members to neglect their children's schooling: "No care was taken of children, as the millennium was momentarily expected when, Mrs Spafford said, they would all be educated in a moment."[37] Members believed themselves immortal as long as they believed in God, and only those who did not

32. Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 23–24; Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 21–24; [Petri], "Jerusalem in Prose," p. 4; and Larsson, English MS, pp. 33–34.
33. Spafford to Smith, 25 January 1883, Smith Archive; *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895; and Fahlén, *Nåsbönderna*, pp. 150–154, 166–174.
34. *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895.
35. Spafford to Smith, 17 January 1900, Smith Archive.
36. [Petri], "Jerusalem in Prose," p. 12. For imagery of the "Bride" in the context of return and redemption, see Isaiah 61:10; Jeremiah 33:11; Joel 2:16; John 3:21; and Revelation 18:23, 21:2, 9, and 22:17.
37 *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895.

"overcome" died. Thus professional medical attention and the use of medicines were considered unnecessary; divine healing was the rule. During the first fifteen years they survived on donations, and according to an affidavit from Selah Merrill, the American consul in Jerusalem, they had accumulated a debt of eight thousand dollars by the year 1895. Only after the arrival of the Swedes did they develop a sound economic base and strictly regiment the daily work schedule of the community.[38]

The Colony's theology and practices resembled those found in late-nineteenth-century American evangelicalism, particularly within the holiness movement. The Colony emphasized aspects of personal holiness and religious experience, and daily prayer was mandatory. Reverence for their leader, considered to be gifted with supernatural powers, figured prominently. Outsiders noted that the "overcomers" did not belong to an established church.[39] Daily activity in the Colony began with the morning prayer meeting, which lasted one to three hours. Anna directed the meeting, which included reading Scripture and singing hymns (mostly well-known evangelical Protestant hymns used by other holiness congregations).[40] The "brothers" and "sisters"—including children—confessed aloud their sins, bad thoughts, and dreams, which were recorded, along with Anna's prophecies, in the Colony's *Book of the Day of Judgment*.[41] Prayer was usually spontaneous, and Anna would sometimes receive "messages" or divine revelations, defined also as the outpouring of the Spirit. The Colony maintained some relationship with holiness groups in America and Britain, and while in Chicago members had participated in a camp meeting. However, the outpouring of the Spirit, divine healing, and Anna's claims of supernatural powers were seen as bizarre by outsiders. Some observers of the Colony's ritual, unaware of the nature of holiness teachings, suspected that they held to spiritualistic practices, and called them "Spiritists."[42]

Colony members believed that humans could achieve moral perfection. The adoption of a perfect way of life would ensure their salvation and eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. Members of the Colony had to become "overcomers," committing to overlook the flesh and to forgive faults and

38. U.S. Consul in Jerusalem Edwin S. Wallace to assistant secretary of state, Washington, D.C., 19 April 1897, RG59 T471, United States National Archives (hereafter USNA).
39. Spafford to Smith, 25 January 1883, Smith Archive; Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 50–92; David Yellin, *The Writings of David Yellin* (Jerusalem, 1972), 1:34–35 (for 1896); and Annie Aiken, reported in *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895.
40. See a hymn found in William Rudy's possession, RG84/Jerusalem No. 27/Rudy, USNA; and Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, pp. 72–80.
41. Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 32–50; and Lester I. Vogel, *To See a Promised Land* (University Park, Pa., 1993), pp. 152–159. The Colony's *Book of the Day of Judgment* was not found.
42. Fogarty, *All Things New*, p. 84; and Vincent John Heyl, "A Study in the Social and Religious in Modern Jerusalem," *The Independent*, 7 March 1889, pp. 1–3.

weaknesses as Christ had forgiven. Universalism, which dismissed the idea of eternal punishment, prevailed during the first years of the commune. After Horatio's death, however, Anna abandoned her late husband's universalist convictions and adopted understandings of the perfect life, sin, and death more in line with standard holiness teachings. When the commune expanded and control of the group became an issue, some sources reported that members were punished at times and were not always so easily forgiven.[43]

