

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, February 7, 1892, commencing at 2 p. m., President Angus M. Cannon presiding.

The choir sang the hymn beginning:
Lord, Thou hast searched and seen me thro';
Thine eye commands with piercing view.

Prayer was offered by Elder Henry Dinwoodey.

The choir next sang the anthem:

"Look up and put your trust in God."

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

ELDER GEORGE C. LAMBERT

was called to address the congregation. He said that having been unexpectedly called upon to speak that afternoon, he trusted that he might be prompted by the Spirit of the Lord. The Latter-day Saints were termed a peculiar people, and one of the peculiarities found among them was the custom of calling upon Elders from the congregation to address the Saints without any previous warning.

He knew that his religion was true, but it was one thing to have a testimony of this fact and quite another to be able to impress others with that truth. If he were asked how he became possessed of the knowledge of the truth of the religion which he professed, he might not be able to make a very satisfactory explanation to those who had no faith. While it was quite satisfying to him, unless the person to whom he might attempt to offer the explanation were possessed of the same spirit, he would not be likely to comprehend the testimonies that had been given to him through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The truth which he had embraced had been revealed anew in this age; it was the same Gospel that was preached by the Savior and His apostles. It had been restored again to the earth after the inhabitants thereof had been for a long period deprived of it, they having followed in their own way and devised creeds to suit themselves. It was said of old by the Lord through the Prophet Jeremiah that the people had committed two sins—they had forsaken Him, the true and the living God, and had hewn out for themselves broken cisterns which would hold no water. That expression might aptly be applied to the creeds which existed both now and when the Gospel was restored to the earth. In fact, he believed the prophet foresaw and had in his mind the various religious systems which existed at the present time when he used those words.

If the claims of those who established these different religious systems were analyzed it would be found that the authority which they arrogated to themselves was not very valid. Certainly they did not receive it from the Apostles to whom the commission was given by the Savior, not having lived on the earth in their day.

The Lord condescended to make known His will to the boy Prophet Joseph Smith, who sought Him in earnest prayer, desiring to know

which of the creeds then extant was the proper one for him to embrace. To his surprise—for such a thought had never entered his mind—he was told by the heavenly messengers who visited him that they were all wrong, and that he should embrace neither of them. The various sects, he was informed, were all teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, but that if he proved faithful, the Lord would in due time reveal unto him the true Gospel, and through him establish His Church and Kingdom upon the earth. It was, however, very generally disbelieved, and the idea was even ridiculed, that heavenly messengers ever appeared to the Prophet Joseph. But why not such an occurrence in this age, as well as in the ancient days? If we believed the Bible we must believe that such things did happen in past ages; then was it unreasonable to suppose that they occurred in these latter days? The Lord's hand was not shortened that He could not save, neither had His ear grown heavy that He could not hear. It might be, however, with those who dwelt upon the earth in the present day, as Isaiah declared of ancient Israel, that their iniquities had separated between them and their God, and their sins had hidden His face from them. It might be due, again, to a lack of faith. If people did not have faith in the existence of God, it was unreasonable to believe that He would answer their prayers. Joseph Smith was simple enough to believe that the Lord was capable of hearing and answering prayer in this age just as in the ages that had passed and gone; and he went and bowed in faith before Him. The Father and the Son appeared unto him as two mortal beings, a bodily shape and spoke to him. The failure of professing Christians to have their prayers answered might be attributed to their lack of intelligent faith in the existence of the Deity. A person who had such a faith—as distinguished from a blind faith—in the existence of the Deity had some idea of His character, and he thought that was the kind of faith which the Apostle referred to when he informed us that without faith it is impossible to please God.

Even now, notwithstanding that so many years had elapsed since the Lord revealed Himself to the Prophet Joseph, there was a great lack of faith throughout the world in regard to the true character of the Deity, and it was now almost universally held that He was a Spirit only, and not possessed of bodily powers or parts. But the Latter-day Saints entertained an altogether different view from that held by professing Christians generally. They believed the Almighty was capable, if He deigned to do so, of descending and holding converse with His Prophets here below, as, for instance, He did with Abraham; that He commissioned certain men to act in His name, and that He was displeased with those who took it upon themselves to so act without authority from Him. Those who officiated in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the name of the Lord did so with authority, and we expected the Lord to acknowledge their acts; and He did so. In proof of this they had the testimonies which were offered by the members of this Church, that they know the Gospel to be true.

In bearing his own solemn testimony on this head, the speaker said that if they could only possess this knowledge of the truth, even at the sacrifice of everything the world held dear—fame, honor, wealth, and all else beside—they should not regard that sacrifice as being too great. It was the blessings of God in this life and salvation hereafter that the Latter-day Saints were striving for; hence they were content to have the finger of scorn pointed at them, to be hated of the world, to become unpopular among their fellows if by so living they could only gain eternal life. In order to secure and continue to enjoy this spirit we must follow the path which the Savior had marked out—deny ourselves, take up the cross, and follow Him. We must submit our own will and judgment to that of the Almighty, and keep all His commandments. Whatever the trials through which the Lord might require the Saints to pass in order to sift and test them, and prove their integrity, he trusted that they might hold fast to the end and secure for themselves that prize which they had set out to gain, even eternal life.

COUNSELOR C. W. PENROSE

was the next speaker. He took great pleasure, he said, in listening to the testimonies of his brethren in regard to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because the same testimony which they bore had been given to him, and their words found an echo in his heart. The testimony they had heard from Elder Lambert that afternoon was true and faithful.

It ought not to be accounted a strange thing that God should speak to His people. Those who were called Christians, no matter to what denomination they belonged, professed to believe in the book called the Bible. The things contained in that record were supposed to have come from God by revelation. In the New Testament we read that holy men of old spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. We also read in the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews:

"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the Prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son," etc.

According to the accepted version of the New Testament, Paul wrote the epistle from which he had quoted, although he believed modern skeptics expressed some doubt as to the author. None, however, knew, for certain, who wrote it, unless it had been made known by revelation; and people nowadays did not take much stock in modern revelation; but all sects and parties composing what was called Christendom professed to believe in the Old and New Testaments, and the testimony of both books was that God in former times and in divers manners did speak to the people of the earth by means of prophets. Such being the case, why should He not speak to those living in this age of the world? Could anyone give a good reason why He should not? Some of their Christian friends said, "O, there is no need for it now; we are so enlightened, we are so wise; we are living in the nineteenth century; we are not living in the dark ages, but in the age of Gospel blaze, and we have learned men who have studied the