

tion has been as of great worth to him in the preaching of the Gospel as a knowledge of the scriptures. If greater attention were given to this subject of the training of young men and of young women also, how to sing the songs of Zion, it would be of great worth to the missions to which they go. I think that if Mission Presidents who are in this congregation were asked, they would bear testimony that they would rather have men sent into their missions who could sing well and who could teach others to sing, even though they could not preach at all. This has been my experience in the European Mission, particularly in Great Britain. The young men who could sing the songs of Zion in a proper and pleasing manner were always in demand. They carried an influence with them that made them welcome at the homes of the people. They attracted attention upon the streets and they found good congregations to preach to, and they were able to do a great deal more good through being able to sing well than they otherwise would have done. Wonderful things can be accomplished in this direction. Prof. Stephens, I believe, at times has had thousands of students under his direction, training the youth of this Stake of Zion particularly, to sing the songs of Zion. Other musical directors could follow this example. They should persuade young men to join their choirs, to form glee clubs, and to prepare themselves in this way to make a good impression on the people when they go out to preach the Gospel.

I do not feel, my brethren and sisters, that it would be proper for me to occupy more of your time; but I do rejoice in this Gospel. I thank God with all my heart that I have been born and reared in the midst of the Latter-day Saints. I testify before you that this work is of God; that there is power and salvation within it; that it has been revealed by the God of Heaven for the benefit and blessing of the people. I pray God that we may be stirred up as a people; that we may believe that there is a Prophet in the midst of Israel and that the God of Heaven has spoken to him and has commanded him to warn this people of the error of their ways and to point

out to them the way in which they should walk, that they may be blessed of the Lord. Let us receive the counsel given; let us believe the word of the Lord; let us sustain His servants, and let us awake to the responsibilities that rest upon us and follow in that straight path that will bring us everlasting life. May God bless us and help us to live aright all the days of our lives, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

Effectiveness of Musical Ability—The Efficacy of Prayer—The Righteous have no cause to Fear the Death of the Body—Spiritual Death and the Means of Escape from It—Young Men should Preserve Themselves in Purity.

Greatly to my surprise, I have been requested to occupy a few moments. I need not repeat the petition of my brother who has just sat down, that I may have the sympathy and the prayers of the Saints, for I certainly desire and need them. A certain incident was brought forcibly to my mind while Brother McMurrin was talking to us. Not long ago President Snow and his party attended a Stake conference, and I noticed that the choir was made up almost entirely of young ladies. There were perhaps two young men. One young man led the choir, and I do not remember clearly whether there was one young man in the choir or not besides the leader; but all the rest were young ladies. It was a beautiful choir, and they sang beautifully, but the absence of male voices was very conspicuous, notwithstanding. I believe during one of the services the leader of the choir was absent, and one of the young ladies had to step forward and lead it. I inquired why it was that the young men were not more numerous in that company of singers, and was told that the young men considered it was too effeminate, too womanly, for them to engage in the occupation of singing. I presume they might have felt more at home shaking the quilts, sweeping the floors, and helping to wash the dishes. I can remember when I was a little boy, hearing my father sing. I do not know how much of a singer he was, for at that time I was not capable of judging as to the quality of his singing, but the hymns he

sang became familiar to me, even in the days of my childhood. I believe that I can sing them still, although I am not much of a singer. When young men go out into the world to preach the Gospel, they will find it very beneficial for them to know how to sing the songs of Zion. I repeat the admonition and request made by Brother McMurrin, who has recently returned from a lengthy mission to Europe, that the young men who are eligible to preach the Gospel, and who are liable to be called into the missionary field, begin at once to improve their talent to sing, and do not think it is beneath their dignity to join the choirs of the wards in which they live and learn how to sing. When we listen to this choir, under the leadership of Brother Stephens, we listen to music, and music is truth. Good music is gracious praise of God. It is delightful to the ear, and it is one of our most acceptable methods of worshipping God. And those who sing in this choir and in all the choirs of the Saints, should sing with the spirit and with the understanding. They should not sing merely because it is a profession, or because they have a good voice; but they should sing also because they have the spirit of it and can enter into the spirit of prayer and praise to God who gave them their sweet voices. My soul is always lifted up and my spirit cheered and comforted when I hear good music. I rejoice in it very much indeed. Now, I would like to encourage the young men of Israel to learn to sing, and especially those young men of whom I have been speaking. I would not like to tell you just where they live, because it might be considered a little personal, but it was down south; it was not very far down south either. It was somewhere near Sanpete valley. I want the young men of Sanpete Valley to learn how to sing, so that when we go down to hold conference there again we can have the young men joining with the young women in the choir, and not leave the young women to do all the singing. This might apply also to all the other counties; especially should it apply to those counties or Stakes of Zion where the young men think it is beneath their dignity and their manhood to learn

how to sing. I hope they will rise above such a foolish notion as this.

