

and Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will address us. Following their remarks, we shall hear from Elder Won Yong Ko of the Seventy.

The choir sang “The Iron Rod.”
Elder H. Aldridge Gillespie offered the invocation.
The choir sang “Where Love Is.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson

Jesus Christ—the Master Healer

My beloved brothers and sisters, I extend love and greetings to each of you. From the Brethren, I express gratitude for your goodness, for your many generous acts of kindness, for your prayers and sustaining influence in our lives. Our challenges are like yours. We are all subject to sorrow and suffering, to disease and death. Through times good and bad, the Lord expects each of us to endure to the end. As we all go forward together in His sacred work, the Brethren realize the importance of your thoughtful consideration, so lovingly offered and gratefully received. We love you and pray for you, as you pray for us.

I express special gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ. I am thankful for His loving-kindness and for His open invitation to come unto Him.¹ I marvel at His matchless power to heal. I testify of Jesus Christ as the Master Healer. It is but one of many attributes that characterize His incomparable life.

Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, the Creator, the great Jehovah, the promised Immanuel, our atoning Savior and Redeemer, our Advocate with the Father, our great Exemplar. And one day we will stand before Him as our just and merciful Judge.²

Miracles of healing

As the Master Healer, Jesus directed His friends to “go . . . and tell . . . what things ye have seen and heard; how that

the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, [and] the dead are raised.”³

The books of Matthew,⁴ Mark,⁵ Luke,⁶ and John⁷ repeatedly report that Jesus went about preaching the gospel and healing all types of sickness.

When the risen Redeemer appeared to the people of ancient America, He mercifully invited those “afflicted in any manner”⁸ to come unto Him and be healed.

Marvelously, His divine authority to heal the sick was conferred upon worthy priesthood bearers in earlier dispensations⁹ and again in these latter days, when His gospel has been restored in its fulness.¹⁰

Influence of prayer on healing

We can also access His healing power through prayer. I’ll never forget an experience that Sister Nelson and I had about three decades ago with President Spencer W. Kimball and his beloved Camilla. We were in Hamilton, New Zealand, for a large conference with the Saints. I was not a General Authority at that time. I had been invited to participate in this and similar meetings in other Pacific Islands while serving as general president of the Sunday School. And as a doctor of medicine, I had attended President and Sister Kimball for many years. I knew each of them very well—inside and out.

A Saturday evening cultural program had been prepared for this conference by local youth of the Church. Unfortunately, President and Sister Kimball both became very ill, each with a high fever. After receiv-

ing priesthood blessings, they rested at the nearby home of the president of the New Zealand Temple. President Kimball asked his counselor, President N. Eldon Tanner, to preside at the cultural event and to excuse President and Sister Kimball.

Sister Nelson went with President and Sister Tanner and other leaders to the event while President Kimball's secretary, Brother D. Arthur Haycock, and I watched over our feverish friends.

While President Kimball was sleeping, I was quietly reading in his room. Suddenly President Kimball was awakened. He asked, "Brother Nelson, what time was this evening's program to begin?"

"At seven o'clock, President Kimball."

"What time is it now?"

"It's almost seven," I replied.

President Kimball quickly said, "Tell Sister Kimball we are going!"

I checked President Kimball's temperature. It was normal! I took Sister Kimball's temperature. It was also normal!

They quickly dressed and got into an automobile. We were driven to the stadium of the Church College of New Zealand. As the car entered the arena, there was a very loud shout that erupted spontaneously. It was most unusual! After we took our seats, I asked Sister Nelson about that sudden sound. She said that when President Tanner began the meeting, he dutifully excused President and Sister Kimball because of illness. Then one of the young New Zealanders was called upon to pray.

With great faith, he gave what Sister Nelson described as a rather lengthy but powerful prayer. He so prayed: "We are 3,000 New Zealand youth. We are assembled here, having prepared for six months to sing and dance for Thy prophet. Wilt Thou heal him and deliver him here!" After the "amen" was pronounced, the car carrying President and Sister Kimball entered the stadium. They were identified immediately, and instantly everyone shouted for joy!¹¹

I had witnessed the healing power of the Lord! I had also witnessed revelation as received and responded to by His living prophet!

I recognize that on occasion some of our most fervent prayers may seem to go unanswered. We wonder, "Why?" I know that feeling! I know the fears and tears of such moments. But I also know that our prayers are never ignored. Our faith is never unappreciated. I know that an all-wise Heavenly Father's perspective is much broader than is ours. While we know of our mortal problems and pain, He knows of our immortal progress and potential. If we pray to know His will and submit ourselves to it with patience and courage, heavenly healing can take place in His own way and time.

Steps toward healing

Afflictions can come from spiritual as well as physical causes. Alma the Younger remembered that his sin was so painful that he wished to "become extinct both soul and body, that [he] might not be brought to stand in the presence of . . . God, to be judged of [his] deeds."¹² At such times, how can we be healed by Him?

We can more fully repent! We can become more fully converted! Then the "Son of Righteousness"¹³ can more fully bless us by His healing hand.

Early in His mortal ministry, Jesus announced that He had been sent "to heal the brokenhearted."¹⁴ Wherever He taught them, His pattern was consistent. As I quote His words spoken at four different times and locations, note the pattern.

