

Tabernacle Meeting.

The large congregation that assembled in the tabernacle on Sunday was addressed by

ELDER ORSON PRATT, who commenced by reading some words written by Joseph Smith while in Liberty jail, beginning, "For there is a time allotted unto every man," etc.; also a passage in a revelation given in 1832, to the same prophet: "All kingdoms have a law given, for there is no space where there is no kingdom," etc., both found in the Book of Covenants. These ideas were given more especially for the benefit and instruction of the Latter-day Saints, still they were open to all who might derive benefit from them, whether connected with the church or not. He could remember since he was very young of hearing much preaching by the various denominations, that after leaving this world there was a place for the good and another for the wicked, the former of which was called heaven and the latter hell. He had also been led, while young, to suppose that the earth was the only world there was, and that the sun and moon and stars were created merely to subserve the uses of this creation in which we lived. But after reflecting and studying on the nature of God he began to regard these matters differently, and he gradually realized that God was not so limited in his works, but that he had organized other worlds, which were peopled and dealt with by their Creator in the same manner as was this creation. He referred to the doctrine revealed to Joseph Smith concerning the creation of this earth, showing him how Moses received the knowledge of the creation as recorded in Genesis. It had been shown to Moses in a vision while he was on an exceeding high mountain, whither he had gone to pray. God then so illuminated the mind of Moses by his spirit that he could behold the interior and also the entire surface of the earth. Moses, having this extended vision of the earth, was very naturally anxious to know its origin, and he began to inquire with regard to all the creations of God, and was told by him that no man could see all of his creations without beholding all his glory; and no man could behold all the glory of God and still remain upon the earth in mortality; but the Lord said he would reveal to him a portion of his works, and commanded Moses to write what was shown him concerning the creation of this earth. Elder Pratt then gave an interesting description of the manner in which the Lord caused the day and night to be discerned until the fourth day, when he caused the sun to shine on the earth and give light by day according to natural laws. He quoted from the book of Abraham, translated from Egyptian papyrus, to prove that the days mentioned in Genesis in connection with the creation were periods of one thousand years' duration, for they were reckoned by the time which prevailed on a planet called "Kolob," on which the periods of time that are called one day was a thousand of years on this earth. He then showed that as the Lord was 6,000 years organizing this earth, so the earth should exist in a temporal condition for 6,000 years; and as God had brought man on the earth on the seventh day, so in the 7,000th year he would bring from the dust those of mankind who had been faithful, and crown them with immortality. Kolob was the celestial world whose time controlled this earth; this was where the spirits of men who inhabit this earth had all once dwelt, and there God sat and issued his commands for the government of the earth and others connected with it. The speaker then showed that worlds had longer or shorter days in proportion to their distance from the great luminary—the sun. In one of the revelations which had been read the Lord gave a glorious parable, showing the set times he had ordained for visiting the worlds he had created, and likened them to a man who owned vineyards and sent his twelve sons to labor, one in each vineyard, telling them he would visit each one in his season, that he might enjoy the light of his countenance. This shows that other worlds have fallen as well as ours, for those which were glorified always enjoyed the light of God's countenance. He referred to Enoch, to whom a revelation had been given, in which he had been told how the Lord could pierce all his creations with his eye, thus showing the omniscient power of the Creator. Some day this world would become a glorified mansion or heaven for the righteous inhabitants that now dwelt upon it. The veil would be lifted and they would be in the presence of God. Distance would be in one sense annihilated, as it was sometimes said to be in relation to telegraphic communication which extended from land to land. It did not matter what distance intervened, if all could see, hear and converse with each other as though they were only a few feet apart. The time would come when the knowledge of God would cover this earth "as the waters cover the channels of the mighty deep." The people would become as familiar with the history of the antediluvians as they were now with that of contemporaneous peoples on both hemispheres. Also the dealings of God with the inhabitants of former worlds, and of worlds yet in the future would be revealed to the Latter-day Saints, and God would make of this people the wisest and most glorious people on the face of the whole earth. To say that they would be taken into the presence of God in their ignorance, without preparation, would be absurd in the extreme; and in order to progress it would require the power of the ancient seers, and constant communication with those beings which were exalted above them. Many of the matters referred to to-day were to be found in the Book of Covenants, and the saints would find that in reading that book a hundred times through, if it were read with the spirit, the Lord would open new light and new ideas each time upon the subjects therein contained. There was much philosophy in that work when read by the light of heaven. He stated that the students in the schools and universities, when they were searching out the secrets of botany and chemistry and other sciences, were simply becoming acquainted with the truths of God, and were thus preparing their minds to understand the greater things which were known by celestial beings; and the speaker urged all to reflect and study all knowledge so that they might rise in the scale of universal intelligence.

The above is a very brief synopsis of the able discourse of Elder Pratt, it being somewhat lengthy and replete with new ideas and interesting information on the subjects dwelt upon.