

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, August 2nd, 1891, commencing at 2 p. m., President Angus M. Cannon presiding.

The choir sang the hymn commencing:

Let Zion in her beauty rise;
Her light begins to shine.

Prayer was offered by Elder W. C. Dunbar.

The choir sang:

O Lord of Hosts, we now invoke
Thy Spirit most divine.

The Priesthood of the Fourteenth ward officiated in the administration of the Sacrament.

ELDER SAMUEL W. RICHARDS

was the first speaker. He asked the sympathy of the congregation. Preaching the Gospel is with the Elders a labor of love, and only if they have the faith and prayers of the hearers can they speak profitably.

The speaker referred to the promise of the Lord that the time shall come when the Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh and then, as the prophet states: "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." This time will certainly come, but a great change must take place before it can come.

If there is a people on earth who anticipates and is prepared for the time, it is the Latter-day Saints. Our destiny is to bring this glorious day about, and we can do it by conforming to the laws of God and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian world is not prepared for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. One of the results of His presence is that there shall be prophecies, but the Christian world rejects prophets and inspired men, declaring that they are no longer needed. Yet, here is a declaration to the effect that heaven and earth shall be brought together—men shall know as they are known and see as they are seen. The rejection of prophets is the rejection of the word of the Almighty. But it is not safe to reject that word, for it will certainly come to pass. When the Lord makes a promise, it will be fulfilled to the very letter, and He will not ask the counsel of any man as to the fulfillment of what He has said. Concerning the pouring out of His Spirit in the last days and the accompanying wonders, we read: "It shall come to pass, saith the Lord"—mark these words—It shall come to pass. Are we prepared for it? Are we seeking to live so, that these things can be brought about?

Speaking of living in conformity to our religion, we are required to love the Lord our God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves. Are we trying to comply with this requirement? If we are not in harmony with this God's law, there is something left for us to do.

A servant of God had once asked the speaker, if he habitually gave the Lord his first and his last thoughts in the day. This question had made a deep impression on his mind, and he often remembered it. When we wake

up in the morning, our first thoughts should certainly be devoted to our heavenly Father, and to Him our last thoughts in the evening should again revert. The result of this practice would be to keep our duties always before us and to strengthen us in our faith, thereby preparing us to successfully combat all difficulties we may have to meet. Everyone in the position in which he is placed would derive benefit from the habit of daily devotion, and the speaker would advise all to practice it. It will tend to your glorification.

And to be exalted and glorified is the object of our coming upon this earth. We are here not merely to spend a few years, often in trying circumstances, nor by chance; we have a mission to perform, and having performed it faithfully, we shall inherit eternal glory as the children of God and heirs of His glory. All men are the children of God, partaking of His Spirit and should, therefore, strive to do the work which is laid out before them. We must yield obedience to the laws of God as given in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Seeing then the destiny before us and placed within the reach of us all, what manner of lives should ours be? Remember that he who will not conform to the law of God may one day have to hear the awful decree, "Depart from me." For God's court is one of immutable justice.

As to the responsibilities of life, they are great. We must answer for this life which God has given us. Fathers and mothers, for instance, must answer for the children which have been entrusted to their care. They are responsible for what they have done to bring them back to the presence of the eternal Father. And in a similar manner, every position of life in which we can enter brings with it some responsibility. Let us therefore ask ourselves if we are living so that we can say with Christ: "Those that Thou hast given me I have kept, and none of them is lost." When shall the time come when we will conform in everything with the law of God? Take one instance, the law of keeping the Sabbath. God has asked us to set apart one day out of seven for His service, but we perhaps think we have done well if we give Him two hours. Yet, the commandment is to do no work on that day. How many of us are doing on that day only that about which we can say that we are justified before God?

There is certainly room for great improvement among us. We forget so easily our duties and think, perhaps, that God is apt to forget, too. But He does not forget. He who comprehends the end from the beginning is not likely to forget what He has said. As His promises are sure so are also His judgments. They will all be fulfilled even if centuries elapse before they come to pass.

The speaker bore a strong testimony that God has spoken in these last days through His servants. He was sorry that the servants of God were not deemed worthy of living on earth among their fellowmen. Joseph Smith was innocent, yet the persecution of his enemies never ceased until they shed his blood in the jail of carthage. And men had never repented of that deed yet. On the con-

trary, the spirit of persecution seems to be at work still. Now, I testify that this work is the work of God, and it will go onward and forward, notwithstanding all persecution, until it has been carried on to final victory.

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON

then addressed the congregation, the following being a synopsis of his remarks:

There are some reflections suggested by the remarks of Brother Richards which are proper to speak upon.

There has been such a flood-tide of infidelity sweeping over the earth that it has seemed as though it would be impossible to arrest it or stem its onward course. It has been proclaimed that God has ceased to make known His will to men. It has been looked upon as no longer necessary to have continuous revelations. The fact that we have the Bible has been deemed sufficient for the guidance of men to salvation, from this time forward.

But to people who have reasoned on this point it has seemed that if there ever was a necessity for revelation from God, this necessity exists today. There, certainly, never was a time when there was such a variety of opinions and views concerning salvation as there is today—never so many sects and parties and divisions, all claiming to be right, and to have the pure Gospel and know the plan of salvation. The human family seems to be left to grope in darkness like so many blind, trying to find the path, with so many guides, all declaring that they know the right path, until confusion reigns everywhere. Therefore, if it ever was necessary to have communication with heaven, that necessity exists now.

We have been compelled to reason on this point by the attacks made on us, and we find nothing in the Scriptures that shows that it is God's design to withhold communication. Whenever there has been silence between heaven and earth, that was invariably produced by the wickedness of men. There have been intervals when there was no communication with heaven, as, for instance, after the death of Samuel. Saul sought then the witch of Endor, because there was no Urim and Thummim, no man to expound the will of God. But the reason for the withdrawal was that the people and the king had fallen.

So when Jesus came. There was no inspired man. And when he appeared preceded by John the Baptist, it was a new thing to the world and people refused to listen to Him, although they said, as our generation is inclined to say, that if they had been living in the days of the prophets they would not have persecuted them. Just as some people now think, that if they had lived in the days of Jesus and His Apostles they would not have refused to believe them. But let a man today stand up and make the statements which Jesus made, and he will receive the same treatment.

There is, as was said, a flood-tide of infidelity, stronger, perhaps, than in former days. For formerly God was believed in, while the tendency now is not to believe in God, and certainly not in a personal God. In these valleys there is a people plead-