Notably, the American settlers chose to adopt celibacy and to relinquish the traditional family framework, living as "brothers" and "sisters." Sociologists and historians have suggested that in communal life, the ban on marriage and sexual relations served to strengthen group ties and to encourage members to put a priority on group needs.[44] These considerations may have played some unconscious role in the Spaffordites' decision to adopt the practice, but adopting celibacy was undoubtedly connected with their messianic and perfectionist beliefs. Colonists desired to follow Jesus' commands regarding those destined to enter the Kingdom: "and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake" (Matthew 19:12); and "they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Luke 20:34–36).[45] Children were separated from their parents and Anna Spafford became "mother" of the whole community. "We must wait," she said, "till sin is rooted out of us and then only will we be able to realize the perfect marriage."[46]

The Spaffords and those who joined them "founded a community whose members pledged themselves to live in unity with each other and to serve and help all humanity." Colony members carried out ministries of welfare, teaching, and nursing, with no desire for material reward and without missionary objectives.[47] This disinterest in conversion attracted Muslims and Jews to the Colony, but at the same time it created long-lasting and bitter conflict between the Colony and the American, British, and other Protestant missionaries and clergymen operating in Jerusalem.

43. See Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, p. 77.
44. Elmer T. Clark, *The Small Sects in America*, rev. ed. (New York, 1949), pp. 11–24; and Yaacov Oved, *Two Hundred Years of American Communes* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 369–377.
45. Vester's account treats the matter as a personal choice not binding on the group as a whole; in Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, p. 201; and Anna Grace Lind, "The House on the Wall" (Jerusalem, 1974?), p. 5, American Colony Archive.
46. *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895; Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 19–59; Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 92–113; and Larsson, *Dalafolk*, pp. 37–39. Annie Aiken, a former member of the Colony, reported that "Mrs. Spafford claimed she was a prophetess and had a wonderful sign that we were to live like Adam and Eve before the fall, those who were married must live as though they were not"; [Petri], "Jerusalem in Prose," p. 6. The appellation "Mother" was engraved on Anna Spafford's tombstone.
47 Lagerlöf, "Address," pp. 1–4; and Yellin, *Writings*, pp. 34–35.

Anna Spafford preached mutual love within the "family," or the commune, based on Jesus' instruction: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another" (John 13:34). She recounted that in 1873, during the *Ville du Havre* disaster, she heard a mighty voice telling her: "That which is required in order that it may become easy to live on earth is unity, unity, unity."[48] Just before the First World War began, Anna Spafford received a "message" from God that "the fierce anger of the Lord goeth forth from nation to nation. . . . No harm shall befall you if you love one another." The Colony put this principle into action in the extensive medical and charitable work performed for all of Jerusalem's needy during the war. Selma Lagerlöf cited as an example the Colony's concepts of love, peace, and unity when she addressed the Universal Christian Conference in Stockholm in 1925.[49]

The Colony declared itself to be open and welcoming to all outsiders—locals and tourists, functionaries and consuls, Jews and Arabs, Bedouin and fellahin, men and women. Yet the Colony strictly controlled its own members, who were often barred from freely interacting with outsiders. A small core of administrators handled all external legal, economic, and other outside contacts in their name. Even the mail sent to relatives was inspected.[50]

The Colony was organized after the communitarian example of early Christianity (Acts 2:42–45; 4:32). Those who joined gave all their assets to the community with no option of getting them back if they left or were expelled. Members performed all types of labor voluntarily. Alexander Hume Ford, a journalist from Chicago, wrote very favorably about the Colony after a visit to Jerusalem for Easter 1906. He called their way of life "Christian socialism," yet some perceived that there was, in fact, class differentiation and a division of labor.[51]

