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The Power of God to Heal
The Shared Gifts of Joseph and Hyrum

Few people are gifted with the remarkable abilities to heal and to lead. *Healing* and *leadership* appear to be dissimilar, unrelated topics. Healing and healers are “mystical”; scholars may see some kind of truth at work but don’t know what to make of it in scientific terms. And social scientists certainly do not connect healing with the business of leadership; among hundreds of books on leadership principles, the topic of healing rarely surfaces. Even in medicine, healing usually refers to physical regeneration, as from a mending wound, rather than to the practice of helping the patient to become whole. And in religious studies, healing is about the personal and the divine, and leadership is about the social and the practical.

Still, it is enlightening to consider the relationship between the spiritual act of healing and the more down-to-earth act of leadership. An instructive example of these connections

comes from the lives of two uneducated nineteenth-century brothers—Joseph and Hyrum Smith—who simply followed the callings of their hearts, of their brotherhood, and of their God. The results changed the world.

Why should we consider healing when exploring the leadership capabilities of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum? The answer is that they understood the power of healing in leadership, and they led the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ with a unique sensitivity to the influence of this divine gift in all aspects of people's lives.

Followers and detractors alike recognize Joseph Smith as a unique, powerful, and effective leader. Students of his life are also well aware of the significant leadership role his brother Hyrum played in the new Church. The brothers were inseparable, their stories interwoven. Their leadership styles were opposite but complementary: Joseph was the imaginative, charismatic, impetuous younger brother while Hyrum was more reflective. Their mutual respect for their differences—along with unshakable faith and love for each other—brought a kind of wholeness to their leadership. Their belief in and practice of individual and spiritual healing helped make them the gifted leaders they were.

I approach this study with humility and faith, not from the expert viewpoint of a scholar of history but as a student of the power of healing. This chapter includes a brief examination of the topics of healing and leading, a glimpse into the divine source of Joseph and Hyrum's healing gifts, and thoughts on the connections between healing and leadership that might be relevant today.

What is healing? To heal is to become whole, to mend, to regain health, to get well, as well as to alleviate suffering and to bring integrity to body and spirit. Healing is personal and private, whether it refers to individual recovery from affliction or to the action of helping another to become whole. Healing

happens in the quiet corner of the soul when pain is softened, illness wanes, or the spirit is strengthened. Healing is both physical and spiritual; to have the faith to heal and to be healed is a gift of the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 12:9; Moroni 10:11; D&C 46:19–20).

Our need for healing reflects our desire to be whole, to become one with our divine nature. In summary, to heal is to restore; indeed, in one sense the Restoration of the gospel is itself a healing of an ailing and broken world in need of the truth about God and his plan for humanity. A healer inspires health and soundness, comfort, and restoration. Joseph and Hyrum understood and practiced principles of healing not only in their family and personal lives and doctrine but in their leadership of the Church.

What is leadership? Leadership is the ability to guide, to direct, to manage, to influence, to counsel, to teach, to command, to take initiative. Leadership is a social effort to move others to better performance, greater effectiveness, or achievement of a goal. A leader inspires results, builds consensus, or guides people forward. Leaders must understand themselves and the people they serve, providing vision and showing empathy for their followers. They help people connect meaningfully around a common cause. Great leaders are also good servants. And leaders heal: they heal organizations that are broken or have lost their sense of purpose; they heal wounds of the past as well as fears of the future. In the case of Joseph and Hyrum, who followed their Master Healer and Leader, they used their divine authority to heal people of ailments of body, mind, and spirit. In their sensitivity to human needs and their capacity to integrate healing with leadership, they established a vibrant new organization, and they lifted their followers to build the kingdom of God.

The Divine Source of Healing and Leadership

Joseph and Hyrum intimately understood the primary source of their powers to heal and to lead: the Savior himself. Much of the Lord’s mission on the earth was devoted to healing, and the Prophet and his brother followed that example:

As Jesus healed, the scriptures say, “All the people were amazed” (Matthew 12:23). They brought their sick, their “blind, and dumb” (Matthew 12:22), those that were “possessed with a devil” (Matthew 12:22; also Mark 1:32), and their dead. They sought Him every day and into the evening. So great was His reputation and His healing power that they sought to “only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole” (Matthew 14:36). “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching . . . and preaching the gospel . . . , and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matthew 9:35). . . . He healed “every one as they were brought forth unto him” (3 Nephi 17:9).¹

Among the first gifts the Savior gave his Apostles in the ancient Church was the power to heal (see Matthew 10:1, Mark 3:14–15), and he admonished them to share this gift “freely” (Matthew 10:8).

