

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, November 1, 1891, commencing at 2 p. m., President Augus M. Cannon presiding.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn commencing:

Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise Thy name, give thanks and sing.

Prayer was offered by Bishop Elias Morris.

The choir next sang the hymn:

Jesus, once of humble birth,
Now in glory comes to earth.

The Priesthood of the Fifth ward officiated in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

APOSTLE ABRAHAM H. CANNON

was the speaker. He said he realized that his efforts to instruct the Saints that afternoon would be in vain unless he was guided and prompted by the Spirit of God. The words of an Elder might be pleasing to the ear and his ideas brilliant, but unless accompanied by that Spirit those words would fail to touch the hearts of the people. While they might give comfort and perhaps instruct, they would not carry with them that conviction which the simplest words presented by the humblest speaker would if inspired of God.

Among other things they prayed that the Lord would open the way whereby those of their faith who were still scattered among the nations of the earth might be gathered to these mountain valleys and become with them a united people. Other sects did not preach the gathering of their converts to any special locality, being satisfied to convert people to their particular doctrine and leave them in the place where they found them, surrounded by their friends, engaging in the same pursuits which they followed when the word of God, as it was called, was preached to them. In this, however, as in many other things, the Latter-day Saints differed from the rest of the world. They believed that God would in the latter days gather His chosen people from all the nations of the earth. Those who received the truth would need no argument to convince them of the necessity for this gathering; for with the reception of the Gospel the spirit of gathering would take possession of them, and however distant they might be from the land which they knew God had appointed as the dwelling-place of His people, they would still be anxious to forsake their native home and come to Zion.

The Gospel brought to the children of men not only spiritual salvation—that salvation which belonged to the other side of the veil—but it would also help them temporally; and they believed that this gathering was designed by God as a means of preserving them—of protecting them—from the scourges, from the judgments of various kinds which were to be poured out upon the earth in great measure.

How necessary it was that mankind, wherever they were, should make themselves familiar with the plan of salvation which God had established upon the earth. The Latter-day Saints who lived in these mountain valleys

claimed that God had given unto them the truth; they claimed that Joseph Smith was the humble instrument in the hands of God in restoring this Gospel to the children of men, and that it would yet be preached in every land—that all should hear it and have the privilege of accepting or rejecting it, as seemed best unto them. Those who received it would have the knowledge of its divinity; the truth would be made plain to them, and the Spirit of God would bear testimony to them that that which they had received was indeed the Gospel of life and salvation. What was the Gospel? That which Jesus Himself taught while on the earth. It was faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, faith that Jesus died for the sins of the world, faith that through His death atonement was made for the original sin, and that through that atonement all men were relieved from the effects of the fall of Adam. Through His death and resurrection life had been restored to the children of men. Those who had lived righteous lives and kept the commandments of God would live never again to die, while those who had rejected the truth, the sons of perdition, would receive the sentence of a second death.

Having spoken of those having the authority to administer in God's holy ordinances, Apostle Cannon remarked that if we were baptized a thousand times by men possessing no such authority from God, who had received no calling except that which came from within, all would be in vain, and their work would be unacceptable in the sight of the Lord. We must have a constant testimony of the Spirit within us to enable us to withstand the trials and tribulations to which we were subjected here in the flesh, or in the day we looked not for it temptation would overcome us and we would fall again into darkness and unbelief. The only way in which we could retain the spirit of the Gospel and the testimony of its divinity was by doing the work which Christ commanded His disciples to do when on earth.

A most important work devolving upon the Latter-day Saints was the building of temples, for the salvation of those who had died without the truth. They believed that unless they performed a certain work within those temples, they with their dead would be rejected of God. The living must work for the salvation of those who had passed away; the latter must work for their own redemption. They in the spirit world could hear the truth, their spirits could repent; but they could not be baptized for the remission of their own sins. Their bodies lay in mother earth; they had mouldered and turned to dust; but their offspring, the children whom God gave them, were expected to remember their parents. The hearts of those who lived today should be inclined toward those who had passed away by their seeking out the genealogy of the dead as far as possible, and within those sacred buildings dedicated to God, and which He by His presence and favor had accepted at their hands, they must perform the work of salvation for those who had died without a knowledge of the truth.

This, then, was the work which greatly devolved upon the people in

these latter days—none more important for the Saints to consider and carry out. Was this a new doctrine or theory? No; it was the Gospel which had existed from the beginning of time, and which would save every son and daughter of Adam, whether they had heard the truth in the flesh or not. Even the heathen would come within the pale of the Gospel which had been restored in the latter days. Every soul would hear this truth either in this life or in the spirit world. It was the most glorious doctrine, and showed to us, as far as our feeble minds could grasp the idea, the justness and mercy of our Father in heaven. He told us through the revelations which He had given us in the latter days that "as man is God once was, and as He is man may be." His promises had been sealed upon our heads, and if they failed it would only be because we had failed on our part.

Should we, then, be disheartened when troubles came upon us, and when it seemed that we were about to be overwhelmed? No; rather should our hearts rejoice in tribulation, when that tribulation was not the result of our own follies, but because of our virtues, good intentions and diligence in the work of God.

We believed that God had a hand in this work for the dead in these latter days. It was a thing formerly unknown. Why should men desire to learn of their ancestry? From a worldly standpoint it would be the gratification of a curious feeling. But there had been a spirit resting upon them that they could not account for, urging them on in this work, and they had not rested until they had exhausted all portions of the dominion where their relations lived and died years and years ago.

In view of all that God had promised to the Latter-day Saints, if they remained true and steadfast to their covenants they could afford to suffer oppression and indignity, to live and die in bondage if necessary; they could afford, if needs be, to let their blood be shed so that the truth might be established, in view of all that was in store for the faithful; though they might be called to undergo persecution, yet would they know that God's work would go on, and future generations would praise the people who had had the fortitude to go forth among the nations and endure persecution and death in the cause of the Gospel.

The Latter-day Saints were not understood today. Their motives were misunderstood, their actions were misjudged; but God would bring all things to pass in His own good time and cause their trials to cease. Their faults were magnified by the world—and they had enough already without that. They knew they were sinful and corrupt, full of weakness and infirmity; but they were, nevertheless, seeking with the help of God to overcome all evil. They were striving to put themselves under subjection unto the Lord, seeking to establish His purposes—not that they might rule among men, or act in opposition to any human government, but seeking to proclaim goodwill towards all men. They did not seek for power except to preach the Gospel and administer the blessings of life and salvation to the children of men. They had no desire to exclude