

The Grave Has No Victory

By Reyna I. Aburto

Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

Through the redeeming Atonement and glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ, broken hearts can be healed, anguish can become peace, and distress can become hope.

On this glorious Easter Sunday, our children joyfully sing, “On a golden springtime, Jesus Christ awoke and left the tomb where he had lain; the bands of death he broke.”¹

We are grateful for our knowledge of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. And yet at some point in our lives, we will have felt heartbroken after losing someone whom we love dearly. Through the current global pandemic, many of us have lost loved ones—either family members or friends.² We pray for those who are grieving such loss.

President Russell M. Nelson has said:

“Irrespective of age, we mourn for those loved and lost. Mourning is one of the deepest expressions of pure love. ...

“Moreover, we can’t fully appreciate joyful reunions later without tearful separations now. The only way to take sorrow out of death is to take love out of life.”³

We can imagine how Jesus’s friends, who had followed Him and ministered to Him,⁴ felt upon witnessing His death.⁵ We know that “they mourned and wept.”⁶ On the day of the Crucifixion, not knowing what would happen on Sunday, they must have been overwhelmed by distress, wondering how they would go on without their Lord. Nevertheless, they continued ministering to Him even in death.

Joseph of Arimathea begged Pilate to give him Jesus’s body. He took the body down, wrapped it in fine linen, laid it in his own new tomb, and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre.⁷

Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes. He helped Joseph take the body and wrap it in linen with the spices.⁸

Mary Magdalene and other women followed Joseph and Nicodemus, watched where they laid Jesus’s body, and prepared sweet spices and ointments to anoint it.⁹ According to the strict laws of that day, they waited to further prepare and anoint the body because Saturday was the Sabbath.¹⁰ Then, early in the morning on Sunday, they went to the sepulchre. After realizing that the body of the Savior was

not there, they went to tell the disciples who were Jesus's Apostles. The Apostles came with them to the tomb and saw that it was empty. All but Mary Magdalene eventually left, wondering what had happened to the Savior's body.¹¹

Mary Magdalene stayed at the tomb by herself. Only a few days before, she had seen the tragic death of her friend and Master. Now His tomb was empty, and she did not know where He was. It was too much for her to take in, and she wept. At that moment, the resurrected Savior came to her and asked why she was weeping and whom she was seeking. Thinking that the gardener spoke to her, she asked that, if he had taken her Lord's body, to tell her where it was so she could get it.¹²

I imagine that the Lord may have allowed Mary Magdalene to grieve and to express her pain.¹³ He then called her by her name, and she turned to Him and recognized Him. She saw the resurrected Christ and was a witness of His glorious Resurrection.¹⁴

Like you, in some way I can relate to the anguish felt by Mary Magdalene and her friends as they grieved the death of their Lord. When I was nine years old, I lost my older brother during a devastating earthquake. Because it happened unexpectedly, it took me a while to grasp the reality of what had occurred. I was heartbroken by sorrow, and I would ask myself, "What happened to my brother? Where is he? Where did he go? Will I ever see him again?"

Back then I did not yet know about God's plan of salvation, and I had the desire to know where we come from, what the purpose of life is, and what happens to us after we die. Don't we all have those yearnings when we lose a loved one or when we go through difficulties in our lives?

A few years after, I started thinking of my brother in a specific way. I would imagine him knocking on our door. I would open the door, he would be standing there, and he would tell me, "I am not dead. I am alive. I could not come to you, but now I will stay with you and never leave again." That imagining, almost a dream, helped me cope with the pain that I felt over losing him. The thought that he would be with me came to my mind over and over. Sometimes I would even stare at the door, hoping that he would knock and I would see him again.

About 40 years later, during Easter time, I was pondering about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and started thinking about my brother. At that moment, something clicked in my mind. I remembered imagining him coming to see me.

That day I realized that the Spirit had given me comfort in a difficult time. I had received a witness that my brother's spirit is not dead; he is alive. He is still progressing in his eternal existence. I now know that "[my] brother shall rise again"¹⁵ at that magnificent moment when, because of Jesus Christ's Resurrection, we will all be resurrected. In addition, He has made it possible for all of us to be reunited as families and have eternal joy in the presence of God if we will choose to make and keep sacred covenants with Him.

President Nelson has taught:

“Death is a necessary component of our eternal existence. No one knows when it will come, but it is essential to God’s great plan of happiness. Thanks to the Atonement of the Lord, eventual resurrection is a reality and eternal life is a possibility for all humankind. ...

“... For sorrowing loved ones left behind ... the sting of death is soothed by a steadfast faith in Christ, a perfect brightness of hope, a love of God and of all men, and a deep desire to serve them. That faith, that hope, that love will qualify us to come into God’s holy presence and, with our eternal companions and families, dwell with Him forever.”¹⁶

I testify that “if Christ had not risen from the dead, or have broken the bands of death that the grave should have no victory, and that death should have no sting, there could have been no resurrection.

“But there is a resurrection, therefore the grave hath no victory, and the sting of death is swallowed up in Christ.

“He is the light and the life of the world; yea, a light that is endless, that can never be darkened; yea, and also a life which is endless, that there can be no more death.”¹⁷

Jesus Christ Himself declared, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”¹⁸

I testify that through the redeeming Atonement and glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ, broken hearts can be healed, anguish can become peace, and distress can become hope. He can embrace us in His arms of mercy, comforting, empowering, and healing each of us. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.