The Prophet Joseph saw the Savior’s healing power as basic to leading his Church. In his leadership role, Joseph persistently visited and administered to the sick. He used his priesthood authority and faith to command the sick to become well, ordained his brother Hyrum to do the same, and in one instance even sent his handkerchief as a symbol of his power to heal.² Additionally, he always ministered in love to his family and friends in their suffering.

The Heritage of Healing in the Smith Family

Belief in prayer and the practice of healing blessings were woven into the fabric of the Smith family. Long before

the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack shared a family heritage of prayer and blessings in times of trial and sickness. Especially inspiring was the fervent faith of Mother Lucy. Of her sisters Lovisa and Lovina, Lucy remembered, “They were one in faith, in love, in action, and in hope of eternal life. . . . They united their voices in prayer and songs of praise to God.” With images of divine healing, she described Lovisa’s miraculous recovery from illness as early as 1791 and the tender passing of her sister Lovina in 1794.³

The story of Joseph’s bout with typhoid fever is well known, but lesser known is the account of his sister Sophronia, who was also critically afflicted with the disease. Late one night Sophronia stopped breathing. Imagine how heartbroken, fatigued, and distraught Lucy must have felt when her ten-year-old daughter was declared dead. Yet Lucy stood tall, strengthened by her maternal will and faith that her child could be healed. She “grabbed her and paced the floor, praying fervently” in spite of chiding from others that the child was dead. But Sophronia lived, in welcome answer to her mother’s prayers.⁴

Father Joseph Smith gave healing blessings to family members throughout his life. His wife, Lucy, once suffered an inflammation of the eyes that left her unable to see. She recalled that “everything that was supposed to help . . . was faithfully tried . . . in vain. I called upon my husband, sons, and other elders to administer to me by prayer and the laying on of hands. I desired that I might receive my sight. . . . They did pray for this with fervent spirit, and when they took their hands off of my head, I opened my eyes and read two lines in the Book of Mormon.”⁵

Mother Lucy told another story of suffering as her family was driven from Ohio to Missouri. On that nearly one-thousand-mile journey, exposed to storms and cold, she became very ill, unable to sit up or walk.

My husband did not much expect me to live to the end of the journey. . . . I had an impression that if I could . . . find a place where I could be secluded and uninterrupted in calling upon the Lord, I might be healed. Accordingly, I seized upon a time when they were engaged, and by the aid of staffs I reached a fence, and then followed the fence some distance till I came to a dense hazel thicket. Here I threw myself on the ground. . . . When I was a little rested, I commenced calling upon the Lord to beseech his mercy, praying for my health and the life of my daughter Catharine [who had recently given birth in the midst of a cold, muddy storm]. I urged every claim which the scriptures give us and was as humble as I knew how to be, and I continued praying near three hours. At last I was entirely relieved from pain, my cough left me, and I was well. Moreover, I received an assurance that I should hear from my sick daughter. . . . I arose and went to the house in as good health as I ever enjoyed.⁶

The spiritual influence of Joseph and Hyrum's mother is evident in another incident of healing involving them. Early in the summer of 1834, during Zion's Camp, Joseph and Hyrum fell violently ill with cholera. Fourteen members of the camp had already died of the disease: "Soon after arriving at the point of destination, the cholera broke out among us, and the brethren were so violently attacked that it seemed impossible to render them any assistance. They immediately sent for us to lay hands on them, but . . . when we laid our hands upon them . . . , the disease instantly fastened itself upon us. And in a few minutes we were in awful distress."

The brothers' prayers and administering to each other did not help. Hyrum cried out, "Joseph what shall we do? Must we be cut off from the face of the earth by this horrid curse?" Joseph replied, "Let us get down upon our knees and pray to God to remove the cramp and other distress and restore us to health, that we may return to our families."

