

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, Oct. 19th, 1890, commencing at 2 p. m., Counselor Charles W. Penrose presiding.

The choir sang the hymn:

Praise ye the Lord! my heart shall join
In work so pleasant, so divine.

Prayer by Elder C. D. Fjelsted.
The choir sang:

Arise, my soul arise,
Shake off thy guilty fears.

ELDER JOHN NICHOLSON

was called to address the congregation. In substance he said: It is a great privilege to meet and renew our allegiance to our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. I desire not only to have the attention but the faith and sympathy of the assemblage, that the Holy Spirit may be present, that we may be enabled to worship in spirit and in truth.

It is essential that we should have prepared ourselves in order to partake of the holy emblems of the atonement worthily, that we may not eat and drink to our own condemnation. Those who entertain unfraternal feelings against others have no right to participate in this sacrament. If there are such feelings they should be removed before we come to commemorate the great sacrifice of our Redeemer, made for the salvation of all human kind.

Many people abroad have been astounded to learn that the Latter-day Saints worship God and seek to follow the footsteps of His only begotten Son. It has been imagined by some that they repudiate the Bible, but I do not believe that there is any other community that believe as firmly in the contents of that book as they do. This idea has gained ground because we believe in other sacred records, notably the Book of Mormon. But if we examine the latter, we will discover that there is the most beautiful harmony between its contents and those of the Old and New Testaments.

I hold in my hand the Book of Mormon, a history of the people, who once lived on this continent and who have left evidences of their advanced civilization in numerous and vast ruins that are found in many parts of America. Jesus visited this people in his immortal body, shortly after His resurrection, and organized His Church on this land with Apostles and other officers which characterized His fold in Palestine. The statement of His ministry is contained in this record, which was originally engraven on metallic plates, which were delivered to Joseph Smith, the Prophet, by an angel. The book was translated by the power of God. In order to show the harmony existing between its teachings and those contained in the Bible, I will read from its pages. The speaker then read the 6th and 7th and from the 10th to the 15th verses of the 9th chapter of the 2nd Book of Nephi.

This passage, he continued, is a

condensed statement of the prominent features of the Gospel. The atonement is set forth as being necessarily of Divine character; then the assertion that death was entailed as a consequence of the fall; the space between death and the resurrection; the restoration of the spirit to the body through the atonement, followed by the judgment, when man, having been brought forth from the grave, shall appear before the bar of God. As the book states, the means of restoration must be a Divine sacrifice, because that atonement could only be made by a Being who had always kept the law, on whom the law had no claim—one who was perfect. According to the theory of the Gospel, as presented in the Scriptures, before man came here he existed as a spiritual entity. It was necessary, in the wisdom of God, for him to come to earth and take on physical conditions, in order to gain an experience which he otherwise could not have reached. It was also necessary that the law, given in his previous condition, should be broken and an atonement provided for, that there might be a restoration and man be, through Jesus Christ, redeemed from the condition entailed by breaking the law of his eternal existence. Thus you see we believe in the teachings of God, and hence our immovable faith and trust in Him. By the atonement a way has been opened up for all to regain their bodies after having laid them down. The Great Master being the first fruits of the resurrection. But we must take the course pointed out by revelation if we wish to obtain glorious future rewards. Paul states that in the resurrection there shall be a number of classifications or glories in the future condition. One glory is that of the sun, another that of the moon, and another that of the stars, and as the stars differ from each other, so shall it be in the resurrection. Here are three grand distinctive divisions, some of which are numerous subdivided, as typified by the differences existing between the stars which bedeck the firmament and revolve in space. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon had a vision upon this subject. The statement of it embraces, in my opinion, a more comprehensive view of the final condition of the dead than is anywhere else presented. It gives a succinct statement of some of the classifications of the intelligences who come here and pass through a probation. The highest conditions are reached by those who follow the example and precepts of the Redeemer, through good and evil report. They accept of Him as their Lord, and of His great sacrifice and atonement, and thus have a living faith. They yield obedience to the commandment to repent of their sins, repentance being the process of spiritual rectification. They cease to do evil and learn to do well, and live by every word that comes to them from God.

When this point of the process has been reached, it is in order for the professed disciple to validate his allegiance by the performance

of some specific act. In human agreements it is customary for documents to pass between the parties, rendering the transaction of force in law. Things temporal are largely typical of matters spiritual. Hence he who has begun the work of rectification is required to receive the administration of baptism by immersion in water, by one holding authority from Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.

There is a beautiful harmony between the atonement of our Lord and the consequent ordinances. When a repentant soul enters the waters of baptism, he typifies the death and burial as well as the resurrection of Christ. He goes into that water with a load of sin on him, but he is buried in the waters of spiritual regeneration and comes out of the watery grave free from his sins. You see how beautifully typical of the fundamental principles of Christianity this first act of the disciple is: And it furnishes a starting point for him from which he can commence to lead a new life. It never fades from the mind of him who undergoes it. We often dwell fondly on this initial act and detail the circumstances associated with it, especially as we received the promised witness that our sins were remitted through it.

The covenant of baptism is of necessity not one-sided. Both parties to it, the Redeemer and the creature, are represented at the water's edge. Our Savior is present there by His agent—His servant—whom He has authorized to perform this act, which can not be administered by any one who has no divine authority to do so. It is clear that such a performance would be worse than useless. There is a resemblance between the seen and the unseen, the temporal and spiritual, and as no earthly institution would acknowledge a transaction by one who had no authority from it, it is absurd to imagine that God would depart from this common sense rule. Without the existence of revelation from God there can be no authority from Him. Hence those who repudiate revelation acknowledge their lack of authority to act in the name of Jesus.

Those who assert that the gifts of the spirit are done away with because not necessary, unwittingly proclaim that they are destitute of the Holy Spirit. Where that spirit is, gifts and manifestations will be found. To assert to the contrary would be as ridiculous as to take the ground that a human being could be anywhere present and not in some way exhibit his powers and intelligence.

When we have given obedience to the ordinance of baptism, the promise is that we shall have the Holy Spirit, and if we do not receive this influence, something must be wrong, for the promise of Omnipotence cannot fail. The reception of the Holy Ghost is received when the authorized servants of God lay their hands upon the head of the disciple and he is then, in the words of our Savior, "born of water and of the Spirit" and belongs, therefore, to the kingdom of God and His Christ. He is no longer a child of the world;