

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, October 26, 1890, commencing at 2 p. m., Counselor Chas. W. Penrose presiding.

The choir and congregation sang:

We thank thee, O God, for a prophet
To guide us in these latter days.

Prayer was offered by Elder Thomas E. Taylor.

The choir sang:

Behold the great Redeemer die,
A broken law to satisfy.

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

BISHOP ORSON F. WHITNEY

addressed the congregation. He desired the inspiration of the Almighty in order that what he should say might be suitable to our needs on this occasion. It is necessary under such circumstances to enjoy a Spirit superior to that of man, even the Spirit of truth which has been promised to all who obey the Gospel.

What is truth? There are many conflicting notions and ideas in the world concerning this. Who can declare what is truth and what is not? The best definition I know of was given by Joseph the Prophet. It is stated thus: "Truth is knowledge of things as they are and as they were, and as they are to come." There is to my knowledge no definition so correct as this. It appeals to our reason and commends itself as proceeding from God. The Spirit of truth was promised by Christ before leaving his disciples. When I go, He said, I will not leave you comfortless, but I will send you another comforter, even the Spirit of truth. This Spirit came down upon the Apostles at the day of Pentecost, after they had received the commission to go out and teach the nations in all things which had been commanded unto them. This Spirit caused them to prophesy and to work wonders and miracles in the name of God. But, more than this, it made manifest to these disciples things as they were, had been and would be, filling their souls with knowledge which is power. It is greater to know God the Eternal Father and His son Jesus Christ; it is greater to know whence we came and whether we are going than to have the greatest of miraculous gifts or heavenly visions. Knowledge of these things was given to the disciples when the Spirit of truth was shed forth upon them.

Truth is eternal. It never was created, neither can it be destroyed but goes onward from eternity to eternity, and causes to cleave to it all who love it. God reveals truth as seemeth Him best; here a little and there a little, but we must not suppose that because our eyes are opened so that we can see the light, that it was created just at the moment of its discovery by us.

God has revealed truth in differ-

ent ages. "Mormonism" we, the Latter-day Saints, hold to be the everlasting Gospel, formulated in the infinite wisdom of our Father. He did not create the fundamental principles of this Gospel, but he formulated them into a code of laws and has revealed them from time to time. Its origin was in the heavens.

Adam had this Gospel. He was baptized after his expulsion from the garden and had the Spirit given unto him. After he had fallen, he repented and was redeemed. Enoch had the Gospel. He preached it and practiced it until he and his city were sanctified and taken to heaven. Of course this is incredible to the carnal mind even in this age of scientific miracles, when so many wonderful truths are coming to light. But miracles will increase, as shall knowledge, until it will become clear that all wonders have taken place according to natural principles. Abraham and Moses preached this Gospel and the latter would fain have brought his people to see God, had they not been so rebellious that they had to be deprived of the Gospel and the higher Priesthood.

After the lapse of centuries the Gospel was again preached in its former purity, when Jesus came and promised the Spirit that should lead unto all truth. We marvel at the heroism of ancient men and women of God, Daniel, for instance, who defied the edicts of a king, or of Shadrach, Mesach and Abednego who told the ruler that they would not bow down to his image, though they should be thrown into the burning furnace. So with the Christian martyrs who went to death, rejoicing that they were worthy to suffer for the sake of truth. This was not accomplished by the power of man. When Christ was arrested, someone said that Peter was one of his followers which Peter denied. That was Peter the man, fearing, trembling. But there came a change when the Holy Ghost was given. The same Peter then had faith and courage to suffer persecution and finally to die a martyr's death. This was because of the Spirit he had received which had opened his eyes to a future glory.

Paul is another illustration of the marvellous change wrought by the Spirit of the Gospel. Paul was at first a persecutor, one who assisted in killing the martyrs. But when the Spirit had changed him, he became an Apostle, willing to labor his whole life for the Savior and finally to die for Him. And what a testimony in his dying words: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, and henceforth I know there is a crown of glory laid up for me!" For such wonderful changes in man, no flesh can glory. It is the work of God entirely. It is the operation of that Spirit which teaches the truth—giving a knowledge of things as they are.

Men very often are deceived by appearances. One of the causes of the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo was his mistake in surveying the

field intervening between him and the enemy. He relied upon the word of a treacherous or ignorant guide, instead of going over the ground himself. So we are often deceived in the smaller affairs of our lives. We misjudge persons and things because we take appearances for truths. God sees things otherwise and when He "gathers His jewels," many who are now first will be last and many who are last will be first.

The spirit of truth is also a comforter. How often has it brought consolation to the mourning, telling that a time would come when sorrows should cease, and every righteous desire of the heart be gratified. If we neglect Heavenly things for earthly things we will be disappointed; but if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all else needful will be added.

The speaker here read a passage of the Pearl of Great Price, containing a vision of Abraham concerning the pre-existence of man to the creation of the earth as his place of probation.

God said to those who were with Him: "We will go down for there is space there and we will take of these materials and make an earth." Thus the creation of this world began. It was formed out of eternal elements, not made out of nothing. And then there were to be placed intelligences upon it and they were to be proven whether they were willing to keep all the commandments of God. Here is a revelation by the Spirit of truth, showing us that we came here to seek the honor and glory of our God; and no matter what we are called to suffer, we will have glory added to us, commensurate with our trials and our faithfulness.

No doubt we will sometimes be called upon to do that which is distasteful, for in the garden of our mortal lives there are not only roses but thorns. But if we are faithful in all things and endure as our Heavenly Father endured when He was mortal, we will obtain a crown of glory such as He wears when we shall have proved ourselves worthy of that great exaltation. The placing of sorrow and affliction in our way may be admitted to be in one sense the work of Satan, but God is greater than Satan, and all things subserve His purposes. This is illustrated in the case of Job, who was stripped of all his possessions, and yet blessed the Lord in words which for grandeur and nobility never were surpassed. He stood the test, and was made stronger by it. So with Abraham, who had received the promise that his seed should become as numerous as the sand on the seashore, and yet was commanded to plunge his knife into the bosom of his son. We read that Abraham went to obey this command, laying his future hopes and his reputation on the altar, believing in the words of the living God without being fettered by the shackles of a dead letter. This is the way to exaltation; to be as clay in the hands of the potter. Those who do most, suffer most and are faithful in all things will sit down at the