They continued to pray, but the sickness grew worse. Their mother related, "[Joseph] cried heartily unto God, but the

heavens seemed sealed against us and every power that could render us any assistance shut within its gates. The universe was still.”⁷ They continued to pray. Finally, Hyrum exclaimed, “I have had an open vision, in which I saw mother on her knees under an apple tree praying for us, and she is even now asking God, in tears, to spare our lives. . . . The Spirit testifies to me that her prayers and ours shall be heard.” And they were healed. Joseph declared on his return, “Mother, . . . how often have your prayers been a means of assisting us when the shadows of death encompassed us!”⁸

In September 1837, Hyrum underwent a trial of loyalty to his brother and to the Church when he left his beloved wife, Jerusha, in Kirtland; she was soon to deliver their fifth child. He joined Joseph in Far West, Missouri, to help with the Church settlement there. A few days after his arrival, he received word that Jerusha had died after childbirth. Hyrum became distraught with grief. When he returned in December, his heartache and despondency continued unabated. His brother Joseph helped bring him healing. The Prophet revealed to him that it was the Lord’s will he should wed Mary Fielding, which he did just three weeks after his return home. Hyrum later explained, “It was not because I had less love or regard for Jerusha that I married so soon, but it was for the sake of my children.”⁹

Joseph and Hyrum: Shared Leadership and Healing

The shared devotion, deep mutual support in times of need, and distinctive personal attributes of Joseph and Hyrum provided a sense of wholeness in their leadership of the Church. Scripture describes their eternal kinship: “In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated!” (D&C 135:3). They were different in complementary ways. Rachel Ivins Grant described the brothers this way: “[Joseph] was a fine noble looking man. . . . When he was preaching you could

feel the influence and power. . . . After he had been in hiding and had come out he was always so jolly and happy. He was different in that respect from Brother Hyrum, who was more sedate, more serious.”¹⁰ As the devoted brother, believer, and “always the mediator,”¹¹ Hyrum followed Joseph with faith, but in his own way. Jane Snyder Richards, wife of Elder Franklin D. Richards, reflected, “Of Hiram [*sic*] Smith I should have said that he was . . . one with his Younger Brother Joseph in counsel and dearly beloved by everybody in the church.”¹² Richard L. Bushman observed that “Hyrum was reason and sympathy where Joseph was will and energy.”¹³

Hyrum’s healing influence on Joseph began early. During the winter of 1812–13, several members of the Smith family were stricken ill during a typhoid epidemic that claimed the lives of six thousand people in the region.¹⁴ Joseph was left with life-threatening osteomyelitis in his leg. Their mother remembered:

Hyrum, who was rather remarkable for his tenderness and sympathy, now desired that he might take my place [in caring for Joseph]; as he was a good, trusty boy we let him do so; and, in order to make the task as easy for him as possible, we laid Joseph upon a low bed, and Hyrum sat beside him, almost day and night, for some considerable length of time, holding the affected part of his leg in his hands, and pressing it between them so that his afflicted brother might be enabled to endure the pain, which was so excruciating that he was scarcely able to bear it.¹⁵

Thirty years later, Hyrum seriously injured his own leg in a fall, and this time Joseph administered to Hyrum. Hyrum’s niece, Mary Jane Thompson, recorded that Joseph “buried his face in his handkerchief and wept bitterly. His heart was touched with tender sympathy for his prostrate brother.”¹⁶

Joseph wrote of Hyrum, “I could pray in my heart that all my brethren were like unto my beloved brother Hyrum, who

possesses the mildness of a lamb, and the integrity of a Job, and in short, the meekness and humility of Christ; and I love him with that love that is stronger than death.”¹⁷ At another time, he said: “There was Brother Hyrum who next took me by the hand, a natural brother; thought I to myself, brother Hyrum, what a faithful heart you have. . . . Oh, may the eternal Jehovah crown eternal blessings upon your head, as a reward for the care you have had for my soul. O how many are the sorrows have we shared together. . . . Hyrum, thy name shall be written in the Book of the Law of the Lord, for those who come after thee to look upon, that they may pattern after thy works.”¹⁸

Joseph’s words in a blessing given in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1833 further illustrate his regard for his brother Hyrum in poetic healing images:

