

he that repents not, from him shall be taken away even the light which he hath received; for my spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord of hosts." I pray that we may not forfeit the influences of that Spirit, but that we may be open to its influences, be guided by its power and eventually come back into the presence of the Father, and the Mother, who are waiting to welcome their children on their return from this earth school in which we are now pupils and students. God grant it in the name of the Master, Amen.

"The Penitent," a soprano solo, was sung by Mrs. Ivy E. Crandall.

PREST. SEYMOUR B. YOUNG.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

I am very much honored, this morning, in the privilege of standing before you, my brethren and sisters, for a few minutes, to occupy your valuable time, and I desire that you will give me the benefit of your faith and prayers while I am thus engaged.

It is written in the scriptures that angels were heard singing "Glory to God on high, peace on earth, and good will to men." It was about the hour of the birth of the Child of Promise, that was to be the Savior of the world, who was to introduce conditions that would lead to the salvation of the human family. The subject of the redemption of mankind was about to be introduced, the set time had come. We have an account of a prophecy uttered on this continent, by Samuel, the Lamanite, who stated to those with whom he associated, a small number of people who accepted the teachings of

the Gospel truths of the Nephite prophets, that there would come a time when a sign would be given, and this sign should be a prophetic evidence of the coming of the Lord. This sign was, there would be no darkness between two days, there would be a day, and a night, and a day when there would be no darkness. The enemies of the members of the little church forbade the people who belonged thereto uttering this prophecy, or expressing their belief in its fulfillment, and finally threatened that if they again uttered their belief, in this sacred prediction that death should be the penalty and destruction would come upon the Church. The Nephite prophet, as recorded in III Nephi, sought a secret place and knelt in prayer to God to learn if He might look for the fulfillment of that prophecy, and the deliverance of his people. The Lord Himself spoke unto him in an audible voice and said, "Lift up your head and be of good cheer, for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world." The history records that on that very night as the sun went down, there was no darkness, the light was bright and did not fade away, and the prediction was fulfilled, to the discomforture of the enemies of the Church, and to the joy of those who believed in the fulfillment.

Far away, across the ocean, in the land of Palestine, in the town of Bethlehem, the child Jesus was born, and wise men, we are told, came to do homage unto Him. They had followed a star that had beckoned them, or inspired them we might have said, to follow; it certainly was an inspiration to them. When these wise men had come to

Jerusalem, they visited King Herod, and asked him where the child was born that was to be king of the Jews. Herod was very much excited, no doubt, because of the question, but he could not answer it, and he appealed to the Jewish Sanhedrin and they answered him that the child should be born in the city of David or Bethlehem, as it was called, and the wise men continued their journey until they came to where the star stood over the place where the young child lay. Herod had said unto them, Return to me when you have found the new born child and bring me word that I too may come and worship him. But we find here an interposition of the Spirit of the Lord, for an angel who guarded the young child and its welfare, whispered unto the wise men, Go not back by the way of Herod: he seeks the young child's life. So the wise men went their way back to their homes in another direction, and did not call at Herod's palace. The record says, when Herod found that the wise men had mocked him, or deceived him, he was very much enraged, and he issued an edict that every child in Bethlehem and vicinity, from two years old and under, every male child, should be put to death. To escape this violence, or this threatened death, the angel of the Lord warned Joseph and Mary to take the young child and flee into Egypt. The purposes of the Eternal Father were not to be thwarted, were not to be prevented of their fulfillment by any act of a wicked king. It had been decreed that the coming forth at the appointed time of this precious child should be for the redemption of the human family, for the salvation of our Father's children.

We read that when Jesus began His ministry, the first act recorded of Him was His coming to John. John, his fore-runner, we are told, had been baptizing in Jordan, and Jesus came to him and asked, or demanded baptism. John said, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" But Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now." And then he suffered Him; and when He came up out of the water John saw the Holy Ghost "descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him," and a voice from on high was heard to exclaim, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

In the day in which we live, we have a history of a boy, a farmer's boy, one who was not versed in the religious doctrines of the Christian churches, one who had never been ordained a minister, according to the manner of their ordinations, one who had not been chosen by them, and if his name had been mentioned anywhere in their churches for advancement, or for ordination, he would probably not have been accepted. He was fourteen and a half years of age, without education, but there was a power and presence on high that was watching over this boy, and was ready to answer his prayers. When he retired into a secret place, within the confines of a shady grove, he bowed himself before the Lord and humbly inquired in fervent prayer, how he could obtain knowledge and wisdom from his heavenly Father. It appears that while he was earnest, and his desires true and faithful to learn and to understand, there was an evil power watching and following him, and that power seized upon him and choked his utterance, and had such effect upon him that he de-

clares that he was unable to audibly utter his prayer, and continue his supplications, but he said, "I lifted my heart to God, I prayed earnestly in the silence of my soul, and very soon I saw a bright light shining upon the leaves of the trees above my head, and it was so bright I thought at first that the leaves of the forest were on fire, and yet though the light was so vivid, it did not consume the trees nor the foliage." Soon that light settled down upon the youthful supplicant and filled his soul, filled his being, every fiber thereof with its effugence, and as soon as this occurred the evil power fled and left him free to the enjoyment of the Holy Spirit that was sent down from God, even the Holy Ghost.

President Smith informs me that my time is about up. I will close by saying that Joseph Smith, the occupant of that sacred grove, was ministered to by the power of God, and thus prepared by the ministration of the Holy Spirit to receive the presence of the Father and the Son and to be commissioned by Them to do a great work for the redemption of our Father's children. The Prophet Joseph maintained his position as a chosen servant of God from that time through all the days of persecution and trials that he was called to pass, until the day of his martyrdom, sealing his testimony with his blood. I know that he was a prophet of God, and he fulfilled the measure of his creation, and the destiny that God had assigned unto him. Amen.

ELDER BRIGHAM H. ROBERTS.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

The word of the Lord to Moses:

"But only an account of this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, give I

unto you. For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man, but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.

"And it came to pass that Moses spake unto the Lord, saying: Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and thy servant will be content.

"And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine.

"And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words."

I read this passage of scripture because there is in it the representation of a great program of the creations of God, the integration of worlds and the disintegration of worlds, and it presents on a grander scale than any other scripture that I am acquainted with, the great governing and controlling power of God, both in the integration or creation of things, and also in the disintegration of things; but whether worlds are being formed from chaos and brought into orderly systems, or whether systems themselves be disintegrated, it affords me unspeakable pleasure and confidence in the stability and in the preservation of orderly creations, that God presides over all. I believe, too, from the manifestation of God's wisdom that wherever disintegration is going on, where destruction apparently takes place, it will only be for the purpose of making room for more excellent things; and so this scripture ministers to me very comforting thoughts, and though I sometimes read in the works of men who give attention to