and perfect unification of body and spirit, gives spirits the power to overcome spiritual death: "For behold, if the flesh should rise no more our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more" (2 Ne. 9:8).

For Latter-day Saints the physical body, in all its developmental, anatomical, and physiological complexities and functions, is evidence of God's creative hand. It is, in itself, miraculous. Furthermore, the day-to-day vitality of the body can be attributed to divine regulation; as expressed by King Benjamin, it is God who "has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another" (Mosiah 2:21).

The upkeep and maintenance of the body are important in LDS belief. Disease is a natural condition that disturbs the normal function of the body's physical processes. When ill or injured, Latter-day Saints exercise faith toward recovery. Worthy priesthood holders, by administering a blessing of health, may call upon the power of God to aid in the healing process. At the same time, Latter-day Saints are encouraged to take full advantage of modern medicine and technology in the prevention and cure of sickness and do not find this inconsistent with accepting the blessings of the priesthood, for they see an ultimate unity between spirit and matter.

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KENT M. VAN DE GRAAFF

**PHYSICAL FITNESS AND RECREATION**

The Church has always endorsed recreation and fitness as desirable and worthy of promotion. Recreational activities can strengthen social connections and a sense of community. Proper physical activities are any that are "clean, beneficial to health, conducive to true happiness and in harmony with the highest moral standards" ("Wholesome Recreation," p. 430). A latter-day apostle stated, "Recreation—good Latter-day Saint recreation—is one of the devices by which we may help the young people of this Church to learn and love the gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and thereby learn to live righteously" (Petersen, p. 554).

During the nineteenth century, when most religions were condemning play as sinful (T.D., p. 178), Joseph Smith and Brigham Young advocated recreation as part of their religious teaching. Both men participated in recreational activities and sanctioned wholesome amusements. Moreover, it was noted of Brigham Young that "he not only enjoyed recreational pursuits himself, but some of his august religious speeches were on this subject" (Skidmore, p. 25). In the early days of the Church, recreation also provided respite from work, drudgery, hardship, and persecution. It is likely that the large number of converts from many nationalities and cultures, although they were drawn together by a testimony of Christ and the restoration of the gospel, were more easily assimilated into the new community of Saints when recreational activities were a common denominator (Skidmore, p. 9). According to one researcher on recreation, the Church was the first religious organization to construct halls adjacent to, or adjoining, chapels for the formal promotion of such activities as games and sports, music, drama, speech, and dance (Brinley, pp. 43, 104–105).

The physical body is viewed as a temple of God that the individual has stewardship from God to care for properly: "I speak of the religious doctrine which teaches that the human body is sacred, the veritable tabernacle of the divine spirit which inhabits it, and that it is a solemn duty of mankind to protect and preserve it from pollutions and unnecessary wastage and weakness" (Richards, p. 208). Isaiah recorded a promise to those who are willing to "wait upon the Lord" that they would "run and not be weary; and . . . walk, and not faint" (40:31). This promise is affirmed in the revelation to Joseph Smith known as the Word of Wisdom (D&C 89:20). Physical and spiritual health is promised as a consequence of obedience to spiritual law and observance of specific dietary and health habits.

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CLARK T. THORSTENSON

PIONEER DAY

July 24, Pioneer Day, is celebrated yearly in "Mormon Country" and increasingly on an international scale among Latter-day Saints. On this date in 1847, the first Mormon pioneers (143 men, 3 women, 2 children) led by Brigham Young, entered the uninhabited Salt Lake Valley. They began the pioneer settlement of more than 400 communities in the intermountain West, Canada, and Mexico. Before the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, 80,000 Mormon refugees and converts went west in perpetual immigration. Six thousand lost their lives and were buried along the way.

"In the annals of the American Frontier," wrote historian Purnell H. Benson, there is "no more thrilling story" (p. 423). On July 24 this story is commemorated annually by a huge parade in Salt Lake City and is also celebrated frequently in drama (e.g., the Promised Valley musical), poetry, and song. The holiday is typically marked by sunrise services and, throughout LDS communities,