

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, August 31, 1890, commencing at 2 p. m., Counselor Charles W. Penrose presiding.

The choir sang:

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God.

Prayer was offered by Elder J. M. Sjodahl.

The choir sang:

'Twas on that dark, that solemn night,
When powers of earth and hell arose.

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

ELDER CHARLES W. PENROSE

addressed the congregation. He was thankful to meet with the Saints to unite with them in worship and to partake of the Sacrament. It is a great privilege to be permitted to do so in peace and to receive the teachings that God will impart to us through His servants.

We must remember that only by the Spirit of Truth are we able to comprehend the truth. This Spirit is the Holy Ghost, which enlightens the mind of man on heavenly things. Every person receives at birth a portion of the Spirit of light, and by that men understand natural things. When a man is born again, he receives a higher degree of that Spirit, by which he can comprehend spiritual things, wherefore I desire this Spirit may brood over this congregation, while we are listening to things pertaining to life and salvation.

The speaker read Eph. i, 9, 10:

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."

The Apostle announces that God had made known to him and his brethren a mystery before not known: that God would gather together, in the fulness of times, all things which are in him, both in heaven and upon earth. This makes it clear that there was a new dispensation to come after the apostolic age. The dispensation of Christ was not to be the last, for God had made known that there would be another, in which all things should be gathered together in one, even in Him.

There have been several dispensations. That of Adam, or of the creation, was the first. Noah's dispensation was another. After that there was one in the days of Abraham, who was called out from his kinsmen and received a dispensation of the Gospel. The dispensation of Moses was another, in which the children of Israel were delivered from the slavery of Egypt. They had "the law" given to them because they were not able to receive the fulness of the gospel, being a degraded race, brought up in bondage. They could not, or they would not, receive the Gospel, which was first revealed to them. There-

fore the law of carnal commandments was added, as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. This dispensation continued until the days of Jesus, the Savior.

When he ushered in a new dispensation the principles which he presented were not actually new. They had been preached, to some extent at least, in former dispensations, and some of them, as infidels urge by way of objection, were known to the heathen sages and philosophers of antiquity. But this is no argument against their divinity or of the divine authority of those who brought them forth to the world, because truth is eternal. It has no beginning and no end. It is not invented or originated, although it may be discovered. Solomon says:

"Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time which was before us. The thing that hath been it is that which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun."

Before the sun, the moon or the stars were swung into their orbits, truth, wisdom, knowledge existed, for they are beginningless and endless. God has told us in His revelations to this Church that "all truth is independent in the sphere in which He has placed it, as all intelligence also." And that "intelligence or the light of truth was not created or made, neither can be." Because the truth abides, it is sure to prevail over error, which is transitory, although it may take some time to gain the victory. It is the truth that sanctifies and saves. Learning truth and living by it is the process of natural exaltation. All the prophets of God of all the ages came to present the truth that men might live by it and be saved.

When Christ came to introduce the Gospel, which had already before to some extent been preached, He sent out apostles to proclaim the truth. They were most of them put to death. The Church which Christ established with its authorities, ordinances and gifts of various kinds, only remained in its purity for a brief period. The lights which Christ placed in it were put out by the hands of wickedness, and soon darkness came again and prevailed upon the face of the earth. This was but a repetition of history, for through departure from the truth darkness came in again like a flood after each successive dispensation. Since the days of the Apostles many churches have been established by men, until, in this age, we find the world divided and subdivided, without unity of faith or unity of worship, or unity of practice. When we examine the claims of the Churches we find among them scarcely any actual knowledge of spiritual things. The people believe or pretend to believe, but there is no positive knowledge, though they may believe much and hope much. The fact that there is so much division and strife proves that there must be a vast amount of error in so-called Christendom.

Now Paul speaks of a dispensation in which all things in the Lord, on the earth

and in the heavens shall be gathered into one. Union is to be the great characteristic. This is a marvelous dispensation and a mighty one. This must be the dispensation spoken of by the ancient Prophets, in which "all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest," when there shall be "nothing to hurt or destroy" and His name will be honored in all the earth. These are to be some of the effects of the dispensation of the fulness of times.

This dispensation cannot yet be fully established upon the earth, for the children of God are not yet made one. Nor has God as yet gathered all things on earth and in heaven together. The dispensation of Christ's personal ministry could not have been the dispensation of the fulness of times, for it has not brought about the effects of that dispensation. It was evidently to be a future manifestation of God's power and authority and mercy to man.

The scriptures declare that God is unchangeable. If we can find out in what manner He opened up former dispensations we shall be able to understand how He will usher in the last and crowning dispensation. In every such instance He raised up a Prophet to do this work, and we must conclude that He will open the dispensation of the fulness of times in the same way.

But how many people are there in the present age who are willing to accept a Prophet? The world sneers at the idea. People think they know too much to need a Prophet in this "age of Gospel blaze," and the popular idea is that Jesus was the last of the Prophets and there were to be none to succeed Him. Yet He promised to send Prophets and wise men and scribes, and said they would be persecuted and killed. All the Apostles were Prophets, and the early Christians were exhorted to "covet earnestly the best gifts but rather that they should prophesy." John the Revelator was a Prophet, and was to prophesy before many nations and kings and tongues, according to the testimony of his own book. Rev. x, ii. If God is consistent with His own character and methods He will usher in the last dispensation by raising up a Prophet.

The Latter-day Saints now announce to the world that God has in this generation raised up a man who was ordained to usher in the last dispensation. And this is my testimony today. No matter what may be the opinion of the world, I know that God Almighty has opened the dispensation of the fulness of times. It is here and will remain. God has restored the ancient Gospel in its fulness and is gathering His people in one on the earth. And I testify that He is gathering them also in the heavens through the instrumentality of his ancient and modern Prophets and Apostles. The day is drawing near when all the Saints of God in the heavens will come down and those who are alive and remain on earth will be caught up to meet them.

The speaker here quoted several Scripture passages to prove that these events would take place.