

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

THE RISING OF CHRIST.

In the month of April, about eighteen hundred and sixty-four years ago, wonderful scenes were transpiring in the land of Judea—scenes that have left their impress upon all the world. The Jews had been looking for deliverance from the Roman yoke that bore heavily upon them; they had listened to the voice of the Prophet from the wilderness, and he had become a victim to the rage of the ruling power; they had seen One come forth with a message strange for that time yet having a peculiar harmony with the desire of the age, strange for its arraignment of the unbelief of those who relied on God for deliverance, yet harmonious with their hopes in heralding the Deliverer; they beheld the One who proclaimed Himself the Son of God, but as His methods did not comport with their ideas of what the Christ should do, they followed that course which they thought would disprove the claim He made, and at their behest He was put to death. And the culminating act in that great tragedy of the spring season of long ago has stood before the world from that time as irrefutable evidence of the wisdom of the saying that "God's ways are not as man's ways," for in the former there is no failure. The very means by which the Jewish leaders sought to disprove the claim of Jesus of Nazareth that He was the Messiah, the Son of God sent to redeem the world, became the means through the overruling providence of the God of Israel to proclaim for all ages that same Jesus as Messiah, Redeemer, Deliverer to all mankind.

It was not alone the death of the Lord Jesus that accomplished the work. There was the further great event of His return to life in the fleshly tabernacle He had occupied upon earth. Therein was His triumph as a Messiah; therein was the deliverance that He wrought from the power of the grave, the redemption he brought to mankind from the power of death. Others had died before in the cause of salvation, but He was the one to bring the redemption from the dead, and from that time there has been a steady, irresistible growth in the operations of the dispensation which He ushered in,—the extension of knowledge of a risen Christ, in whose revivifying was the example, the door, for the resurrection of all men.

By the crucifixion there was almost blotted the hopes of those whom the lowly yet miraculously gifted Nazarene had gathered around Him. His death had plunged them into the depths of a sorrow and hopelessness so great that no new Prophet could rescue them from it. One thing, and only one, could revive their fallen hopes, remove their disappointment, and restore the supreme joy they had experienced in looking on Him whom they regarded as the Christ; there was but one thing to save Christianity to mankind. That one thing was that Jesus should live again in the flesh. Nothing short of that would suffice to establish the

disciples' faith in Him, and enable them to continue to declare Him as the Christ. All that could be done in mortality was done, and it required the triumph of immortality to proclaim to the world that the Redeemer had come to earth. Hence Jesus rose again. And the corporeal resurrection of Jesus became the prime fact of Christian history. It raised the joy and faith of the disciples beyond all they had known before, and it became the burden and central feature of their testimony from that time forth.

With what body did He rise? The Apostles had seen Him crucified, and they saw Him risen again, communed with Him, not for a day, but for a month or more; and many others in Judea communed also. There was no mistake as to His identity. It was Jesus, having the same body that was nailed to the cross—the body of flesh and bones which was pierced by the nails and the spear, with immortalizing spirit that had superseded the mortal blood which had been shed. With what body do all the dead rise? With the body of flesh and bones which they occupied in mortality. Jesus is the pattern, and there is none other; hence a similar resurrection, a reunion of the spirit, and of the fleshly tabernacle come from the grave. The resurrection by the Lord is the only resurrection, and to it all who are resurrected come. And as surely as He was resurrected, so shall all men be—and His rising up is a living fact, of which no other fact of history has such indisputable evidence.

The resurrection is established by the testimony of the disciples, and of all the facts that follow in the history of Christianity. But it was not alone in the Eastern hemisphere that He left His witness. Here, on the Western continent, at the same time that great events were transpiring in Judea, events none the less important to this hemisphere were occurring. Simultaneously with the agony on the cross there was instituted the operations of God's judgment upon the wicked, in the convulsions of nature, which buried cities, desolated valleys, rent the mountains, and smook the earth. But "the more righteous part of the people" were spared, to gather in "the land Bountiful." There they heard the voice from heaven declaring: "Behold My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified My name: hear ye Him." And the people beheld, as the historian says:

And it came to pass as they understood, they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a man descending out of heaven; and He was clothed in a white robe, and He came down and stood in the midst of them, and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon Him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them.

And it came to pass that He stretched forth His hand and spake unto the people, saying,

Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world;

And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.

And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, the whole multitude fell to the earth, for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should shew Himself unto them after His ascension into heaven.

And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying,

Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know, that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.

And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into His side, and did feel the prints of the nails in His hands and in His feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one, until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes, and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety, and did bear record, that it was He of whom it was written by the prophets that should come.

And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying,

Hosanna blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship Him.

It was Jesus, who had been slain at Jerusalem—the same that the disciples in Judea testified as being risen from the dead. In the Book of Mormon, quoted from, is the witness on this land of the risen Redeemer—the resurrected Christ is the central fact of that history, the burden of its whole testimony. And in this day angels and the voice of God have declared to men the absolute truth of the Book of Mormon record. It is a record of the triumphant resurrected Christ.

In our own day, in addition to the angelic declaration of the truth stated in the ancient records of the Bible and Book of Mormon, is the still further appearance of Christ Himself—the resurrected Redeemer. He came to the boy Joseph Smith. He appeared afterwards in the Temple erected to His name; and here is a record of one of His appearances as perfectly authenticated as any other:

We, Joseph Smith Jr. and Sidney Rigdon, being in the Spirit on the sixteenth of February, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two,

By the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God—

Even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father, through His Only Begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning,

Of whom we bear record, and the record which we bear is the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision.

In the New Testament, which contains the record of His first appearance after His resurrection, as well as in the other works named, there is promise of a still further appearing, when