

## RELIGIOUS.

## Sunday Services.

Religious services were held in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, Dec. 8th, 1889, commencing at 2 p. m., President Angus M. Cannon presiding.

The choir sang:

How pleased and blest was I  
To hear the people cry.

Prayer by Elder A. M. Musser.  
The choir sang:

Though in the outward Church below  
The wheat and tares together grow.

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

## ELDER WILLIAM SPRY

addressed the assemblage. I realize, he said, the importance of the position of standing before a congregation of Latter-day Saints and proclaiming unto them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In order to do so in an acceptable manner before our Heavenly Father, it is necessary that the speaker should be guided by that Spirit which shall lead unto all truth. While I have been absent from the midst of the Saints and the body of the Church, it has been my lot and privilege to labor among the people of the South, and, in connection with my brethren associated with me, of lifting up my voice and warning that people of the judgments which are about to overtake the nations of the earth, crying unto them "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." In thus laboring we have been directed by the Spirit of our Heavenly Father and thereby enabled to do an amount of good in our weak way in bringing some of the honest in heart and the honorable among men to a knowledge of God and His commandments.

The labors of the Elders abroad are, in every sense of the word, a labor of love. They leave their homes and all that is near and dear to them by the ties of nature, and in many cases go among those who prove to be their enemies. They have a testimony for themselves that this is the Gospel of Jesus Christ; they know that they are enjoying the blessings of their Father in heaven because of their faithfulness; and that He has again set His hand to redeem the children of men. They offer unto the people of the world the same advantages and privileges that they themselves are permitted to share. It is true that, in a great measure, the Elders are misunderstood and looked upon as were the Prophets and Apostles of old. All manner of evil is spoken against them, and not unfrequently they have nowhere to lay their heads at night. But the knowledge that they are in the discharge of their duty, that they are striving to perform that which is required at their hands and to prove true to the trust which has been committed to their care is sufficient to enable them to gain strength and go forward without murmuring, searching after those who are honest enough to receive them, and bearing testimony

as the opportunities are presented before them.

If we go back to the time of our Savior, when He and those associated with Him were laboring in the same cause in which we ourselves are engaged today, when they were teaching unto the children of men the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and preaching repentance, we find that even our Savior Himself was persecuted, driven from one city to another, offered all manner of abuse, and finally His blood was shed in order that He might seal His testimony. Persecution has always prevailed, indeed, whenever the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been preached upon the earth, and I presume it will continue to be so as long as Satan bears rule over the hearts and minds of the people. But there will come a day when the Latter-day Saints and all who are desirous of living in accordance with the principles of the Gospel of the Son of God will be understood in their true light, and those rights and privileges which are theirs will be accorded to them.

I am often led to compare the situation at the present time with that in the days of our Savior. We find the Pharisee and the publican going into the Temple to pray together. The publican, understanding that he was not keeping the commandments of God, that he was a sinner indeed, pleaded with the Almighty to have mercy upon him because of his sins. The Pharisee, clothed with his self-righteousness, looked with contempt over to the poor publican, and thanked God that he was not like unto him. A similar state of affairs exists today among the various sectarian denominations in the world. When they see a servant of God, an Elder of Israel, laboring in their midst and striving according to the ability which the Almighty has given unto him for the welfare of the human family, they fold their righteous robes around them and with contempt exclaim, "We thank Thee, O God, that we are not like unto these men." When we come to sift the matter, however, we find that even out of their own mouths they condemn themselves, for they thank God that they are not keeping the commandments which He has given unto them—that they are not following in the ways of that humble servant who is striving to bring mankind to a knowledge of God and His laws.

One of the great peculiarities connected with the Latter-day Saints is that they believe the Bible to be the Word of God; and inasmuch as there are certain commandments contained therein pertaining to the human family which have been given unto men through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, through the mouths of the Prophets and Apostles, the Latter-day Saints are peculiar enough to believe that those commandments contained in Holy Writ concern them today just as much as they concerned the people who lived two thousand or four thousand years ago; they believe that the Gospel is the same "yesterday, today and forever;" that it was

formulated in the heavens even before the foundation of this earth was laid, and that it shall continue throughout the endless ages of eternity just so long as there is a soul to redeem.

Great opposition is manifested on the part of many when the Elders teach that there are certain gifts and blessings connected with our obedience to the laws of God, and oftentimes they are laughed to scorn, reviled and driven from the midst of the people for teaching doctrines of that kind. In my travels through the South, however, during the fall, I found not a few professed ministers of the gospel teaching unto their flocks that gifts and blessings shall follow the believer, as in times gone by. Still, there are numbers who cannot, or rather will not, see the matter in this light.

I can bear my testimony that these gifts and blessings are identified with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that these signs shall follow those who believe in the name of the Savior; and that the Holy Ghost shall be conferred upon them. May God bless the Latter-day Saints and the honest in heart everywhere, and cause them to see the necessity of bowing in obedience to the Gospel; for by so doing they shall obtain eternal life.

## ELDER DAVID R. GILL

desired to bear his testimony to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He had been absent as a missionary for nearly two years, and was pleased to have had the privilege of going forth to bear the Gospel to the people. He knew that Joseph Smith was a Prophet, and he felt thankful to his Heavenly Father that that boy went out into the woods to enquire of the Lord in prayer whether or not the true Gospel of Jesus Christ was then upon the earth. But for that Gospel being thus restored to the earth through the Prophet Joseph, the Saints would not be gathered together in these valleys today and worshipping God in that Tabernacle.

The speaker knew that the gifts and blessings of the Gospel were with this Church, for he himself had received some of them in his native land before coming here. He had witnessed the gift of tongues, interpretation, and prophecy, and had seen the sick healed. If the Latter-day Saints were false prophets, where, he added, were to be found the genuine ones to prove them false? Let us rejoice as a people that the Lord has quickened our understandings, that we have received the Gospel, and been gathered together from the nations of the earth. Though we may be persecuted, ridiculed, or even put to death, we know that the Lord will come, and that the time is near at hand.

May God bless us as Latter-day Saints; may we ever prove true to the covenants which we have made with Him, and gain our reward in the celestial kingdom.

The choir sang the anthem,

O, give thanks.

Benediction by Patriarch John Smith.