Not only should we learn to sing, but we should learn to say our prayers. It is about as awkward for a young man to go out to preach the Gospel to those who sit in darkness, who does not know how to pray, as it is for one who does not know how to sing. And there are some who have gone out into the world, as we have heard today, who have not even known how to pray. The last time I was absent from home in the missionary field, I heard of a young man, whose grandfather was an Apostle and one of the most brilliant and faithful Apostles of the Church, and whose father has been a Bishop in the Church, and is today a very prominent man. This young man went out to preach the Gospel to the heathens, and when he got into the field of labor he confessed he had never said a prayer in his life; he had never heard his mother pray; he had not been sufficiently with his father to hear him pray, and he knew nothing about praying and he had to begin as a little child, in the missionary field, to learn how to pray. It is a great pity that a young man should be sent out handicapped in this way; that he should be put to such a disadvantage by the indifference of his parents and the neglect of the opportunities that he had had in Zion. I pray you, my young brethren who are present in this vast congregation, and who are liable to be called to preach the Gospel to the world, when you are called to go out, I pray that you will know how to approach God in prayer. It is not such a difficult thing to learn how to pray. It is not the words we use particularly that constitute prayer. Prayer does not consist of words, altogether. True, faithful, earnest prayer consists more in the feeling that rises from the heart and from the inward desire of our spirits to supplicate the Lord in humility and in faith, that we may receive His blessings. It matters not how simple the words may be, if our desires are genuine and we come before the Lord with a broken heart and a contrite spirit to ask Him for that which we need. I would like to know if there is a young man in this congre-

gation, or anywhere else, who does not need something of the Lord. Where is there a soul upon the earth that does not need something that the Almighty can give. In the first place, all that we have comes from him. It is by His providence that we exist on the earth. It is by His kind mercy that we see and hear, that we have the power of speech, and that we possess intelligence, for as the prophet of old said, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Therefore the very power of understanding that we possess is the gift of God. In and of ourselves we are but a lifeless lump of clay. Life, intelligence, wisdom, judgment, power to reason, all are the gifts of God to the children of men. He gives us our physical strength as well as our mental powers. Every young man should feel from the depth of his heart that he is indebted to Almighty God for his being and for every attribute that he possesses which is in likeness of the attributes of God. We should seek to magnify the attributes that we possess. We should honor God with our intelligence, with our strength, with our understanding, with our wisdom, and with all the power that we possess. We should seek to do good in the world. This is our duty; and if a young man can only feel as all men should feel, he will find that it is an easy matter for him to bow down before the Lord in humble prayer and seek unto him for the aid, comfort, and inspiration of His Holy Spirit, that he may not be left entirely to himself, nor to the wisdom and ways of the world. But as a rule, where young men have good parents to provide for them, where they have good homes and their food and raiment are sure, they feel that they are not dependent upon anybody, unless perchance they should be afflicted in some way, and then begin to realize their weakness and dependence. But I want to say to you, my young friends, that in the hour of your independence, at the moment when you feel the strongest, you should bear in mind that you are but human, the breath of life is in your nostrils, and you are destined to pass from this world through the portals of death.

Every man that is born into the world will die. It matters not who he is, nor where he is, whether his birth be among the rich and the noble, or among the lowly and poor in the world, his days are numbered with the Lord, and in due time he will reach the end. We should think of this. Not that we should go about with heavy hearts or with downcast countenances; not at all. I rejoice that I am born to live, to die, and to live again. I thank God for this intelligence. It gives me joy and peace that the world cannot give, neither can the world take it away. God has revealed this to me, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I know it to be true. Therefore I have nothing to be sad over, nothing to make me sorrowful. All that I have to do with in the world is calculated to buoy me up, to give me joy and peace, hope and consolation in this present life, and a glorious hope of salvation and exaltation in the presence of my God in the world to come. I have no reason to mourn, not even at death. It is true I am weak enough to weep at the death of my friends and kindred. I may shed tears when I see the grief of others. I have sympathy in my soul for the children of men. I can weep with them when they weep; I can rejoice with them when they rejoice; but I have no cause to mourn, nor to be sad because death comes into the world. I am speaking now of the temporal death, the death of the body. All fear of this death has been removed from the Latter-day Saints. They have no dread of the temporal death, because they know that as death came upon them by the transgression of Adam, so by the righteousness of Jesus Christ shall life come unto them, and though they die they shall live again. Possessing this knowledge, they have joy even in death, for they know that they shall rise again and shall meet again beyond the grave. They know that the spirit dies not at all; that it passes through no change, except the change from imprisonment in this mortal clay to freedom and to the sphere in which it acted before it came to this earth. We are begotten in the similitude of Christ himself. We dwelt with the Father and with the Son in



