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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

## We Listen to a Prophet's Voice

1. We listen to a prophet's voice and hear the Savior too.

With love he bids us do the work the Lord would have us do.

The Savior calls his chosen seer to preach the word of God,  
That men might learn to find the path marked by the iron rod.

2. In ev'ry land, in ev'ry tongue, our prophet will be heard;

How swiftly round the world his voice reveals the gospel word!

The sacred message that he brings will witness and agree

With ev'ry prophet called of God throughout earth's history.

3. Hosanna! Let our praise ascend unto the Savior's throne;

Rejoice! The prophet has confirmed that by Him we are known.

Attend, ye earth! The prophet speaks; come listen and obey.

He is the man who holds the keys of priesthood pow'r today.

### MUSIC

Darwin K. Wolford, b. 1936.

### TEXT

Marylou Cunningham Leavitt, b. 1928.

### SCRIPTURES

Doctrine and Covenants 1:38, Doctrine and Covenants 68:4, Doctrine and Covenants 112:30-32

The prophet speaks the words of Christ, so when we listen and pay attention to the prophet, we have also listened to and paid attention to Christ. I realize there are times when prophets speak their own opinion. My observation here refers to what the hymn is talking about.

The prophet always encourages us in a loving manner to do the works of Christ. The prophet is called by God to teach all mankind how to follow the teachings of the scriptures, the word of God (iron rod).

One of the great blessings of living in the latter days is that the prophet's words can be heard in each person's own language. With modern communication his messages from God literally fly around the world in seconds. Because prophets teach the words of Christ, each prophet's teachings agree with every other prophet who has ever lived.

Let me add a personal word of warning here. There are some who will claim that because the Lord has had to change the direction of the Church in the past, and will again in the future, that this causes a lack of harmony between the prophets. This is not true. Truth is truth in any age. If the Lord decides we are to live a certain law at one point in time, then later says to change to a different law, that does not affect the truth of the law. The principles behind the laws of God never change. They are all there to change us into the kind of people that can walk comfortably back into the presence of God.

Hosanna is a shout of praise to God. We should let our praises to God rise up to the Savior's throne. We do not normally think of Christ sitting on a throne. Perhaps (my opinion here) it is because he does not have time to do much sitting.

Be glad (rejoice) because the prophet has confirmed to us that Christ knows each one of us. Pay attention people of earth, the prophet is speaking to you! Come and listen and obey. The prophet is the only one who holds all the priesthood keys, the source of the Church's power.