

HE IS RISEN

By President Thomas S. Monson

Wherever I travel, I try to pay a visit to the town cemetery. It is a time of contemplation, of reflection on the meaning of life and the inevitability of death. In the small cemetery in the town of Santa Clara, Utah, I remember the preponderance of Swiss names which adorn the weathered tombstones. Many of those persons left home and family in verdant Switzerland and, in response to the call “Come to Zion,” settled the communities where they now “rest in peace.” They endured spring floods, summer droughts, scant harvests, and backbreaking labors. They left a legacy of sacrifice.

The largest cemeteries, and in many respects those which evoke the most tender emotions, are honored as the resting places of men who died in the cauldron of conflict known as war while wearing the uniform of their country. One reflects on shattered dreams, unfulfilled hopes, grief-filled hearts, and lives cut short by the sharp scythe of war.

Acres of neat white crosses in the cities of France and Belgium accentuate the terrible toll of World War I. Verdun, France, is in reality a gigantic cemetery. Each spring as farmers till the earth, they uncover a helmet

here, a gun barrel there—grim reminders of the millions of men who literally soaked the soil with the blood of their lives.

Death, a New Chapter of Life

Many years ago I stood by the bedside of a young man, the father of two children, as he hovered between life and the great beyond. He took my



Christ's Resurrection, as a part of the Atonement, opens the way for all of us to be resurrected.

FROM LEFT: MY REDEEMER LIVES; BY ROGER LOVELESS; MAY NOT BE COPIED; PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY MATTHEW REIER, CHRISTINA SMITH, AND WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; BEHOLD MY HANDS AND FEET; BY HARRY ANDERSON; LAZARUS; BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH

1. We have come to earth to learn, to live, to progress in our eternal journey toward perfection.



2. Some remain on earth but for a moment, while others live long upon the land. The measure is not how long we live but rather how well we live.



3. Then comes death and the beginning of a new chapter of life.



4. This new chapter leads to that glorious day of resurrection, when spirit and body will be reunited, never again to be separated.



hand in his, looked into my eyes, and pleadingly asked, “Bishop, I know I am about to die. Tell me what happens to my spirit when I die.”

I prayed for heavenly guidance. My attention was directed to the Book of Mormon on the table beside his bed. I began to read aloud:

“Now, concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection— . . . the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, . . . are taken home to that God who gave them life.

“ . . . The spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow” (Alma 40:11–12).

My young friend closed his eyes, expressed a sincere thank you, and silently slipped away to that paradise about which we had spoken.



Christ said to the grieving Martha, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die” (John 11:25–26).

Victory over the Tomb

Let Luke, the physician, describe the experience of Mary and the other Mary as they approached the garden tomb:

“And they found the stone rolled away. . . .

“ . . . They entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

“ . . . As they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men

stood by them in shining garments:

“And . . . said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

“He is not here, but is risen” (Luke 24:2–6).

This is the clarion call of Christendom. The reality of the Resurrection provides to one and all the peace that surpasses understanding. It comforts those whose loved ones lie in Flanders fields or who perished in the depths of the sea or who rest in tiny Santa Clara. It is a universal truth.

As the least of His disciples, I declare my personal witness that death has been conquered, that victory over the tomb has been won. May the words made sacred by Him who fulfilled them become actual knowledge to all. Remember them. Cherish them. Honor them. *He is risen.* ■

From “He Is Risen,” Liahona and Ensign, Apr. 2003, 2–7.