

as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the main cornerstone of the Gospel of salvation. The event is recorded by all the inspired biographers of our Lord and forms the starting point of the brief history of the acts of the Apostles. It was one of the first announcements made by the messengers of peace to the pagan world. "He is risen" was the joyful greeting of the angels to the mourning disciples on the first Easter morning. "He is risen" was repeated by them to a wider circle of followers, who again took up the strain and brought the wonderful news to the world. On the truth of the fact, the reliability of Christianity stands or falls. "For," as Paul puts it, "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God."

The importance of the question of the resurrection of Christ has not escaped the opponents of Christianity. They have seen that as long as this chief of all miracles remains, it is vain to assail the others. If the Founder of our faith really conquered death and rose from the tomb, His divinity is at once established and His claims must be true. Hence their diversified efforts to render the Biblical accounts incredible, all of which, however, have stranded against the well-established facts.

A brief statement of the evidence of the resurrection miracle is the best refutation of all arguments against it. On the evening of the crucifixion the body was hastily wrapped in linen and conveyed to a tomb near by. This tomb was no doubt similar to those that can still be seen in many places in Palestine, a small chamber cut in the rock, the opening closed with a stone slab and with a small enclosed court before it. The chief priests, remembering that something had been said about a resurrection, persuaded Pilate to take possession of the tomb, whereupon the stone was sealed and the enclosure guarded by soldiers. In the meantime several of the women hurried into the city in order to procure the spices necessary for embalming the body before the Sabbath, all business then being suspended.

The Sabbath being over, Mary of Magdala and two others very early in the morning went out to the tomb. On their arrival they found the stone had fallen down and the first rays of the rising sun revealed to them that the body was not there. Mary at once returned to the city, but her companions entered the enclosure, where they found an angel sitting on the stone. The guard was also near, but panic stricken. The angel explained what had happened and told the women to bear the news to the Apostles. By this time Mary had found Peter and John and informed them that the beloved remains had been taken away, she did not know by whom. The two started at once for the tomb. Peter entered the grave chamber and examined the surroundings. He found the linen clothes neatly folded on the floor, a sufficient refutation of the statement that the body had been stolen, since a desecrator of the grave would not have had time to attend to such a trivial circumstance in the pres-

ence of the guard. The idea then dawned upon the two disciples that Jesus had risen, and they returned to the city. Mary now arrived for the second time and stood weeping in the court. She saw two angels, who inquired into the cause of her sorrow, and as she turned, Jesus was there. As soon as she recognized Him, she was told to hasten to the disciples and inform them that He lived. As she departed on the joyful errand she overtook her two companions who had first been with her in the early morning, and Jesus again appeared and repeated His message.

The soldiers, as soon as they had recovered from their fright, went to their headquarters and reported that an earthquake had occurred, rolling the stone from the grave, and that when they recovered from the effects of the shock, the tomb was empty. Being well bribed, they changed their statements so as to convey the idea that the body was stolen while they slept—an absurdity that does little credit to the ingenuity of the priests. Think of the Roman soldiers asleep on duty and yet, although sleeping, cognizant of the fact that the disciples stole the body!

During the time these events took place, a large company of women from Galilee and Jerusalem had assembled and departed for the tomb with spices, in order to perform the last service to their dead Master. But when they arrived and found the little chamber empty they were much perplexed. Then two angels appeared and reminded them of the promise Christ had given that He should rise. They then returned and told the assembled Apostles of their experience. Peter again went to the tomb and the Lord appeared to him, but what passed between them is not recorded. Later in the day He was seen by two disciples on the road to Emmaus, to whom He gave a lengthy discourse. In the evening Jesus appeared to the Apostles and showed them His pierced hands and wounded side. The following Sunday he again visited the Apostles, on which occasion the doubts of Thomas were tenderly set at rest. Afterwards he appeared to the Twelve and to a multitude of more than five hundred brethren, gathered in Galilee, according to appointment. Subsequently he came to Peter and six other disciples on the shore of the Galilean sea, when He commissioned Peter to feed His flock, fully reinstating him in his position at the head of the Twelve. On the fortieth day after the resurrection He led His followers out to Bethania and from there He ascended the Mount of Olives and was taken away, "and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Lastly He was seen by Paul, the famous persecutor of the Nazarenes, and that the vision was real, his conversion and subsequent zeal in the cause of Christianity amply prove.

Such is the evidence that Christ rose from the dead. Thus numerous are the witnesses to this miracle. If anything can be established by testimony, this fact is beyond dispute. In this truth we have the guarantee of the divine origin of Christianity and also of Mormonism, which is nothing but Christianity as revealed in this age and founded on the fact that Christ

lives. We have also a strong foundation for our faith in a future happy existence, inasmuch as we follow Christ, for as He lives, so His followers shall also live. To them death has no sting; the grave no horror, for the victory belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### WHO WASTED OUR VALLEY?

With the purpose of discrediting the reports of the Utah Pioneers and the works done by them and the Mormon people in the Great Basin, an old story is periodically revived to the effect that still earlier explorers found the valley of the Great Salt Lake a fruitful, smiling garden. Now comes a Denver paper, the latest to give publicity to the story, and in a recent issue, says: "The Mormons in Utah have so often claimed that they found Utah a wilderness and a barren waste and made the desert to blossom as the rose that a good many people believe this florid tale. John C. Fremont, the explorer, however, tells differently. In his memoirs he states that on first penetrating to the valley of the Great Salt Lake in 1842 he found it covered with luxuriant vegetation, a regular garden of nature in fact. The whole valley was carpeted with the richest, densest grasses. This magnificent vegetation was largely cleaned off after the Latter-day Saints had been in the country some years and it was done by sheep."

Gen. Fremont is not the only one whose recollections of gorgeous vegetation, of waving grasses reaching to the feet of the mounted horsemen, and all that sort of thing, have ever and anon been flaunted in the face of those who declare they came to a desert country, parched, arid and forbidding, and by industry have made it fruitful and delightful. As to the Denver journal's notion that "this magnificent vegetation was cleaned off by sheep after the Latter-day Saints had been in the country some years," we suggest the query whether it is not possible that the cleaning off process had been done before the Latter-day Saints came? To be sure, there is difficulty in discovering the sheep to do it at that prior period, but not more so than in accounting for the mysterious and total disappearance of "the luxuriance of the rich, dense grasses" between Gen. Fremont's visit in 1842 and Brigham Young's arrival in 1847. We submit that our Denver contemporary, in justice to and explanation of Gen. Fremont's veracity, should endeavor to make the coming of the sheep and the going of the grasses, during the years 1842-47, somewhere near simultaneous.

#### THE GATHERING.

Writing from Brodlington, Alabama, E. B. Dormon makes some inquiries as to the causes for the Latter-day Saints gathering together, and asks advice regarding emigrating to Utah, stating some very good reasons which impel him to consider that step.

The general reply to his inquiry why the Saints are gathering to America is that the Lord has appointed that place for the assembling of His Saints in the last days. Those who receive