the beginning, as the sons and daughters of God, and at the time appointed we came to this earth to take upon ourselves tabernacles, that we might become conformed to the likeness and image of Jesus Christ and become like him; that we might have a tabernacle as He has a tabernacle; that we might pass through death as He has passed through death; that we might rise again from the dead as He has risen from the dead. As He was the first fruits of the resurrection of the dead, so shall we be the second fruits of the resurrection from the dead; for as He came forth, so shall we come forth. What is there therefore to be sad about? What is there to make us heavy of heart or sorrowful in this matter? Nothing at all. Sorrowful, indeed, to think that we shall live forever! Is there any cause for sorrow to know that we shall rise from the dead, and possess the same tabernacle that we have here in mortality? Is there cause for sorrow in this great, glorious Gospel truth that has been revealed to us in this dispensation? Certainly there can be no sorrow connected with a thought like this. There must be only joy connected with this knowledge—the joy that springs from the ten thousand feelings and affections of the human soul; the joy that we feel in association with brethren, with wives and children, with fathers and mothers, with brothers and sisters. All these joyous thoughts spring up in our souls at the thought of death and the resurrection. Wherein should we be sad or sorrowful? On the contrary, it is cause for joy unspeakable, and for pure happiness. I cannot express the joy I feel at the thought of meeting my father, and my precious mother, who gave me birth in the midst of persecution and poverty, who bore me in her arms and was patient, forbearing, tender and true during all my helpless moments in the world. The thought of meeting her, who can express the joy? The thought of meeting my children who have preceded me beyond the veil, and of meeting my kindred and my friends, what happiness it affords! For I know that I shall meet them there. God has shown me that this is true. He has made it clear to me, in answer

to my prayer and devotion as He has made it clear to the understanding of all men who have sought diligently to know of Him. We are not dependent for this upon the written word, nor upon the knowledge possessed by the ancient Prophets and Apostles. We depend only upon God as He reveals Himself today and administers unto men by the power of His Holy Spirit. And all men in the world, not only the Latter-day Saints, but those who have never embraced the Gospel, have the same privilege that we have, if they will take the course which God has marked out. It is their privilege to come to the knowledge of this truth and to understand these things for themselves. We have derived this knowledge from the Lord, not from man. Man can not give this knowledge. I may tell you what I know, but that is not knowledge to you. If I have learned something through prayer, supplication, and perseverance in seeking to know the truth, and I tell it to you, it will not be knowledge unto you. I can tell you how you can obtain it, but I cannot give it to you. If we receive this knowledge, it must come from the Lord. He can touch your understandings and your spirits, so that you shall comprehend perfectly and not be mistaken. But I cannot do that. You can obtain this knowledge through repentance, humility, and seeking the Lord with full purpose of heart until you find Him. He is not afar off. It is not difficult to approach Him, if we will only do it with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, as did Nephi of old. This was the way in which Joseph Smith, in his boyhood, approached Him. He went into the woods, knelt down, and in humility he sought earnestly to know which church was acceptable to God. He received an answer to his prayer, which he offered from the depths of his heart, and he received it in a way that he did not expect.

My brethren and sisters, do not learn to pray with your lips only. Do not learn a prayer by heart, and say it every morning and evening. That is something I dislike very much. It is true that a great many people fall into the rut of saying over a ceremonious

prayer. They begin at a certain point, and they touch at all the points along the road until they get to the winding up scene; and when they have done, I do not know whether the prayer has ascended beyond the ceiling of the room or not. I rejoice in the truth. I thank God for the testimony that I have received of the Gospel. I thank God that I live, and that I shall die and that I shall live again in spite of me. I cannot prevent that, I am bound to go through that ordeal.

But I want to speak a word or two in relation to another death, which is a more terrible death than that of the body. When Adam, our first parent, partook of the forbidden fruit, transgressed the law of God, and became subject unto Satan, he was banished from the presence of God and was thrust out into outer spiritual darkness. This was the first death. Yet living, he was dead—dead to God, dead to light and truth, dead spiritually; cast out from the presence of God; communication between the Father and the son cut off. He was as absolutely thrust out from the presence of God as was Satan and the hosts that followed him. That was spiritual death. But the Lord said that He would not suffer Adam nor his posterity to come to the temporal death until they should have the means by which they might be redeemed from the first death, which is spiritual. Therefore angels were sent unto Adam, who taught him the Gospel and revealed to him the principle by which he could be redeemed from the first death, and be brought back from banishment and outer darkness into the marvelous light of the Gospel. He was taught faith, repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, in the name of Jesus Christ, who should come in the meridian of time and take away the sin of the world, and was thus given a chance to be redeemed from the spiritual death before he should die the temporal death. Now, all the world today, I am sorry to say, with the exception of a handful of people who have obeyed the new and everlasting covenant, are suffering this spiritual death. They are cast out from the presence of God. They are without God, without Gospel truth,

