

## RELIGIOUS.

## Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday February 14th, 1892, commencing at 2 p. m., President Angus M. Cannon presiding.

The choir sang the hymn commencing:

O'er the gloomy hills of darkness  
Look my soul, be still and gaze.

Prayer was offered by Bishop F. Kessler.

The choir sang:

While of these emblems we partake  
In Jesus' name and for His sake.

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

## ELDER JOSEPH H. DEAN

was then called to address the congregation. The speaker, having unexpectedly been called upon to occupy some time of the services, felt his own weakness, but would rely on the faith and prayers of the Saints to have the assistance of the Holy Spirit from whom all intelligence flows.

As a people the Saints are in many respects peculiar to the world. Even the congregation gathered here this afternoon, made up as it is of representatives of many nations of the earth, is a peculiarity. Here are people not only from the United States, but from England, Scotland, Wales, from Germany, the Scandinavian countries and from the islands of the sea. All have been led by the same Spirit to embrace the same Gospel and to gather in one place. This is one evidence of the divine origin of the religion which Joseph Smith preached. For nothing but the conviction that truth brings could enable the Saints to endure to be separated from father, mother, kindreds and friends, and to come here in order to learn about the ways of God and to be led by leaders inspired by the Almighty.

As a people, we believe in the same Gospel as that which was revealed by the Lord. We believe in the same kind of repentance, the same baptism, the same ordinance of laying on of hands. We believe in the same resurrection and hold that we, if faithful, shall enter the same kingdom of God over which Jesus reigns. We believe in the same gifts that were originally promised to those who believed, viz.: healing of the sick, tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc. For this reason we are often considered to be a peculiar people by other religious bodies who do not believe in these things.

The speaker would mention another "peculiarity." We believe that a man should not serve as a minister in the ordinances of the Gospel unless he be called to this office by God. This doctrine may seem peculiar in this age, but it was not so considered formerly by the people who better understood the ways of the Lord. We read of Moses that he, when he thought of becoming a leader of Israel, shrank from the responsibility. But God called him in a revelation and commissioned him to this work. When Moses had completed his work, he laid his hands on Joshua and conferred on him the leadership, by divine command. Sam-

uel was called by the Lord to be a Prophet and to take the place of Eli. The first king of Israel and his successors were similarly called by God by special revelations. None of the prophets in later ages assumed their offices without divine command. Even Jesus, the Son of God, honored this law. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews states that none taketh this honor unto himself, unless he be called of God as was Aaron. Aaron received his calling from God through Moses, and no one has the right to officiate in the ordinances of God, unless he be similarly called.

We believe in the Gospel as established by Christ. But we believe also that the Church after the death of the Apostles gradually apostatized from the Gospel institutions, so that the world finally was left without the Gospel, and man-made doctrines were substituted for it. Through the dark ages, the Church was not on earth. Luther did a good work in preparing the world for freedom, so that the Church could again be restored. Luther was a man of God, willing to stand by his convictions. He was educated as a Catholic priest and he did hardly from the beginning contemplate the formation of a new sect. This work was forced upon him. He reformed the Catholic religion as well as he could, but he never claimed to have any revelation or to be called by special revelation from God. He simply did the best he could according to the light he had.

Other reformers differed from Luther and established their churches much as he had done and on similar authority. Calvin did so, preaching his peculiar doctrines and gaining followers. John Wesley differed from both these reformers, and he gained many followers and established another church. Now, Paul says, if any preach another Gospel than he had preached, let him be cursed. The Latter-day Saints believe this. They dare not preach another Gospel. There should be but one faith, as there is only one Lord.

Joseph Smith was taught that none of the existing churches was the church of God. He had been praying for wisdom according to the promise given, that he who asks for wisdom shall obtain it. It was the will of God that Joseph should be the instrument in the hands of the Lord to establish the Church and he was therefore inspired to do as he did, and when he followed the admonitions of the Spirit and went but into the woods to pray, he had the remarkable vision in which the Lord told him that no sect on earth was right, but that all were corrupt; and also that he should receive further instructions in the future, if he were faithful.

This promise was fulfilled when angels visited him and guided him in the establishment of this Church, April 6th, 1830, a work which has grown in strength and increased wonderfully ever since.

When the Elders go out and preach the Gospel to the world, they sometimes meet people who ask them for signs and wonders. They assert that if they could only see a sign, they would believe. People who talk this way, thereby only show their ignorance, for it is written, that signs shall

follow those who believe, not go before faith. They are the reward accorded to those who are faithful. Miracles alone never make men believe. The enemies of the people of God in Babylonia remained enemies, notwithstanding the miraculous deliverance of Daniel from the lions' den and the three children from the burning furnace. Those who ask for signs are mostly imbued with the same spirit which prompted the Jews to mock Christ on the cross and tell Him to save Himself, if He was the Son of God. The speaker had noted that people, who claimed to have been converted through miracles, would constantly seek for miraculous manifestations, and when these ceased, their faith was gone, too. They would not stay in the Church long. Faith should depend on obedience to the Gospel and the testimony that is sure to follow obedience. The ways of the Lord are understood only by the Spirit of the Lord and not by the spirit of man. Hence we find that men at one time can testify that they know this work to be of God and then apostatize and say they know no such thing. The spirit of the Lord has left them and with Him the testimony they had of the truth. They are like a man who is out in darkness with his lamp just extinguished. To him the darkness is denser than if he never had had a light. So it is with those who have lost their testimony through being unfaithful to their God.

The speaker concluded his remarks by earnestly expressing the hope that the Saints may remain faithful, keep the commandments of God and have their garments clean from the corruption that is threatening from the world through all kinds of evil influences, and that the people of God might be kept pure and stand firm to the end.

## ELDER GEORGE M. CANNON

was then called to the stand. Like the previous speaker, he would claim an interest in the faith and prayers of the Saints, and he would not attempt to speak without being prompted by the Spirit of God.

Elder Dean, he said, has explained some of the peculiarities of the Saints. He has reminded us of the fact that those who are gathered here have come from almost every clime; from almost every section of this country as well as from countries abroad, and in every case those who have embraced the Gospel in reality have repented of their sins, been baptized and have had the hands of the Elders laid upon them for the reception of the Holy Spirit. Signs have also followed the believers and every promise has been fulfilled.

The view entertained by many is that the Latter-day Saints are not Christians. The speaker had read accounts written by travelers and in which it was claimed that our religion is hardly any religion at all, or that it is a non-Christian religion. This is an error. The Saints do believe in the principles which Christ proclaimed, and we believe the Scriptures as far as they are correctly translated. The Saints have in reality more light upon these subjects than most other people. Yet, we are willing to accord to everybody full liberty of conscience and infringe upon the rights of nobody.