

Walking

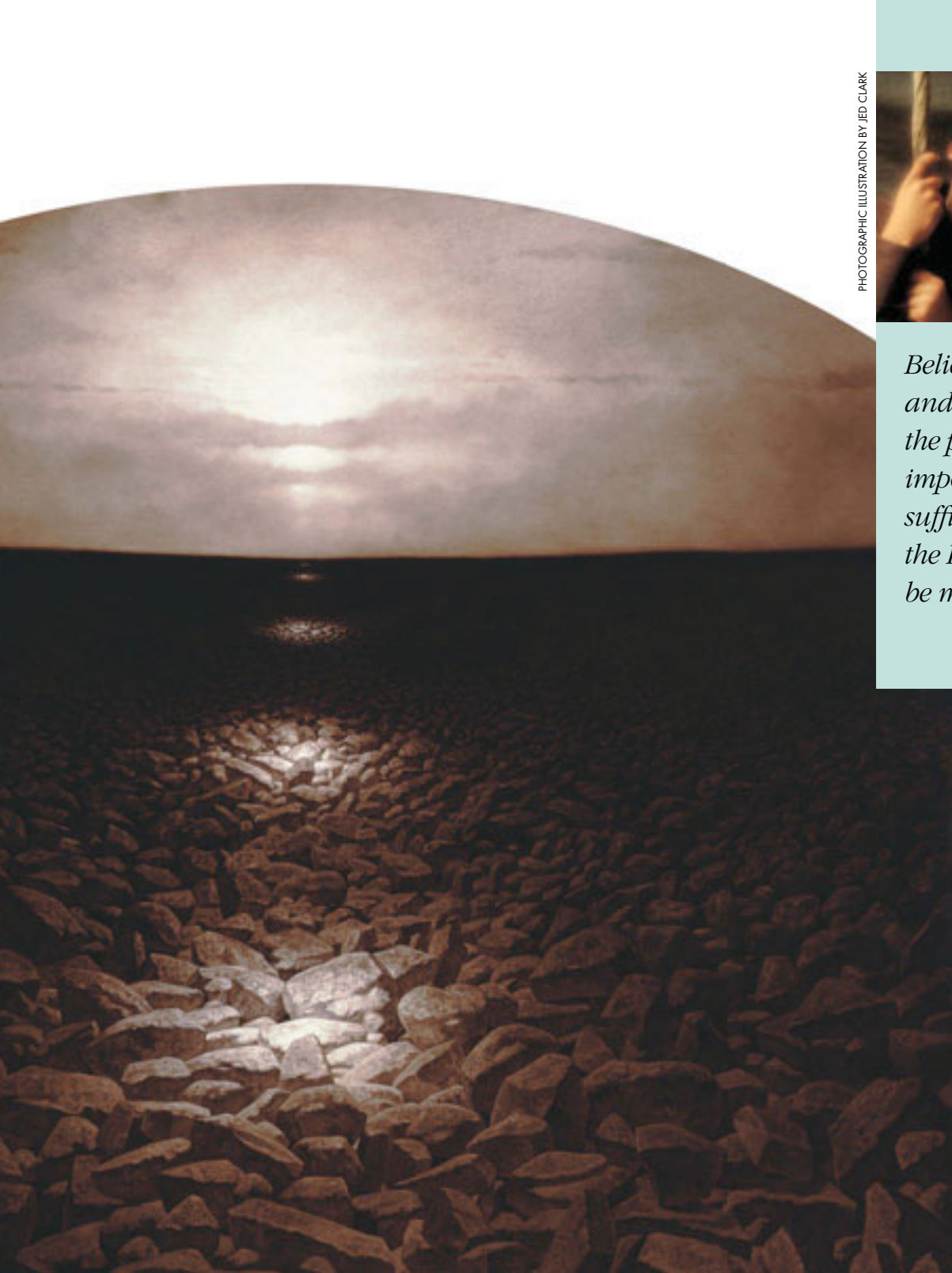
THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

By Michael
R. Blair

In recent months I have been particularly drawn to Psalm 23 because I am, in fact, walking “through the valley of the shadow of death” (verse 4). Being diagnosed with a rare form of lymphoma with an uncertain prognosis has been sobering, to say the least. But I’ve felt great hope in my Savior. He truly has been with me to teach and comfort me. Here are a few things I’ve learned:

- His teachings are a pattern for happy living. My greatest joy has been in serving others—the way the Savior spent His life. Of course, any good that I have done pales in comparison with what He did for us. He asks only that we do “all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23).
- The Lord knows what it is to suffer. Alma 7:11 teaches us that Jesus suffered “pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind” so that He can succor us. Whatever I have felt, am now feeling, or will yet feel, He knows what it is like.
- Faith in Him is powerful. Believing in miracles and the power of the priesthood is important. But faith sufficient to accept the Father’s will (see John 17) may be the most important factor in recovery. I am confident that whatever God’s will is regarding my disease will be right.
- The Savior’s grace is sufficient for all of us. We often look back at our lives and hope the good outweighs the bad. I am starting to understand that the Atonement is not something we earn. It is a gift freely given. The Lord’s grace is real, and it is sufficient to pay debts that we cannot.

REMEMBER THESE, BY DAVID LINN



PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY JED CLARK



Believing in miracles and the power of the priesthood is important. But faith sufficient to accept the Father's will may be more important.

I do not believe that my illness is a punishment from God. Instead, this is a time for me to learn to be dependent on Him and His Son. Regardless of the outcome of this dreadful disease, I am grateful that God has not—that He will never—give up on me. Perhaps our tests are yet another chance for us to seek after Him and to come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. ■

Would you like to share how Jesus Christ has touched your life? We welcome accounts of your gospel experiences relating to the Savior's ministry and mission as well as insights on the mission of the Son of God. Possible topics might include the Atonement, grace, healing, hope, or repentance. Please limit submissions to 500 words, label them "We Talk of Christ," and submit them at ensign@ldschurch.org.