

visited the Nephites, he told them that he had been sent by his Father. He knelt before them, and he prayed to his Father. He taught them to pray to his Father, but that did not lessen in the least our duty and responsibility of looking upon the Son of God as a father to us because he spiritually begot us.

The Lord bless you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is President Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Quorum of the Twelve. Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder John Longden.

ELDER HOWARD W. HUNTER

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

On the evening of the day of the resurrection, Jesus appeared and stood in the midst of his disciples in the closed room. He showed them his hands through which had been driven the nails and his side which had been pierced by the spear. Thomas, one of the twelve, was not present when this happened, but the others told him they had seen the Lord and that he had spoken to them.

No doubt Thomas had been deeply shaken by the events of the past days. His love and devotion to the Master cannot be questioned, but the flame of faith had burned low and had grown cold. The tomb was empty, this he knew. Mary Magdalene and the other women and Peter and John had been there. Jesus later appeared to Mary in the garden, and she told the disciples of this event as she had been commanded. That very day the Risen Master had walked with Cleopas and his companion down the road to Emmaus and had also appeared to Simon Peter in Jerusalem. In spite of these evidences, Thomas was skeptical, and he said to the disciples:

“. . . Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.” (John 20:25.)

This statement of Thomas has caused him to be remembered down through the ages and his name placed with the skeptics, the doubters, and the faint-hearted; with those who will not believe until they see. In a sense, Thomas represents the spirit of our age. He would not be satisfied with anything he could not see, even though he had been with the Master and knew his teachings con-

cerning faith and doubt. Jesus had said: “. . . O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (Matt. 14:31.)

“. . . Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?” (Mark 4:40.)

“. . . If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” (*Ibid.*, 9:23.)

“. . . According to your faith be it unto you.” (Matt. 9:29.)

All of these things Thomas well knew, but his personal faith had been dimmed by a great disappointment. Faith does not take precedence over doubt when one must feel or see in order to believe.

Thomas was not willing to stand on faith. He wanted positive evidence of the facts. He wanted knowledge, not faith. Knowledge is related to the past because our experiences of the past are those things which give us knowledge, but faith is related to the future—to the unknown where we have not yet walked.

We think of Thomas as one who had traveled and talked with the Master, and who had been chosen by him. Inwardly we wish that Thomas could have turned toward the future with confidence in the things which were not then visible, instead of saying in effect, “To see is to believe.”

It must have saddened the heart of the Savior, but this had happened before. Within the past few days Judas had betrayed him, Peter had denied him, and now Thomas doubted him.

A week later, the disciples were again together in the same house in Jerusalem. This time Thomas was with them. The door was closed, but Jesus came and stood in the midst of them

and said, ". . . Peace be unto you.

"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:26-27.)

The record does not indicate that Thomas accepted this invitation—this loving rebuke by the Lord. Thomas could see the print of the nails and the wound of the spear. He only answered: ". . . My Lord and my God." (*Ibid.*, 20:28.) Now he believed, but Thomas had missed the highest form of faith.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (*Ibid.*, 20:29.)

This occurrence stands as one of the great lessons of all times. Thomas had said, "To see is to believe," but Christ answered: "To believe is to see."

Faith has always been a necessary condition of a righteous life. As we read through the books of the Old Testament, we are impressed by the faith that motivated the prophets and righteous men, the saints of old, to endure the trials which came to them. The books of the New Testament are replete with the teachings of the Savior concerning faith and examples of the effect of faith in the lives of individuals. These writings also set forth the disappointment and tragedy that come where faith is lacking.

There are many things which are invisible to our senses and not subject to positive proof. The scientific approach to proof is by experimentation in the laboratory. The result of this scientific method has a greater influence upon our thinking than we realize, because it produces positive proof resulting in knowledge. We cannot overlook the great good this approach by science has upon the lives of persons, but how about those things which lie outside of the realm of positive, tangible proof? This question brings us to the higher law. It is through the assurance that comes from faith.

The classic example of faith is ascribed to the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1.)

This statement does not presuppose

a perfect knowledge, but describes faith as that which gives to one an assurance or a confidence in things which are yet in the future. These things may be in existence, but it is through faith they are realized. Faith gives a feeling of confidence in that which is not visible or susceptible of positive proof.

It would appear that Thomas had lost his confidence in the future. He looked to the past. He wanted proof of that which was not then visible. Those who lose or lack faith, live in the past—there is loss of hope for the future. What a great change comes into the life of one who finds an abiding faith to give assurance and confidence.

If we turn back to the ninth chapter of John, we read of another incident that took place in Jerusalem in which a man who had been born blind received his sight. It was the Sabbath day, and Jesus was apparently in the vicinity of the temple when he saw the blind man, and his disciples asked him:

". . . Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"

"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:2-5.)

Jesus then spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle mixed with the dust of the earth. He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. If this had been Thomas, would he have gone as he had been commanded or would he have asked the question: "What good can come from washing in the stagnant waters of that dirty pool?" or "What medicinal properties are there in saliva mixed with the dust of the earth?" These would seem to be reasonable questions, but if the blind man had doubted and questioned, he would still be blind. Having faith, he believed and did as he was directed. He went and washed in the pool and came back seeing. To believe is to see.

A miracle had taken place. A man who had been blind from the day of his birth was caused to see. The

Friday, October 5

First Day

neighbors and the Pharisees were astonished and asked how it happened.

"He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight." (*Ibid.*, 9:11.)

It was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened the eyes of the blind man. Some of the Pharisees said he could not be a man of God because he did not keep the Sabbath day. Others asked how a man who was such a sinner could perform a miracle. Even though they could see, they would not believe. The blind man was asked: "What sayest thou of him?" He answered: "He is a prophet." Still they did not believe and called the parents of the blind man and asked them: "Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see?" His parents were afraid to answer for fear of being put out of the synagogue if they should confess that the one who performed the miracle was Christ, so they said, "He is of age; ask him." And the blind man said, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "Thou art his disciple," and they shut the door of the synagogue against him. (See *Ibid.*, 9:14-34.)

When Jesus heard that the blind man had been cast out, he found him and said:

"... Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

"He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?"

"And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

"And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." (*Ibid.*, 9:35-39.)

The blind man believed and was permitted to see. Thomas refused to believe until after he could see. The world is full of Thomases, but there are many like the blind man of Jerusalem. Missionaries of the Church meet both of these every day as they carry their message to the world, the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. They bear witness to the fact that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that God has spoken to his children in these latter days, that there is a prophet of God on the earth today, that the gospel has been restored in its fulness. Some believe, have faith, and are baptized. Some will not accept because they cannot see or feel.

There is no positive, concrete, tangible evidence that God lives, yet millions have a knowledge that he does through that faith which constitutes the evidence of things unseen. Many say to the missionaries, "I would accept of baptism if I could believe that Joseph Smith was visited by the Father and the Son." For this fact there is no positive, concrete, tangible evidence, but to those who are touched by the Spirit, faith will stand in the place of such evidence of things unseen. Remember the words of the crucified Master as he stood before Thomas:

"... blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (*Ibid.*, 20:29.)

To believe is to see.

I add my witness to the testimonies of the thousands of missionaries that God does live, that Jesus is the Savior of the world, that those who will believe through faith will be caused to see, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve. Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Bishop Victor L. Brown.