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Mormonbasics.com is humbled to bring you a commentary on the hymns published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This commentary is presented in a two-column format. The original text, as presented in the hymnbook published by the LDS Church, is in the left column. The comments on the right are provided by mormonbasics.com. We have even changed the color of the text so there won't be any question as to who wrote what.

Personal note from the commentator:

The hymns of the Church are sacred text. The Lord has made it very clear to us through his prophets that the singing of hymns is a form of prayer, and as such is sacred communication. Much of the sacred Spirit and reverence we experience in our meetings, especially Sacrament Meeting, comes from the Spirit that accompanies the singing of the hymns.

The hymns are written in poetic form, and as such are able to take certain licenses and liberties with the English language that cannot normally be expressed in any other way. It is certainly not the aim of this commentary to improve on the beauty of the poetic expressions found in our sacred hymns. As a teacher of English to those who speak other languages, I have found that many of the hymns have expressions that are difficult for some people to understand.

Because hymns are written to fit a set rhythmic pattern or meter, often the expression has to be condensed to fit in a small space, but still convey its intended meaning. It is the combination of the rhythm, text, and music that create such a powerful Spiritual experience when singing the hymns. My attempts to explain some of the meaning behind the text should not detract from the original meaning, nor should it replace the original meaning. Hymns, like parables, take on different meanings as the circumstances of our lives change. My commentary is only a starting point for (hopefully) a better understanding of the overall meaning of the hymn in this work. Anyone else writing this same commentary would have different perspectives and points to make. That is the nature of a commentary. I pray that what I say will, in some way, help in your understanding of this hymn. Since this is a personal study of the hymns, I will sometimes use the first person when writing the commentary.

Kelly P. Merrill

What Glorious Scenes Mine Eyes Behold

1. What glorious scenes mine eyes behold!
 What wonders burst upon my view!
 When Ephraim's records I unfold,
 All things appear divinely new.
 All things appear divinely new.

2. Good news to earth have angels borne,
 Which fills our souls with joy and peace.
 Good tidings comfort those who mourn
 And bring the captive full release,
 And bring the captive full release.

3. The scattered sheep, who once were sold
 In darkness o'er the mountains far,
 Shall now return unto their fold
 And there their waiting hearts prepare,
 And there their waiting hearts prepare.

4. Now Israel, long oppressed and grieved
 In ev'ry land, in ev'ry clime,
 Shall hear the word of God and live;
 This is the time, the chosen time.
 This is the time, the chosen time.

MUSIC

Ebenezer Beesley, 1840-1906

TEXT

Anon., ca. 1840

SCRIPTURES

Doctrine and Covenants 27:5, Doctrine and Covenants 133:36-38

What glorious visions I see. What wonders or amazements I am suddenly (burst) seeing. When I open the Book of Mormon (Ephraim's records) all things look new in sacred ways.

Angels have brought the gospel (good news) of Christ to the earth, which fills our souls with joy and peace. Those who had cause to mourn or be sad because of the lack of spiritual knowledge are released from their spiritual captivity and receive the comfort this good news (the gospel) brings.

The Lord scattered his flock, Israel among the nations. Without prophets they were in spiritual darkness and far away from God. They sold themselves to Satan's influence because they refused to obey the Lord. Now, in the last days, the Lord has prepared their hearts to receive his gospel again, and they, His sheep, will be gathered back into the fold, His Church).

The scattered people of Israel have been living in every land and in every climate, being punished for their disobedience. This is the long awaited time for them to hear the word of God and live as His people once again.