

Sealed Sepulchres

By David L. Frischknecht

Curriculum Department

The day after Dad passed away, my mother, brothers, sister, and I made the necessary visit to the mortuary for funeral arrangements. Our tasks included choosing a casket and a vault into which the casket would be placed.

As we considered the options, I noticed a sales pamphlet promoting a certain vault. It claimed, among other things, that the vault was self-sealing, and it guaranteed that seal for 75 years. Even though the occasion was a solemn one, the guarantee amused me.

“Who will check on the seal in 75 years?” I wondered. “And if someone does and it has failed, who will collect on the guarantee? What are the chances, really,” I mused, “of that vault staying sealed?”

In that thoughtful moment, my mind was directed to another vault, the one described in Matthew 27. This vault, actually a sepulchre in a distant time and place, had an opening covered by a great stone:

“Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

“Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

“Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

“Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.



The claims in a sales pamphlet seemed unlikely—almost laughable—but they reminded me of a promise that is eternally guaranteed.

“So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch” (Matthew 27:62–66).

Of all the commands ever given in the history of kings and generals and rulers, Pilate’s command to keep the sepulchre sure was perhaps the most futile.

What chance did that sepulchre have of remaining sealed? In reality, there was no way for the soldiers to carry out that order as there was no way that the sepulchre would not open: “Behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door” (Matthew 28:2).

Because of the unsealing of that one sepulchre, all the vaults and tombs and sepulchres that have ever been sealed will open. Guaranteed.

The Rock of Our Salvation is our deliverer from death and from hell. He is “the resurrection, and the life” (John 11:25). Because of Him “hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel” (2 Nephi 9:12). ■