- To people of the Holy Land, the Lord said that His people "should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."¹⁵

- To people of ancient America, the resurrected Lord extended this invitation:

“Return unto me, . . . repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you.”¹⁶

- To leaders of His Church, He taught, “Continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them.”¹⁷

- Later, during the “restitution of all things,”¹⁸ the Lord taught the Prophet Joseph Smith regarding the pioneers, “After their temptations, and much tribulation, behold, I, the Lord, will feel after them, and if they harden not their hearts, and stiffen not their necks against me, they shall be converted, and I will heal them.”¹⁹

The sequence of His pattern is significant. Faith, repentance, baptism, a testimony, and enduring conversion lead to the healing power of the Lord. Baptism is a covenant act—a sign of a commitment and a promise. Testimony develops when the Holy Ghost gives conviction to the earnest seeker of the truth. True testimony fosters faith; it promotes repentance and obedience to God’s commandments. Testimony engenders enthusiasm to serve God and fellow human beings.²⁰ Conversion means “to turn with.”²¹ Conversion is a turning *from* the ways of the world *to*, and staying *with*, the ways of the Lord. Conversion includes repentance and obedience. Conversion brings a mighty change of heart.²² Thus, a true convert is “born again,”²³ walking with a newness of life.²⁴

As true converts, we are motivated to do what the Lord wants us to do²⁵ and to be who He wants us to be.²⁶ The remission of sins, which brings divine forgiveness, heals the spirit.

How do we know if we are truly converted? Self-examination tests are available in the scriptures. One measures the degree of conversion prerequisite to baptism.²⁷ Another measures our willingness to serve others. To His disciple Peter, the Lord said, “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”²⁸ Willingness to

serve and strengthen others stands as a symbol of one’s readiness to be healed.

Magnitude of His healing

John the Beloved declared, “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!”²⁹ What power! Only the Master Healer could take away the sin of the world. Our debt to Him is incalculably great.

Well do I remember an experience while speaking to a group of missionaries. After I had invited questions, one elder stood. With tears in his eyes he asked, “Why did Jesus have to suffer so much?” I asked the elder to open his book of hymns and recite words from “How Great Thou Art.” He read:

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.³⁰

Then I asked this elder to read from “Reverently and Meekly Now.” These words are particularly poignant because they are written as the Lord would express His own answer to the very question that had been asked:

Think of me, thou ransomed one;
Think what I for thee have done.
With my blood that dripped like rain,
Sweat in agony of pain,
With my body on the tree
I have ransomed even thee. . . .

Oh, remember what was done
That the sinner might be won.
On the cross of Calvary
I have suffered death for thee.³¹

Jesus suffered deeply because He loves us deeply! He wants us to repent and be converted so that He can fully heal us.

When sore trials come upon us,³² it’s time to deepen our faith in God, to work

hard, and to serve others. Then He will heal our broken hearts. He will bestow upon us personal peace³³ and comfort.³⁴ Those great gifts will not be destroyed, even by death.

Resurrection—the consummate act of healing

The gift of resurrection is the Lord's consummate act of healing. Thanks to Him, each world will be restored to its proper and perfect frame.³⁵ Thanks to Him, no condition is hopeless. Thanks to Him, brighter days are ahead, both here and hereafter. Real joy awaits each of us—on the other side of sorrow.

I testify that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ—the Master Healer—in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. See Matthew 11:28–30. Indeed, His yoke is easy and His burden is light.
2. See Russell M. Nelson, “Jesus the Christ, Our Master and More,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 4–17.
3. Luke 7:22.
4. See Matthew 4:23; 8:1–3, 5–13, 16–17; 9:1–8, 32–35; 12:15; 14:14, 34–36; 15:29–31.
5. See Mark 1:32–34, 40–45; 2:1–12; 6:53–56; 7:31–37.
6. See Luke 4:40–41; 5:12–15, 17–26; 7:1–10; 11:14; 22:50–51.
7. See John 4:46–53.
8. 3 Nephi 17:7.
9. See Matthew 10:5–8; Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17; 4 Nephi 1:5.
10. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:65–70.
11. See Spencer J. Condie, *Russell M. Nelson: Father, Surgeon, Apostle* (2003), 172–74.
12. Alma 36:15.
13. 3 Nephi 25:2; see also Malachi 4:2.
14. Luke 4:18; see also Isaiah 61:1.
15. Matthew 13:15; see also Isaiah 6:10; John 12:40; Acts 28:27.
16. 3 Nephi 9:13.
17. 3 Nephi 18:32.
18. Acts 3:21.
19. Doctrine and Covenants 112:13; see also Doctrine and Covenants 124:104.
20. Thus keeping the two great commandments: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself” (Luke 10:27).
21. *Conversion* comes from two Latin roots: *con*, meaning “with,” and *vertere*, meaning “to turn.”
22. See Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:12–14.
23. See John 3:3–7; 1 Peter 1:23; Mosiah 27:24–26; Alma 5:49; 7:14; Moses 6:59; Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 6:62.
24. See Romans 6:3–4.
25. See Mosiah 5:2–5.
26. See 3 Nephi 27:21, 27.
27. See Doctrine and Covenants 20:37; Mosiah 18:10.
28. Luke 22:32.
29. Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:29.
30. *Hymns*, no. 86; see also Psalm 8:3–9; 9:1–2; Mosiah 4:5–13.
31. *Hymns*, no. 185; see also Doctrine and Covenants 19:16–19; 45:3–5.
32. See “Did You Think to Pray?” *Hymns*, no. 140, verse 3.
33. See John 14:27.
34. See Isaiah 40:1; John 14:16–17, 26.
35. See Alma 11:43; 40:23.

Elder Robert D. Hales

Foundation for the Restoration

This year we are commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith. To the world we

testify that he was the prophet of God foreordained to bring about the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This he did under the direction of our Savior, who said to an earlier prophet, “My name is