Blessed of the Lord is my brother Hyrum for the integrity of his heart; he shall be girt about with strength, truth and faithfulness shall be the strength of his loins. . . . His name shall be called a blessing among men. . . . He shall be as a cooling spring that breaketh forth at the foot of the mountain, overshadowed with choice trees bowed down with ripe fruit, that yieldeth both nourishment to the appetite and quengeth the thirst, thereby yielding refreshment to the weary traveler: and the goings of his feet shall ever be by streams of living water. He shall not fail nor want for knowledge, for the Lord his God shall put forth his hand and lift him up and shall call upon him with his voice in the way wherein he is travelling, that he may be established forever. . . . Yea, this shall be the desire of his soul, to comfort the needy and bind up the broken in heart. His children shall be many and his posterity numerous, and they shall rise up and call him blessed.¹⁹

Of Joseph, Hyrum said, “I have not been absent from [Joseph] at any one time not even for the space of six months, since his birth . . . and have been intimately acquainted with all his sayings, doings, business transactions and movements.”²⁰ At

the time of Joseph's critical decision to submit to imprisonment at Carthage, knowing he risked his very life, Hyrum said simply, "Joseph, I will not leave you."²¹

Joseph and Hyrum's fierce fraternal loyalty and unwavering personal commitment to each other were matched only by their fervent, independent testimonies of the Restoration, "the truth of the Book of Mormon, the renewal of the everlasting covenant, and the establishment of the kingdom of heaven, in these last days."²²

Healing among the Saints

Early members of the Church especially needed the strongly unified leadership of Joseph and Hyrum, including their concern for healing. Times were difficult, with little effective treatment for illness in the face of frequent epidemics of typhoid fever, tuberculosis, and other infections. Harsh living conditions, poverty, flight from persecution, and fragmenting of families brought increased exposure to physical illness, as well as emotional and spiritual despair.

But the Lord's healing power also signaled the dawn of the Restoration. The Prophet Joseph obviously saw the authority to heal as vital to his leadership mission. He set specific procedures for healing based on the teachings of the New Testament: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven" (James 5:14–15). The Prophet explained, "What is the sign of the healing of the sick? The laying on of hands is the sign or way marked out by James, and the custom of the ancient Saints as ordered by the Lord, and we cannot obtain the blessing by pursuing any other course except the way marked out by the Lord."²³ He further instructed:

In the matter of administering to the sick, according to the order and practice established in the Church, care should be taken to avoid unwarranted repetitions. . . . Rather let the time be given to prayer and thanksgiving for the manifestation of divine power already granted and realized. No limit should be or can be set to the offering of prayer and the rendering of praise to the Giver of good, . . . and no special authority of the priesthood or standing in the Church is essential to the offering of prayer; but the actual administration by anointing with oil and by the imposition of hands by those who hold the proper office in the priesthood is an authoritative ordinance, too sacred in its nature to be performed lightly.²⁴

At one time in Nauvoo, Joseph rebuked elders “who would continue to lay hands on the sick . . . without the power to heal them.” He warned, “It is time that such things ended. Let the Elders either obtain the power of God to heal the sick or let them cease to minister the forms without the power.”²⁵ He knew that faith, humility, and human sensitivity must be added to formal authority. Women also had a role in the Church’s healing ministry; soon after the Relief Society was organized in 1842, Joseph set apart “noble and lofty women . . . to go about among the sick and minister to their wants.”²⁶

Impressed with scriptural examples of immersion in the healing waters of the river Jordan and the pool at Bethesda, the Prophet Joseph also suggested that the ordinance of baptism could have a healing effect: “Baptisms for the dead, and for the healing of the body must be in the font, those coming into the Church, and those re-baptized may be baptized in the river.”²⁷ Though an inspiring metaphor of cleansing and healing, the practice of baptism for healing in the temples was discontinued by the beginning of the twentieth century.

Joseph added personal faith and tenderness to his official directions on the proper way to bless the sick. His concern for the sick is shown in a diary entry of October 1835: “Sunday,

[I] visited my father again who was very sick. . . . I waited on him all this day with my heart raised to God in the name of Jesus Christ that he would restore him to health again, that I might be blessed with his company again. . . . Brother David Whitmer came in and we called on the Lord in mighty prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, and laid our hands on him, and rebuked the disease and God heard and answered our prayers to the great joy and satisfaction of our souls.” Joseph and his father then joined in “songs of praise to the most High.”²⁸

To Joseph and Hyrum, the power to heal and the faith to be healed were deeply ingrained into Church theology, entwined in their personal faith, and woven into the fabric of their leadership. On the topic of healing, Hyrum shared this testimony:

