

the investigator" ("It Becometh Every Man," *Ensign*, Oct. 1977, p. 5).

The only hope I can find in this troubled world is to have the standards by which our lives are governed firmly grounded in the gospel of our Lord and Savior.

May each of us be prepared and have the courage to share this greatest of all gifts the Lord has given to His children. I testify of the truthfulness of His message in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, amen.

President Howard W. Hunter

The miracle of springtime

In our Northern Hemisphere, we are enjoying in this beautiful, bursting season of the year one of the great recurring miracles of nature—the regeneration and renewal of the earth that we call spring. There may be a few wintry days left, but the sun has begun its vernal return, the buds are appearing on the flowers and trees, and luxuriant greenery is sprouting to the surface.

How fitting that just one week ago all of Christendom celebrated on Easter Day the great restoring and renewing resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, declaring all of the joy and eternal promise that event holds for mankind. With you, I welcome this season of the year which reminds us that God is a God of miracles, that his Only Begotten Son is "the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in [him], though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

In this beautiful time of year, we remember that death has no sting and the grave has no dominion. I testify that after every winter's season there is the miracle of springtime ahead—in our personal journey through life as well as in nature. These restorations and renewals are a gift from the Lord Jesus Christ, the ultimate "man for all seasons." I wish to speak briefly of some of those divine moments

The chorus sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee" without announcement.

President Monson

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the Twelve Apostles has spoken to us, following which the Mormon Youth Chorus sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

President Howard W. Hunter, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our concluding speaker for this session.

in our lives when the Savior reaches out to redeem and make whole and strengthen us.

The God that doest wonders

The Psalmist has written:

"I cried unto God with my voice, . . . and he gave ear unto me. . . .

"And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. . . .

"Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people" (Psalm 77:1, 10, 14).

Among the signs of the true church, and included in the evidences of God's work in the world, are the manifestations of his power which we are helpless to explain or to fully understand. In the scriptures these divine acts and special blessings are variously referred to as miracles or signs or wonders or marvels.

Not surprisingly, these signs and marvels were most evident in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the very Son of God himself. But startling and wonder-filled as they were, Christ's many miracles were only reflections of those greater marvels which his Father had performed before him and continues to perform all around us. Indeed, the Savior's humble performance of such obviously divine acts may be just one very special application of the declarations he made:

"The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" (John 5:19) and "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me" (John 8:28).

Recognize everyday miracles

For example, the first miracle by Jesus recorded in the New Testament was the turning of water into wine at the marriage at Cana (see John 2:1-11). But poor, indeed, was the making of the wine in the pots of stone, compared with its original making in the beauty of the vine and the abundance of the swelling grapes. No one could explain the onetime miracle at the wedding feast, but then neither could they explain the everyday miracle of the splendor of the vineyard itself.

It is most remarkable to witness one who is deaf made to hear again. But surely that great blessing is no more startling than the wondrous combination of bones and skin and nerves that lets our ears receive the beautiful world of sound. Should we not stand in awe of the blessing of hearing and give glory to God for that miracle, even as we do when hearing is restored after it has been lost?

Is it not the same for the return of one's sight or the utterance of our speech, or even that greatest miracle of all—the restoration of life? The original creations of the Father constitute a truly wonder-filled world. Are not the *greatest* miracles the fact that we have life and limb and sight and speech in the first place? Yes, there will always be plenty of miracles if we have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Just one other reminder. Once we start to recognize the many miraculous and blessed manifestations of God and Christ in our lives—the everyday variety as well as restored sight to the blind and restored hearing to the deaf—we may be truly bewildered at the unexplainable principles and processes that bring about such wonders.

Do not deny miracles

In the contemplation of miracles "we must of necessity recognize the operation

of a power transcending our present human understanding," wrote Dr. James E. Talmage, who, as both a scientist and an Apostle of the Lord, had uniquely strong qualifications for examining such phenomena (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1916], p. 149). Science and the unaided human mind, he said, have not advanced far enough to analyze and explain these wonders. But, he cautioned, to deny the reality of miracles on the ground that the results and manifestations *must* be fictitious simply because we cannot comprehend the means by which they have happened is arrogant on the face of it (see p. 149). Indeed, those who have been the beneficiaries of such miracles are the most compelling witnesses of all. It is hard to argue with results.

Jesus heals a blind man

Consider this simple but telling account from the Savior's ministry to make manifest the works of God in men's lives.

One Sabbath day Jesus anointed the eyes of a man blind from birth, and the man's eyesight was restored. It was a startling and inspiring manifestation. Unfortunately, however, some who learned of it would not rejoice that one of the local citizens had his vision returned.

"Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man [meaning Jesus] is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them," the scripture tells us (John 9:16).

With such a controversy inside their ranks, this group did a very intelligent thing—they asked the opinion of the man who had been healed. "What sayest thou of him, that . . . hath opened thine eyes?" they asked, and waited for his answer (John 9:17).

As he spoke, the blind man undoubtedly looked directly into their eyes (a new and precious privilege). He said plainly, "He is a prophet" (John 9:17).

But that was an unsettling answer. After much discussion, including conversation with the man's parents, the

Pharisees agreed to acknowledge that there had indeed been a miracle and that it might have come from God, but that this man must deny any role Christ may have played in the process:

"Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man [Jesus] is a sinner" (John 9:24).

Unencumbered by theory or law, the man said, slowly enough for everyone to hear, "Whether [Jesus] be a sinner or no, I know not: [just] one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25).

The Pharisees, in total frustration and unable to argue with that single greatest and undeniable fact in the case, cast the man out of their presence. Then comes this sweet conclusion to a story about renewed sight and brighter light:

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, 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" (John 9:35-38).

Now sight had been given *twice* — once to remedy a congenital defect and once to behold the King of Kings before he would ascend to his eternal throne. Jesus had quickened both temporal and spiritual vision. He had cast his light into a dark place, and this man, like many others in that day as well as in our own, had accepted the light and had seen.

Faith and miracles

President Spencer W. Kimball taught us with a book by the title *Faith Precedes the Miracle*. But there is, of course, an increase of faith that should follow the miracle as well. As a result of the many miracles in our lives, we should be more humble and more grateful, more kind and more believing. When we are personal witnesses to these wonders which God performs, it should increase

our respect and love for him; it should improve the way we behave. We will live better and love more if we will remember that. We are miracles in our own right, every one of us, and the resurrected Son of God is the greatest miracle of all. He is, indeed, the miracle of miracles, and every day of his life he gave evidence of it. We should try to follow after him in that example.

Miracles have not ceased

Moroni quotes his father in the Book of Mormon:

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased because Christ hath ascended into heaven? . . . Has the day of miracles ceased?" (Moroni 7:27, 35).

"I say unto you, Nay; neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men. . . . [Nor will they], so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved" (Moroni 7:29, 36).

I testify of God's goodness and Christ's power, and of the privilege Apostles have been given. I know that Peter and John did take a lame man by the right hand and, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, command him to rise up and walk — and he did walk (see Acts 3:1-11). I testify of the restoration of the gospel in these latter days and of the priesthood powers that make possible the many modern miracles of our dispensation.

I say of our Father as the Psalmist said, "Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people" (Psalm 77:14). In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

President Howard W. Hunter, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us. His theme was that of miracles. He spoke of the miracle of renewal, the springtime following winter, and all who have heard his voice, all who have witnessed his coming to the podium, have witnessed a miracle in our time.