The Whiting trial provides a well-documented opportunity to glance at the Colony's character, the effect of its religious convictions on community life, and Anna's role as leader. The Whitings were among the original members from Chicago. Upon John C. Whiting's death, his widow's parents demanded custody of the children who, they argued, were being raised in an eccentric commune without a proper education. The children's grandparents blocked the transfer of funds from Whiting's estate to the Colony, and so the issue of custody and inheritance came to court in Chicago in 1895. The Colony took the trial very seriously, as it reflected on both its reputation and its financial

48. Lagerlöf, "Address," pp. 1–4; see also Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, pp. 30–42.
49. Lagerlöf, "Address"; and [Petri], "Jerusalem in Prose," pp. 3, 8–10.
50. *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895; correspondence concerning the Whiting Affair in the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem, July–October 1893, RG59 T471, USNA.
51 Alexander H. Ford, "Our American Colony," *Appleton's Magazine* 8 (1906): 634–655; Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 32–50, 171; and Fahlén, *Nåsböndarna*, pp. 175–185.

situation, and Mary Whiting, Anna Spafford, and other members traveled to Chicago.[52]

At the trial, Anna spoke openly of the Colony's premillennialist beliefs. She told the court that her group considered the return of the Jews to Palestine to be central to their messianic hope.[53] American consul Selah Merrill submitted written testimony to the court that Colony members neither worked nor sent their children to school. Annie Aiken, who once lived in the Colony, described Anna's position as a religious figure who received divine revelation. Anna knew, Aiken said, that the Spirit would pour out when a certain muscle in her hand moved. The witness also testified that the Colony expelled one couple who refused to abide by the community's requirement of sexual abstinence. She also attested to the Colony's contribution to the larger Jerusalem community and its many charitable works. Luther Laflin Mills, once state's attorney for Illinois, had agreed to present the Colony's case free of charge in order to fight religious persecution. In the public eye, not only Mary Whiting's rights as a mother but the entire American Colony were being put on trial. The judge's decision to award custody of the children to her thus granted some legitimacy to the Colony.[54]

4.

For many in the small British and American Protestant community in Jerusalem, the American Colony was at best eccentric and at worst anathema. A group of clergymen expressed a strongly negative attitude in a dispatch of 28 September 1897 to the American president and State Department.[55] Among the signers were the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem and a number of missionaries who strongly objected to the Colony's failure to proselytize. Other Protestants also objected. A report published in *Die Warte des Tempels*, the newspaper of the Templers (German pietists who themselves founded four colonies in Palestine), offered this mixed assessment of the Colony in 1884: "On the one hand their desire for sanctification is commendable, but on the other hand their expectation of the imminent return of the Lord is sectarian . . . and the visions that have appeared to several of their women are even dangerous."[56]

Selah Merrill, American consul in Jerusalem from 1882 to 1885, 1891 to 1893, and 1898 to 1907, observed the Colony with similar suspicion. A Congregationalist minister and a scholar of the Holy Land, Merrill had little

52. Kark, "William Rudy," pp. 38–39.
53. Cook County Court Official Papers, third year (17 April 1895), no. 795, Chicago, Illinois.
54. *Chicago Daily News*, 14–15 May 1895; and Kark, "William Rudy," p. 39.
55. Quoted in Vivian D. Lipman, *Americans and the Holy Land through British Eyes, 1820–1917: A Documentary History* (London, 1989), pp. 153–157.
56. *Die Warte des Tempels*, 14 February 1884, pp. 11–12.

appreciation for the Colony's religious practices. He detested the Colony's
messianic fervor and disapproved of the informal prayer meetings. He
particularly objected to the requirement of celibacy, and was appalled by the
Colony's communal lifestyle. As consul, he dealt with persons who left the
Colony and noted that such people were not reimbursed for their contribu-
tion to the community, nor for property they had entrusted to the Colony.
Merrill reported complaints about the authoritative rule of Anna Spafford
and the lack of personal freedom. He also "warned" tourists against visiting
the place and generally described it in very negative terms. The Colony in
turn viewed Merrill as an oppressor and petitioned Washington for his
removal from office.[57]

