

WHO MOVED THE STONE?

Resurrection Sunday, Mark 16:1-8

April 9, 2023

Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

Mark 16:2-3

The Easter morning story

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' "

⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Mark 16:1-8 (see Matthew 28:8 for the very next thing that happens)

1. In preparing to carry out their final obligations to Jesus, these women are publicly identifying themselves with Jesus
2. The stone is rolled away ("thrown" in John's gospel) not so Jesus could get out but so that we can see in
3. The "young man" reminds the women that this is happening "just as he told you."
4. Mark ends his story with the "fear of anticipation" precisely because everyone who knows that the story ends with this fear resolved when the women and disciples meet Jesus!
5. From this moment on, the empty tomb has been essential to our belief in the resurrection



The center of Act 3 (and the setting of our text)

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰ Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹ In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

⁴² It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

Mark 15:37-47

1. Jesus' death ("a ransom for many") is the dramatic climax of Mark's gospel, but the resurrection completes Mark's gospel
2. The women are acting out of incredible courage and faith
3. Jesus' death and resurrection assure me of the credibility of his teaching, the integrity of his claims, and his power to save (see Romans 4:25 and Deffinbaugh's sermon)

From resurrection alarm to resurrection joy

⁶ “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him”

Mark 16

1. The gospel doesn’t end at the cross – the resurrection matters because Scripture matters and because faith needs a solid foundation

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15 (but get to “And is Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile” in 15:12-19)

2. In the resurrection story, fear turns to joy and lives are transformed when I meet Jesus

³⁶ As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!” ³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. ³⁸ And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

Luke 24

3. This is the salvation to which Isaiah looked forward and the salvation on which we look back (with thanks to Kim Riddlebarger’s “He Is Risen” sermon)

*⁶ On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare
a feast of rich food for all peoples,
a banquet of aged wine— the best of meats and the finest of wines.*

*⁷ On this mountain he will destroy
the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;*

*⁸ he will swallow up death forever.
The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces;
he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth.*

The LORD has spoken.

*⁹ In that day they will say, “Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”*

Isaiah 25

Resources for studying Mark

The poster for Mark can be found at bibleproject.com

Redeemer Presbyterian's Lent devotions are online at <https://gospelinlife.com/lent-devotional/>

There is a wonderful series of sermons by Kim Riddlebarger (though I think he gets the "don't go into the village" part at least partly wrong) at <http://kimriddlebarger.squarespace.com/downloadable-sermons-on-mark/> Kim Riddlebarger has his Mark 16 resurrection sermon at <http://kimriddlebarger.squarespace.com/downloadable-sermons-on-mark/He%20Is%20Risen.%20%20He%20Is%20Not%20Here%20revised%2046.pdf>

J. C. Ryle has an interesting commentary on Mark's gospel at <https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/mark16.htm>

Doug's favorite Mark commentaries include

J.R. Edwards *The Gospel According to Mark* (Eerdmans, 2002)

France's NIGTC volume (Eerdmans, 2002)

Hendricksen's *Expository Commentary* (Baker, 1975)

Walter Wessel's volume on Mark in *Expositors' Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1984)

Note: Again for this passage, I think Hendricksen has the best analysis.

Josh McDowell, at his Cru site, has a short introduction to the philosophy of the resurrection at <https://www.josh.org/christianity-philosophy-or-history/>

Archibald Alexander has an interesting analysis at <https://www.monergism.com/one-thing-you-lack>

Spurgeon has a Mark 16 sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols34-36/chs2060.pdf>

I appreciate Ray Stedman's work on this text at <https://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/mark/the-child-in-our-midst>

Warfield (1884) has a powerful argument for the reliability of the apostolic eye-witness at <https://www.monergism.com/resurrection-christ-historical-fact>

There are only three theories which can be possibly stated to account for these facts. Either, the original disciples of Christ were deceivers and deliberately concocted the story of the Resurrection; or, they were woefully deluded; or the Resurrection was a fact.

I suggest Horton's longer "Can We Still Believe in Resurrection?" article at <https://www.monergism.com/can-we-still-believe-resurrection> He has a shorter resurrection article at <https://whitehorseinn.org/resource-library/articles/risen-indeed-2/>

Bob Deffinbaugh's resurrection sermon is at <https://bible.org/seriespage/39-burial-and-resurrection-christ>
I included this sermon in my notes because Deffinbaugh does a good job of noting the significance of the resurrection.