

# Saturday Talk

By an Ex-Editor.

The man who starts out as a reformer and endeavors to teach his fellows better ways always has a hard road to travel and has very much to contend with. It may be that he has a divine plan to introduce, a system of excellence, in every respect superior to any of the existing systems around him, yet he will find that men are wedded to the old ways, and however defective they may be, tradition sanctifies and makes them sacred in the eyes of their adherents and they cling to them with unyielding tenacity. The most striking and prominent example which mankind has of this is the case of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He taught the people the most sublime truths in the most simple language, and He practiced the principles and doctrines which He taught. There was an entire correspondence between His teachings and His life. The miracles which He wrought were also evidences of His divine origin. Yet He became a victim of popular fury and was crucified as a criminal. With such an illustration before us of man's bigotry and ferocity, can we wonder that other teachers of divine truths should be persecuted and killed?

When error and false systems prevail it takes time for truth to get a foothold. Its true value is not immediately recognized. Some may accept it as soon as they hear and can understand it, and to them it may seem so beautiful and simple that they rush off and communicate that which they have learned to friends, only to find themselves rebuffed, and perhaps ridiculed and scoffed at. It might be thought that everyone who possessed the ordinary faculties of man would immediately seize and believe in a truth whenever it would be presented and explained to him. But experience proves that this is not so. Men are slow at perceiving and acknowledging the truth. Still, truth, when it is consistently practiced and advocated, does gain ground and does have an effect upon all who come within the circle of its influence.

The sixty-three years during which the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been organized, have given proof of this. The teachings of the Church have not been lost upon the world. Let those who are old enough, or who have examined and given the subject thought, contrast the beliefs of today upon the subject of spiritual communications and powers and gifts with those which prevailed fifty or sixty years ago. At that time so intense was the general unbelief upon these points that to raise mobs to drive the Latter-day Saints from their homes it was only necessary to state, as one charge against them, that they believed in prophets, in spiritual gifts and in the laying on of hands for the healing of the sick. Now there are the Christian Scientists and other organizations which profess to heal the sick through the prayer of faith and the laying on of hands. There are

others who believe spiritual communications can be obtained. They point to the Bible for proofs of the correctness of their position.

The Latter-day Saints have been teaching for upwards of fifty years that the preaching of the Gospel of Christ was not confined to this state of existence; but that after death the principles of salvation will be taught to those who died ignorant of them and they would have the privilege of believing in Jesus as their Savior and Redeemer and of repenting of their sins.

Imagination cannot conceive of a doctrine more philosophic or more godlike and consistent with the benignity and justice of the Great Creator than this, and its great beauty and value consist in its being true and having been revealed by the Lord; yet for long years it was scouted and derided. But now, however, it is slowly working its way into favor and belief, and the day does not appear to be far distant when it will meet with general acceptance. Every humanitarian whose attention has been called to this subject, must have felt that there has been something lacking in the systems of theology upon this point. The Bible teaches that the name of Jesus is the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved; but uncounted millions of human beings have died who never so much as heard his name. The man of inquiring mind asks, "What is their future fate?" The reply of theologians generally has been, "They are damned."

What a horrible conclusion! Human justice revolts at the thought of any being receiving punishment for not obeying laws of which he had never heard; but how utterly irreconcilable with divine justice is the idea of receiving eternal punishment for ignorance of this character!

Will the erection of temples and the work performed therein by the Latter-day Saints have no effect upon the thinking world? Will these not be object lessons to mankind? Already I have heard the remark made many times, when the doctrine of preaching the Gospel to those who have passed away and the possibility of the dead being baptized for vicariously has been explained, "What a beautiful doctrine! And how consoling to the living who believe in it must be the opportunity which they have of officiating for their deceased relatives and friends who were not in a position to receive these ordinances when they were on the earth!"

These doctrines being true they will bear the strictest scrutiny. They supply a long-felt want. They appeal in the strongest and most sympathetic manner to every heart which entertains a love for mankind. They uplift those who believe in and act upon them nearer to God; for they furnish the opportunity for men and women to become saviors in their spheres, to partake of the spirit which the Son of God exhibited in dying for us, and to be co-workers with our Lord in the great work of human redemption. In no system of theology extant, except that revealed by the Lord to His Church, do the inquiries of the human mind concerning the fate of the heathen and of those who

died never having heard the Gospel of Jesus in its fullness and plainness, find satisfactory answers. But in the revelations of the Lord, these doctrines, which have for ages been such mysteries, are revealed in simplicity and plainness and accompanied by the testimony of the Holy Spirit that they are true.

The proposed dedication of the Temple at Salt Lake City has attracted the attention of a great many people outside of Utah. The fact that the building itself has been in the course of erection for forty years, the foundation having been laid so soon after the settlement of the pioneers in this valley, makes the building somewhat remarkable. Constant inquiries have been and will still be made as to the uses to which the Temple will be put, for visitors perceive that it is not so well adapted for congregational worship as the Tabernacle, and all are curious to know why such a costly structure should be erected when the Tabernacle already answers all the ordinary purposes of public worship. When explanations are given in reply to these inquiries, there can be but one conclusion reached concerning the people who have contributed of their means for its completion, and that is that they are sincere and that their faith must be of a thoroughly earnest character to prompt them to make the sacrifices which have been made for this building.

To the Latter-day Saints it must be a cause of satisfaction to see this edifice, upon which their hopes and anticipations have been centered for so many years, at last completed. Isaiah and Micah both speak of "the Lord's house which shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." From the day that the foundation was laid, April 6, 1853, until the present time, there has been a feeling entertained by the Latter-day Saints that this house was the realization of the visions of these inspired men. All the circumstances which they described have actually occurred; the people have gathered from the different nations and in the exact way that these prophets have predicted, and the people in gathering have used the exact language in describing their reasons for coming to the mountains that these men predicted they would use. From the day that the foundation stone of this building was laid up to the present time there has been a steady stream, varying in size sometimes, flowing from the various nations to these mountains, and the Latter-day Saints who have come have done so for the purpose described by these ancient men of God. We see before us, therefore, a direct fulfillment of prophecy—prophecies uttered thousands of years ago. Moses says: "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." This was the rule which he gave for distinguishing a true from a false prophet.

On the 24th day of July, 1847, President Brigham Young came into Salt Lake Valley with a company of pio-