In contrast, the premillennialist and holiness movements more easily
accepted the main theological ideas and daily religious practices of the
Colony, since these resembled their own. Though the Colony deviated from
Protestant norms, some evangelicals remained friendly toward the commu-
nity. Both William Blackstone and Dwight L. Moody paid visits to the Colony.
The Colony also established relations with the Keswick holiness movement in
Britain, which had ties with the Moody circle in America.[58] Albert E. Thomp-
son arrived in Jerusalem in 1903 as the representative and director of the
Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA). This missionary organization,
founded in 1888 by A. B. Simpson, eventually developed into a large
Protestant denomination that accepted premillennialist and holiness teach-
ings. Thompson and other members of the CMA saw the American Colony as
close to their own religious faith and practices. Thompson became friendly
with the Colony's leaders, visited regularly, and sent his children to the
Colony's school, which had opened in 1903. It is noteworthy that Horatio
Spafford's hymn, "It Is Well With My Soul," appeared consistently in the
CMA's hymn collection.[59]

The Colony maintained friendly relations with the Quakers in Ramallah
and the remnants of the Adams Colony (Mormon dissenters who also
expected the Second Coming and had settled in Jaffa in 1866). The British
general Charles "Chinese" Gordon, an ardent evangelical and premillennial-
ist, befriended the Spaffords and lived in the Colony for a time during his
visit to Jerusalem (1882–1883). In 1904, the Colony's public standing appar-
ently changed and it gradually became more accepted within the wider
Protestant community. An international conference of the Sunday school
movement convened in Jerusalem and the American Colony's leaders were
invited to participate and interact with other Protestant ministers. Among

57. On Merrill's attitude towards the Colony, see Ford, "Our American Colony," pp. 634–655; Kark, *American Consuls in the Holy Land 1832–1914* (Detroit, Mich., 1994), pp. 323–326; and Spafford to Smith, 17 January 1900, Smith Archive.
58. R6 84/Jerusalem No. 27/Rudy, USNA.
59. See, for example, *Hymns of the Christian Life* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1936), p. 125.

other benefits, some of the connections made there served the Colony in collecting contributions for its charitable activities.[60]

The intense religious fervor of the Colony, which served as its moral framework and on which its leaders based their authority, did not continue into the second generation. This phenomenon began to manifest itself in some ways even during Anna's lifetime. By the early 1900s, a number of young men and women had reached marriageable age, including Anna's own daughter, Bertha. Anna stood firm against allowing marriages for a while, but then, particularly as it concerned her own daughter, yielded in 1904. She explained her decision as a result of divine revelation. The marriage between Bertha and Frederick Vester, with his commercial experience, brought considerable benefit to the Colony. As a dowry, he contributed his family's store at the Jaffa Gate. This became the American Colony Store, the Colony's main source of income.

Not long after Anna Spafford's death in 1923, Bertha took over the Colony's leadership and the austere religious atmosphere relaxed considerably.[61] Bertha, along with her rival, Olof Larson's daughter Edith, and most of the other second generation members of the Colony, no longer awaited the imminent Second Coming. For them, Jerusalem was not the magnified holy site where the Messiah was to arrive and rebuild the Davidic kingdom, but an earthly city, with its limitations and problems. Occupied with raising their families, they developed other views and gradually lost their faith in divine revelation. Having abandoned the dispensational premillennialism which saw the Jewish national revival as a sign of the coming end times, the second-generation members of the Colony no longer felt committed to Jewish immigration and settlement in the Holy Land. They directed charitable medical work to the Arab population, identified themselves with Arab needs and aspirations, and rejected the Zionist enterprise as a usurpation.[62]