[God] knows where disease is seated and what is the cause of it. He is also acquainted with the springs of health, the balm of Gilead—of life. He knows what course to pursue to restore man to his pristine excellency and primitive vigor and health. He has appointed the Word of Wisdom as one of the engines to bring about this thing, . . . to restore his body to health and vigor. . . . He will plant the tree of life whose leaves shall be for the healing of the nations. . . . We shall be healthy, strong and vigorous. We shall be enabled to resist disease. . . . We shall prepare ourselves for the purposes of Jehovah, for the kingdom of God, for the appearance of Jesus in His glory; out of Zion shall come the perfection of beauty. God will shine; Zion will be exalted and become the praise of the whole earth.²⁹

Histories of early Church members are filled with faith-building accounts of suffering and divine healing. Levi Hancock recorded, “My parents were so sick at times that we children knew not what to do. At times we children were so hungry and sick that it seemed we were destined to starve to death. . . . When the people began to move into Nauvoo and were dying off so fast, father would work day and night making

caskets, when he was not sick.”³⁰ This account demonstrates the intense need for healing among the Saints, a need to which Joseph and Hyrum responded with compassion.

The miraculous accounts multiplied. Joseph blessed Elsa Johnson, who was healed of rheumatism of the shoulder.³¹ He took young Margarette McIntire Burgess on his lap, and she was healed of her sickness.³²

In 1836 the father of young Lorenzo Dow Young desperately sought out the Prophet when physicians pronounced the boy near death with “the quick consumption.” He cried, “My son Lorenzo is dying; can there not be something done for him?” Regretfully committed to go somewhere else at that moment, Joseph said, “Go and get my brother Hyrum.” Hyrum went as “the Spirit rested mightily upon him, . . . [and he was] full of blessing and prophecy.” Lorenzo recovered.³³

Joseph led the Saints to Nauvoo in the spring of 1839. That summer, an epidemic of fever, chills, and sickness, which the Saints called “the ague” (evidently a malarial disease), overtook much of the population, including Joseph and many of the Church leaders. A letter from Don Carlos Smith described the situation:

When I arrived here, there had been nothing done in the office, as Brother Robinson has been sick every day since I left and is sick yet. I have done but little labor since I returned, for I have been striving against the destroyer and attending upon the sick continually. There are not well ones enough to take care of the sick. . . . McLeary and Sophronia are both sick. Brother Robinson’s wife has been nigh unto death. Father is better. Last Tuesday I administered to sixteen souls and have since administered to a great many in company with George A. Smith, and some notable miracles were wrought with our hands. I never had so great power over disease as I have had this week.³⁴

John Lyman Smith described his first family home in Nauvoo as a “hovel” made of “crooked poles,” where sickness,

chills, and fever lingered. He remembered: “The Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum visited us and administered to us all, father being delirious from the effects of the fever. Their words comforted us greatly, as they said in the name of the Lord you all shall be well again. Upon leaving the hovel Joseph placed his slippers upon my mother’s feet and sprang upon his horse . . . and rode home barefoot. The next day Joseph removed father to his own house and nursed him until he recovered.”³⁵

Oliver B. Huntington recorded: “Brother Joseph seeing that we still grew worse, told William that we would all die if we stayed there, and that he must . . . bring us down to his own house. So he took us all into his own family. . . . The prophet was our . . . doctor, and he visited us nearly every day, in fact he was doctor for all the brethren and every day he went the circuit, to all, which took him pretty much all the time through the sickly season. He would lay on hands and apply simple proscriptions.”³⁶

In Nauvoo, July 22, 1839, was remembered as the “day of God’s power”³⁷ as Joseph came up from his own sickbed and went about using the power of the priesthood to heal himself, members of his own family, and many people in the community. He ministered to the sick and commanded them to be made whole. Among the healed were Elijah Fordham, who arose from near death; Joseph Noble, who responded to the command to rise from his bed;³⁸ and young Sarah Ann Gregory, who was taken into the Prophet’s home under Emma’s care and Joseph’s blessing.³⁹

An eyewitness of the miracles of that day, President Wilford Woodruff recorded:

[Joseph] arose from his bed and commenced to administer to the sick in his own house and door-yard, and he commanded them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to arise and be made whole; and the sick were healed upon every side of him.

