

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Dec. 21, 1890, commencing at 2 p.m., President Angus M. Cannon, presiding.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn beginning:

O ye mountains high, where the clear blue sky,
Arches over the vales of the free.

Prayer was offered by Counselor Charles W. Penrose.

The choir sang the hymn:

He died! the Great Redeemer died,
And Israel's daughters wept around.

The Priesthood of the Tenth Ward officiated in the administration of the Sacrament.

PRESIDENT ANGUS M. CANNON

addressed the congregation. He said it was with heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God that he arose on that occasion, rejoicing that he was still numbered with the Latter-day Saints. When he contemplated the prosperity and happiness which existed in their midst as a people, notwithstanding the trials through which they had passed, he was led to believe that they were among the most highly favored on the face of the whole earth. Traverse these settlements from north to south, from east to west, and peace, prosperity and plenty abounded on every hand; and if any one inquired of the people the hope that inspired their hearts, the reply would come that God had called them from the nations of the earth, by the Prophet's voice, to a land which He had prepared as a gathering place for His Saints. Here they might be found organized and ready to receive those blessings and truths which God had in store for a people whom He had designed to prepare for the coming of His Son Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist came forth from the wilderness with the precious truth that God the Eternal Father had inspired him to proclaim, declaring unto the people the necessity of repentance. It required a man like John the Baptist to do this. He was under no obligations to the nation to which he belonged, having been reared in the midst of a barren waste, having partaken of rude food which he found where he traveled, and his raiment being of the coarsest kind. He could therefore go into the midst of the Jews in their refinement and declare unto them the necessity of turning unto God and repenting sincerely of their ways. The people did repent and multitudes thronged the waters of the Jordan, clamoring for baptism. He told them to bring forth fruits, meet for repentance and think not to rely on the claim that they had Abraham for their father.

Abraham loved his father, his mother and his country; but he loved God more, and at God's bidding he forsook home, country and everything he possessed, and journeyed into an unknown land. The Lord prospered and blessed him, be-

cause he was faithful. He loved Sarah his wife, and he also loved Hagar, for she was the mother of Ishmael. Sarah asked him to send Hagar away; but he would not. The life of Sarah's boy, Isaac, was in danger from Ishmael's presence; but notwithstanding this Abraham would not be moved. Then God spoke unto him and told him to send Hagar away, promising that He would be a father unto her child. Abraham at once yielded, entrusting Ishmael to the Divine care. With the boy's future history they were familiar; God preserved and blessed him, and multiplied his seed in the earth. But it pleased the Lord to further try Abraham's faith by telling him to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, and when he was about to carry out the Divine command the uplifted hand was stayed. Abraham loved God more than all else.

The speaker went on to remark that the Latter-day Saints had gathered together in these mountain valleys subject to the inspiration, influence and control of Almighty God, on the condition that they would love Him with all their soul, serve Him with all their might, and love their neighbors as themselves.

The Lord raised up Joseph Smith as a Prophet when a mere boy, and sent holy angels to minister unto him. He was introduced by God the Father unto His Son Jesus Christ, who proclaimed unto him the truths which had made the Latter-day Saints a free and rejoicing people. That same Gospel was being carried unto the various nations of the earth today; the same testimony accompanied the administrations of the servants of God. He had heard the late President John Taylor declare that when this Gospel was preached in England, before a word had been spoken relative to the gathering, the Saints there rose up and said in prophecy, "We shall go to America; we will gather unto Zion."

When the Spirit of God thus rested upon the people they felt to leave parents, brothers, sisters, all earthly ties and associations, and gather with the Saints in this land. In Illinois they were banished from their homes after the martyrdom of their leaders and came to these wastes—as they then were—poorly clad and scantily provided with the necessities of life; and if evidences were needed of the sufferings which they endured, let them go to Florence a few miles above Omaha, on the Missouri River, and there find the record where thousands laid down their lives as they journeyed westward, from the effects of the disease which visited them. God designed that the people should obtain lessons through these experiences; but, he asked, had those who lived now forgotten the sacrifices and sufferings which the Saints formerly endured in journeying to this promised land? How many men and women in that congregation had stood by the open graves of their relatives and friends and seen them buried without even the form of a rude coffin to screen their dead

bodies from the pressure of the cold earth—their eyes bedewed with tears, but their hearts inspired with the loving hope of seeing fulfilled in the future the predictions of the Prophet Joseph that they would yet become a happy, great and prosperous people—tried more by wealth than they had ever been by poverty?

How many fell away from the faith when passing through those trials? Very few indeed. But today we saw men and women turn away from the truth, forgetting their covenants and obligations and wrapping themselves in the cloak of selfishness. God designed that the Latter-day Saints should be an independent people, subject to their own will and governed according to their own purposes. Men and women living in these mountain vales, while rejoicing in their possessions, freely acknowledged these gifts as coming from God, holding them as His stewards and subject to His will. There were others again who said: "I control these possessions; I am going to look after number 1. The poor may cry, the distressed may wail from want and grief, and I will turn a deaf ear to them. I have passed through enough, and if people come here and suffer want and hardship, it is nothing more than I have undergone myself. Let them do as I did." This was not pleasing to the Lord. He gave us our possessions that we might put them to good uses, and that our ears might not be stopped to the cry of distress.

He rejoiced in the thought that the Prophet Joseph sealed his testimony with his blood, and left it on record that they might profit by what he suffered. He rejoiced to see the children of Zion increasing, the Spirit of God resting down upon His people, and to know that so many of them were true and faithful to the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some people were indifferent to the payment of their tithing, to partaking of the holy Sacrament, and other ordinances of the Church. They seemed to regard rest and recreation on the Sabbath as of more consequence than assembling with the congregation of Saints and worshipping God according to His divine decree. He would say to the heads of families—"Do all the work you can on the Saturday; provide then all your food for the Sabbath, so that your wives and daughters may have no household duties to perform on the Lord's day. Teach your children, also, that it is not sufficient for them to go to the Sabbath school and partake of the Sacrament there, but that they must go to the Tabernacle and partake of it with the general assembly of the Saints." To Sabbath school teachers he would say: "You are not fit to teach the children of Zion if your idea is that the partaking of the Sacrament in the Sabbath school is enough, and that you need not go to the Tabernacle." They should go and join the general assembly of the Saints, that they might be instructed by those called upon to speak to them. The man or woman who