

THE NEW BIRTH—BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD—TEMPLES.

DISCOURSE BY ELDER GEORGE Q. CANNON, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE, SALT LAKE CITY, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 3RD, 1871.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

I will read a portion of the 3rd chapter of Peter's first epistle, commencing at the 18th verse:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

In the first chapter of this epistle the same subject is continued. The apostle says:

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though

now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

When I was called upon to speak, these passages suggested themselves to my mind. Whether the Spirit will lead me to dwell upon them at length I do not know, but there are important principles embodied in these verses which I have read in your hearing, principles which, when rightly understood, change the belief of men in relation to the future, that is, the belief of those who receive the commonly accepted creeds of Christianity. For some reason or other, there is an idea prevalent in the Christian world that mankind, when they lay down their mortal lives, are consigned to a condition or place of happiness or pain, there to remain throughout the endless ages of eternity. There may be a few who do not entertain this belief, but it is the general belief of most of the sects which comprise Christendom. There is an idea prevalent that if men do not receive what may be termed a conversion, or change of heart, if they do not obtain a remission of sins through the blood of Jesus, and they die in this condition, their doom is