and without the power of redemption; for they know not God nor His Gospel. In order that they may be redeemed and saved from the spiritual death which has spread over the world like a pall, they must repent of their sins, and be baptized by one having authority, for the remission of their sins, that they may be born of God. That is why we want these young men to go out into the world to preach the Gospel. While they themselves understand but little perhaps, the germ of life is in them. They have been born again, they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and they have the authority of the holy Priesthood, by which they can administer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Though they may know but little in the beginning, they can learn, and as they learn they can preach, and as they have opportunity they can baptize for the remission of sins. Therefore, we want them to do their duty at home. We want them above all things to be pure in heart. We want our boys to be without sin or blemish. We do not want boys that have been in saloons, that have been in houses of ill-fame, that have been gamblers, that have been drunkards, that have been infamous in their lives—we do not want such to go into the ministry of this holy Gospel to represent the Son of the Living God and the power of redemption to the world. We want young men that have been born or adopted in the covenant, that have been reared in purity, that have kept themselves unspotted from the world, and can go into the nations of the earth and say to men, "Follow me, as I follow Christ." Then we would like to have them know how to sing, and to pray. We expect them to be honest, virtuous, and faithful unto death to their covenants, to their brethren, to their wives, to their fathers and mothers, to their brothers and sisters, to themselves and to God. Where you get men like this to preach the Gospel to the world, whether they know much to begin with or not, the Lord will put His Spirit into their hearts, and He will crown them with intelligence and power to save the souls of men. For the germ of life is in them. It has not been

vitiated or corrupted; it has not been driven away from them.

God bless all Israel, and preserve the life of our beloved President. May He fill him with wisdom, with understanding, and with a knowledge of the necessities of the whole people and of the cause of truth in the world, that he may be instrumental in the hands of Almighty God of meeting every exigency of the Church and performing every duty that may be required for the salvation of Israel and for the redemption and sanctification of this land, that it may be a land of Zion unto us. May the blessing of life, peace, health and intelligence rest down upon President Cannon also, and upon the Apostles, one and all of them, that they and the Presidency may be united; that we may see eye to eye, and labor as one man for the salvation of souls, and especially for the preservation and the integrity of the household of faith. May God bless these men, and the Presidents of Stakes and their counselors, the High Councils, the Bishops and their counselors, and the Presidents of the High Priests. Let me say here that we do not want every "old fogey," or any man because he is an "old fogey," to be joined to the High Priests quorum. We want men to be connected with the High Priests that have sense and intelligence enough to govern, if they are called upon to do so. The office of High Priest is the office of Presidency in the Church, and men who are High Priests should be men possessing more wisdom, more intelligence, and more knowledge as to how to govern and how to rule in righteousness in the Church than any other class of people in it. We want good men to be High Priests, as well as good men to be Seventies. Then we want good men to be Elders. May God bless the High Priests in their organizations in Zion, and the Seventies, and the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies. May He bless the Elders, and the lesser Priesthood throughout the Church. May God bless the widows, and provide for them, through the means that He Himself has appointed in the Church. May the people of God remember their tithes and offerings, and obey the laws of God, that there may be meat in the storehouse of the Lord,

to feed the poor, to clothe the naked, to educate the orphan, and to take the helpless and lift them up and put them in a position where they can contend in the world successfully for their living, equally with those who have guardians and protectors to take care of them. May God bless Israel, and may peace abide upon all the household of faith, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

##### In Relation to Prayer.

I would like to add a few words in relation to prayer. The testimony that President Smith has borne is very true and comes home to me with great force. It is a subject upon which I have had a good many thoughts. I have talked to our people in various conferences concerning it, and I will say here that we should give our wives and children the opportunity to pray in the family circle. There are men who think that unless they pray the Lord does not hear the prayer, and they are in the habit of doing all the praying in their families. I have known men who have got into such a habit, as President Smith has said, that prayer with them is only a form. There is a story told of some boys who were outside a house while the man of the house was praying. One of his sons was among the number, but he was not where he could hear as well as some of his companions; so he asked one of the boys where his father was at, and I believe they told him he was at Jerusalem and the gathering of the Jews. "Oh!" said he, "we can go off for some time yet." He knew the prayer so well that he could tell how long it would take to finish it. Now, it is a delightful thing to hear little children pray. They pray so innocently and simply; and I would rather hear a little child pray than I would some of the ceremonious and formal prayers. Some men seem to think that they have got to tell the Lord all about it or He will not know; so they enter into every detail. Well, if the Spirit prompts that, it is all right; but it is good for us to pray concisely. We should teach our children to pray simply and naturally;