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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

Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise

1. Let Zion in her beauty rise;
Her light begins to shine.
Ere long her King will rend the skies,
Majestic and divine,
The gospel spreading thru the land,
A people to prepare
To meet the Lord and Enoch's band
Triumphant in the air.

2. Ye heralds, sound the golden trump
To earth's remotest bound.
Go spread the news from pole to pole
In all the nations round:
That Jesus in the clouds above,
With hosts of angels too,
Will soon appear, his Saints to save,
His enemies subdue.

3. That glorious rest will then commence
Which prophets did foretell,
When Saints will reign with Christ on earth,
And in his presence dwell
A thousand years, oh, glorious day!
Dear Lord, prepare my heart
To stand with thee on Zion's mount
And nevermore to part.

MUSIC

Anon., Württemberg, Germany, ca. 1784

TEXT

Edward Partridge, 1793-1840. Included in the first LDS hymnbook, 1835.

SCRIPTURES

Doctrine and Covenants 82:14, Moses 7:62-65

The beauty of Zion (the pure in heart) is always defined by the people's personal righteousness. Zion is always referred to as a "she." The light of Zion is found in the good example, good works, and spiritual worthiness of her people. It won't be long before Christ will rend or burst through the skies in His majesty. The gospel is spreading throughout the land to prepare a people that will be worthy of meeting their Lord and the city of Enoch triumphantly in the air when the righteous are caught up to meet them at their return.

This is a reference to the angel Moroni in the Book of Revelation where he flies through the heavens sounding his gospel message as though with a trumpet. It also refers to all those who spread the message of the restored church. We are to spread the gospel from one pole to the other, to the most remote corners of the earth. The message is that Jesus, with his hosts of angels will soon appear to save the Saints and subdue His enemies.

The glorious rest mentioned is the millennium. It will be a time of rest from the current wickedness in the world. The prayer in the last sentence is that the Lord will prepare our hearts to stand with Him in holy places (Zion's mount) so that we never have to be separated from him again.