

INCIDENT OF HEALING

Not very long ago I was down in one of the California stakes attending a stake conference. At the close of the morning meeting, one of the bishops brought his mother to the stand as she wished to shake hands and send a message back home. When she reached the stand, she said, "Will you give a message from me to Brother Thomas E. McKay?"

I said, "I shall be very glad to."

She said: "It has been a couple of years since he was here to stake conference, but I want you to take a message to him."

At that time I was holding in my hands a Book of Mormon that I had used during the conference. She took the Book of Mormon from my hands and opened it and read a paragraph to me, then she closed the book and gave it back.

She said, "Two years ago Elder Thomas E. McKay was down here to our stake conference. I was blind. I knew that if he would lay his hands upon my head I would receive my sight again. I sent over to the conference and had him come. He and the other brethren laid their hands upon my head, and blessed me. Now you see that without even the use of glasses I have been able to read a paragraph from your book. When you get back to Salt Lake City, will you tell him what I have done here today and express to him the gratitude I feel to the Lord that one of his chosen servants came down here and was willing to lay his hands upon my head? Whereas I was blind two years ago, now I can see and I can read without glasses."

A TRUE SERVANT

I thought that was a beautiful testimony she bore to one of the servants of God. I have loved Brother McKay ever since I first became acquainted with him some years ago. I can testify to you along with this good sister from California that indeed Thomas E. McKay through his life has been a true servant of God, and I am glad that he stood here today and bore that fervent testimony that he knows that God lives; that he knows that Jesus is the Christ; that he knows that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God; and that all the men who have succeeded him in the presidency of this Church likewise are prophets of the Lord.

I bear you this testimony also because I know that these things are true, and I give you this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of Seventy

I wish that Brother Petersen had followed me instead of preceding me, for I should have tried to see that he had more time and I had less.

I should like to express my appreciation for my association and membership with you, my brethren and sisters, and for the confidence and encouragement of the First Presidency and my other brethren among the General Authorities, and to express my support and prayers for them in the heavy burdens they carry.

EVIDENCE OF FAITH

President McKay's report this morning of one item reminded me of an interpretation that I have placed for my own personal comfort upon the fact of our tremendous building program, and I have stated it previously to this congregation: I believe that some four hundred and twenty buildings actually in the course of construction at the present time is a great and tangible evidence of the faith of this Church and its leadership in the future, and I like to accept it as such.

TEMPLE SQUARE ACTIVITIES

Perhaps you will be interested in knowing of some of the activities on Temple Square this past year. Up to the close of September, we had had some 895,439 visitors come through the gates of Temple Square for this year of 1951. The general travel index, in this area, at least, is a little down, as compared to last year, as indicated by the business barometer of those establishments that largely deal with tourist trade. But it looks again as if we may reach or exceed, or at least closely approach, the million mark again—a million visitors who have come to see us as we are on Temple Square during this year of 1951. And we are pleased to report that despite some decrease in general tourist travel and in the number of visitors who have passed through our gates, we have had the privilege of conducting tours and telling our story to more people this year, up to this time, than ever before on record, in a like period of time.

We have the great privilege of meeting here some of the finest people from almost every part of the world, and it is encouraging and gratifying to partake of their spirit as they come here—asking and with open arms, and they are gracious guests, as we try to be gracious hosts—to Temple Square, which I believe to be the greatest ten acres in the world, that I know anything of, at least.

I remember one fine, elderly lady from a remote part of the country, who not many weeks ago looked over the valley and said, "No wonder Brigham Young and the pioneers chose this place." Well, it looks easy after the work is done; it looks desirable. But every time I look at the tabernacle and the temple, and every time I hear the organ, I am made humble in thinking of what they did with what they had.

CHURCH AFFILIATIONS

Brother Harold Lundstrom invited my attention to a most interesting figure or two from the *1951 Yearbook of American Churches* published only last month. Sometimes people ask us why we send missionaries to Christian peoples. This yearbook, published by the National Council of Churches, indicates that there are about 256 religious groups in the United States at the present time, to which some eighty-seven million people belong. Only about fifty-eight percent of the population of the United States of America claims or is counted as having affiliation with any church group, which means that beside those who are somewhat disaffected or disinterested or inactive or who haven't found what they want in their own churches, there are some sixty to seventy millions of people right here among us in our own nation, who are not claimed by, and do not claim, any church. Certainly one of the greatest missionary fields in the world is here at home, besides our abundant opportunities abroad.

OBLIGATIONS TO CHILDREN

President McKay and other speakers have mentioned our obligations to our children, and some thoughts have been running through my mind concerning them: It doesn't matter what you have if you don't deliver it, no matter what talent or ability or capacity. It doesn't matter what truth you possess if you don't use it. And, so far as the next generation is concerned, it doesn't matter what you have learned if you don't pass it on. Every generation needs teaching, not only by example, but also by specific word, and, as indicated by President McKay, the great number of hours we have with our children in the home, as compared with their hours in schools and the churches, is somewhat indicative of the ratio of our responsibility concerning them. Every generation is a relay station to pass on the great, eternal truths to the next generation, and I pray that we may do so and that no part of this eternal message may stop at our relay point but may be continually passed on to the next generation—to our children and our children's children.

A PECULIAR PEOPLE

We sometimes hear the phrase applied to us (sometimes applied to us by ourselves) that we are a "peculiar people." The word *peculiar* is not peculiar to us; it is peculiar to scripture. It is a word by which the Lord describes a generation that he will have, peculiar in purity, in honor, in righteousness as indicated in both Old and New Testament texts. And I believe the opportunity we have with our children and with the visitors who come here prompts us more than ever to have in mind that we must be in some respects set apart and in some respects different—not queer,

that is not the connotation of the word as applied in scripture—but I think we should be peculiarly honest, peculiarly dependable, peculiarly industrious, peculiarly willing in our work, peculiarly kind, peculiarly hospitable, peculiarly understanding, and peculiarly happy.

And I am sure that our young people are peculiarly blessed in many ways. For one thing they are blessed with membership in a Church that is committed to the acceptance of all truth. They are blessed in knowing that there is no truth that they could ever discover that their Church would not accept in any field of thought or learning. All that the Church asks is that what it is asked to accept shall be beyond theory, beyond supposition, beyond private opinion. They are peculiarly blessed in belonging to a Church that will accept every truth they ever discover in any field or from any source.

We should be, and I think we are, peculiarly sustained in hardship and in times of difficulty, and peculiarly comforted in times of sorrow and uncertainty; and I ask our Father in heaven that his blessings may be upon these young people of ours who are faced with uncertainty and difficult situations that they may be peculiarly blessed as they live for these blessings and keep their covenants and are faithful in the performance of their duties, wherever their country may call them, wherever mission service or any other essential service may take them.

And may this be a time for teaching our children of the mission and message of him who said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven"; and may his peace and the fulfilment of his promises be unto all of us; and may we repent where we need repentance and conform to the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ and live so that those who come to see us will sense our "peculiarities" in the constructive sense in which the Lord used the word in scripture.

I ask that the blessing of our Father in heaven may be with each of us in all of our problems, in all of our decisions in life, in our counseling of our children, in our teaching them the great and eternal truths, and in all our meetings with others, so that our lives may be consistent with our convictions and with the commandments of God, that our conduct may be consistent with those things we profess, and I do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have been deeply impressed, as you have, with the testimonies and remarks of these Brethren.

We are now nearing the conclusion of this first session. I have been most favorably impressed with the reverential attitude of this large congregation. Truly there has been a spirit of worship. Though every seat is taken, members standing in the gallery and in the rear of the hall, there has scarcely been a sound that has been