Many lay sick along the bank of the river; Joseph walked along up to the lower stone house, occupied by Sidney Rigdon, and he healed all the sick that lay in his path. . . . He called upon Elder Kimball and some others to accompany him across the river to visit the sick at Montrose. . . . The first house he visited was that occupied by Elder Brigham Young . . . who lay sick. Joseph healed him, then he arose and accompanied the Prophet on his visit to others who were in the same condition. . . .

The next place they visited was the home of Elijah Fordham, who was supposed to be about breathing his last. . . . The Prophet of God walked up to the dying man and took hold of his right hand and spoke to him; but Brother Fordham was unable to speak, his eyes were set in his head like glass, and he seemed entirely unconscious of all around him. . . . Joseph asked him if he had faith to be healed. He answered, "I fear it is too late; if you had come sooner I think I would have been healed." The Prophet said, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" He answered in a feeble voice, "I do." Joseph then stood erect, still holding his hand in silence several moments; Then he spoke in a very loud voice, saying, "Brother Fordham, I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to arise from this bed and be made whole." . . . It seemed as though the house shook to its very foundations. Brother Fordham arose from his bed, and was immediately made whole. His feet were bound in poultices which he kicked off; then putting on his clothes he ate a bowl of bread and milk and followed the Prophet into the street.⁴⁰

Of that day, President Brigham Young remembered:

Joseph arose from his bed of sickness, and the power of God rested upon him. He commenced in his own house and door-yard, commanding the sick, in the name of Jesus Christ, to arise and be made whole, and they were healed according to his word. He then continued to travel from house to house from tent to tent upon the bank of the river, healing the sick as he went until he arrived at the upper stonehouse, where he crossed the river in a boat,

accompanied by several of the Quorum of the Twelve, and landed in Montrose.

He walked into the cabin where I was lying sick, and commanded me, in the name of Jesus Christ, to arise and be made whole. I arose and was healed, and followed him and the brethren of the Twelve into the house of Elijah Fordham, who was supposed to be dying, by his family and friends. Joseph stepped to his bedside, took him by the hand and commanded him, in the name of Jesus Christ, to arise and be made whole. His voice was as the voice of God. Brother Fordham instantly leaped from his bed, called for his clothing and followed us into the street.

We then went into the house of Joseph B. Noble, who also lay very sick, and he was healed in the same manner; and when, by the power of God granted unto him, Joseph had healed all the sick, he recrossed the river and returned to his home. This was a day never to be forgotten.⁴¹

That day in July, in the terrible conditions of the swamp yet to become Nauvoo the Beautiful, the Saints witnessed a pentecostal miracle, an outpouring of healing that served as a magnificent sign of the prophetic leadership of Joseph Smith.

Building on the Heritage of Healing

The legacy of healing and leadership provided by Joseph and Hyrum Smith has marked the Church to this day. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland has said: “The Church . . . is . . . like a hospital provided for those who wish to get well. . . . For some of you that is simply to live with greater faith, to believe more. For some of you it does mean to repent: Right here. . . . For virtually all of us it means to live more by the promptings and promises of the Holy Ghost and to ‘press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men’ (2 Nephi 31:20).”⁴²

President Gordon B. Hinckley reminded us that “as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, ours is a ministry of healing, with a duty to bind the wounds and ease the pain of those who suffer. Upon a world afflicted with greed and contention, upon families distressed by argument and selfishness, upon individuals burdened with sin and troubles and sorrows, I invoke the healing power of Christ.”⁴³

In our day, there is new interest in the connections among spirituality, prayer, and healing on one hand and empirical health science and practice on the other. Scholars are now attempting to reconcile science and the spirit.⁴⁴ Healing is emerging as a legitimate concept in the language and practice of the business of modern health care.⁴⁵ Now it is time to examine the role of healing in leadership as well.

Leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ see healing as part of their stewardship, and the great examples of Joseph and Hyrum light the way. As leaders in the kingdom, we have an obligation to help others to heal. Members of the priesthood and Relief Society organizations provide models of healing for the world. Additionally, as individual members, we have the opportunity to heal and care for others through our ministry. The specific diseases—spiritual and physical—might have changed since their time, but Joseph and Hyrum show us how every day we can be leaders and healers in our own lives. We can help someone who is hurting, who is afraid, who feels inadequate, who needs a friend. We can help those who suffer, who need to be reached. We can help to heal wounds of misunderstanding and contention. We can each serve “in the cause of the Master Healer.”⁴⁶

Notes

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6. Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, 358–59.
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