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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 hymn book 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

## Lead Me into Life Eternal

1. Lead me into life eternal  
By the gospel's holy call.  
Let thy promise rest upon me;  
Grant me ready strength for all.

2. Father, all my heart I give thee;  
All my service shall be thine.  
Guide me as I search in weakness;  
Let thy loving light be mine.

3. Hear me as I pray in meekness;  
Let my strength be as thy day.  
Give me faith, the greater knowledge;  
Father, bless me as I pray.

“Life eternal” is the eternal life promised to those who obey God. The plea here is for God to lead us to this life by way of the “call” or covenants of the gospel of Christ. We desire that the promise made to the faithful Saints will rest upon us (or be ours). The last line asks that the Lord will give all of us “ready strength” or strength when we need it.

In verse two we promise our Father in Heaven that He has the full devotion of our heart, and all our service. We ask that even though we are weak He will still guide and lead us, and ask that we can possess His loving light or truth.

You can safely replace “meekness” with humility or willingness to obey. The Lord’s day is as a thousand years to us (2 Peter 3:8). This asks, in other words, that we will have sufficient strength from the Lord to do His will as long as it takes to accomplish His designs.

Faith brings many blessings into our lives, including greater understanding of the Lord and His ways. Referring to faith as “the greater knowledge” could refer to all the gifts of the Spirit, since they all come because of faith. The last line reminds us that we need to pray to God to ask for these blessings.

### MUSIC

Alexander Schreiner, 1901-1987

### TEXT

John A. Widtsoe, 1872-1952

### SCRIPTURES

Psalm 143:10, Doctrine and Covenants 42:61