Without an intense religious belief system to unite them and a charismatic leader whose authority was accepted by the entire community, factions and power struggles developed which eventually led to the disintegration of the commune. Some second-generation Swedes opposed Bertha's leadership. Not a charismatic religious leader like her mother, she claimed no divine revelations. Some members denounced what they considered to be Bertha's unfair tactics, expulsion policy, and attempts to govern the Colony's assets. In the end, various factions of the Colony applied to the district court concern-

60. Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 92–108; and *The Cruise of the Eight Hundred to and through Palestine Glimpses of Bible Land* (New York, 1904).
61. Anna Grace Lind, interview with Yaakov Ariel, 28 December 1993, Jerusalem; and Lind and Wallström, *Jerusalem Fararna*, pp. 171–173.
62. This is apparent from a chapter which Vester added to her book, *Our Jerusalem*, published (around 1954) by the Middle East Export Press, Lebanon, chap. 32, pp. 359–381.

ing the division of property, and the American Colony as a religious sect ceased to exist in the 1930s.

For some of the old guard, particularly the Swedes who had been in the Colony for decades and had worked for the sake of the commune and adhered to its religious principles, the situation was tragic. Some of them, older men and women, remained with Bertha Spafford and continued to work for the "Colony"—although it was no longer a religious group—until their deaths.[63] The "American Colony" became, in effect, a family business focused mainly on a hotel but also committed to charitable and community enterprises, including a children's hospital and clinics. Both a clinic and the hotel still operate. Most second-generation members of the Colony chose to leave. Some (including second-generation Swedes) left for the United States, whose language and culture they knew best. Even Bertha's own children left to build their lives and careers elsewhere, although they later returned.[64]

The character of the American-Swedish Colony in Jerusalem is best understood by taking into account similar developments in religion and communal life in America. It fits typologies of American religious movements and groups, as well as the characteristics of American religious communes. A number of communes—utopian, pietistic, and sometimes premillennialist—were founded in the nineteenth century. Led by a charismatic personality, such groups frequently sought to establish a new Holy City, often at the margins of their societies.[65] The American-Swedish Colony established itself not in a New Jerusalem but in the earthly Jerusalem. Other attempts by American and Swedish groups to settle in the Holy Land or the Levant failed miserably and disintegrated after a very short time, but this unique Protestant group thrived for decades. Two major factors were instrumental in the building of this relatively large and long-lasting community: a common set of religious beliefs, central to which was intense messianic expectation, and a charismatic leader whose spiritual and moral authority, based on divine revelation, was accepted by the entire community. Without these, the community was bound to disintegrate.

As might be expected, the group's initial fervor and practices were modified over time, in response to the community's growth and to both internal and external pressures. The Colony's founders and those who joined the commune in its first decades made a deliberate choice to live there, and either helped create the group's practices and norms or accepted them completely. They had come from other ways of life to become part of a religious community in which they found meaning and fulfillment. Naturally

63. A number of such former members were buried at the Colony's private cemetery on Mount Scopus, still in existence.
64. Lind, interview with Ariel, 28 December 1993.
65. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 138–145.

some became disillusioned and left or were expelled. The unwillingness or inability of the second generation to follow zealously in their parents' footsteps is seen among a number of other intense religious groups in America. In them, the founding generation built a community marked by dedication, self-sacrifice, obedience to the rules, and a willingness to place community demands before personal needs in the name of a great cause—a common belief which united them all. Yet they were only partially able to transfer their values. An overt or covert rebellion against the community's authority and its regulations took place, and gradually norms and practices were either modified or ignored until little was left of the original spirit and intention of the founders.[66] The American-Swedish Colony should be viewed, in that respect, as one of a number of attempts to build an intense perfectionist Christian community in a new place, an attempt which proved successful for a single generation.

66. See, for example, Elisabeth Sommer, "A Different Kind of Freedom? Order and Discipline among the Moravian Brethren in Germany and Salem, North Carolina 1771–1801," *Church History* 63 (1994): 221–234. The situation among the second-generation settlers in Salem, N.C., resembles that of the American-Swedish Colony (although the official framework in Salem remained).