



Let The Stone Speak
Mark 15:46-16:4

Albert Henry Ross (pseudonym Frank Morison) was an advertising agent and freelance, investigative writer

- As an atheist he was critical of the resurrection of Jesus and being skeptical he set out to analyze the sources and to write a short paper entitled *Jesus – the Last Phase*
- His paper was written in the hope to prove that the resurrection was a myth

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- Ross firmly believed in the teachings of the renowned skeptic, Aldous Huxley, that, “Miracles do not happen.”
- Ross, “When, as a very young man, I first began seriously to study the life of Christ, I did so with a very definite feeling that, if I may so put it, his history rested on very insecure foundations”

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- The book he set out to write – debunking the risen Christ – was not the book he completed, a fact he recounts in his chapter “The Book That Refused to be Written.”
- At the conclusion of the writing he was brought to, as he calls it, the “unexpected shores” of salvation

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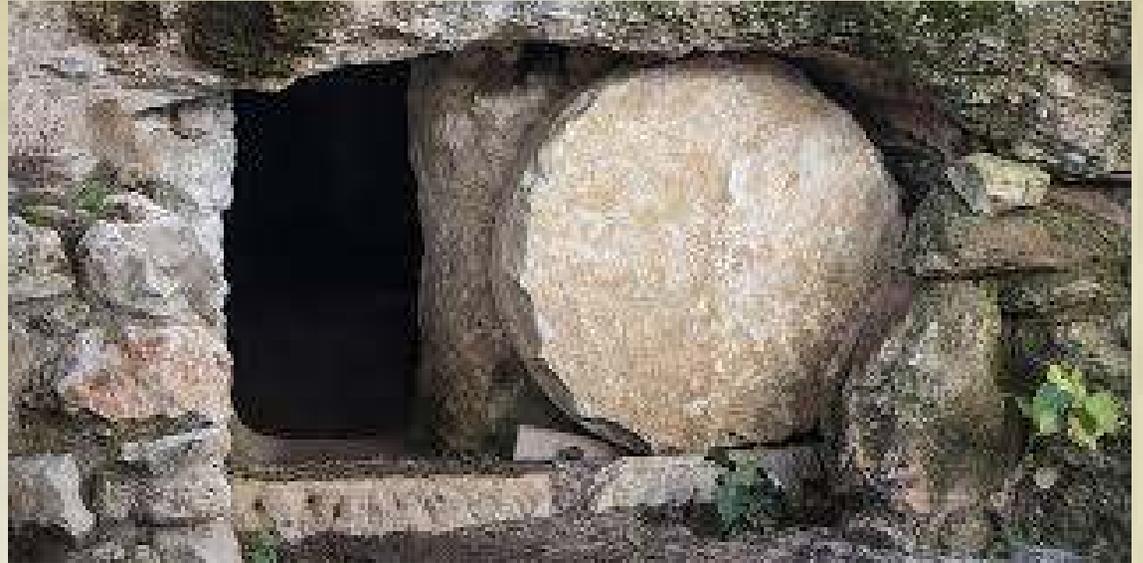
- There was one question Ross kept coming back to over and over, “Who rolled away the stone?”
- He said, “The stone kept speaking to me.”

- C. H. Spurgeon, “Men had an indistinct feeling that this world could not be all, that there must be another life, that intelligent creatures could not all have come into this world that they might perish; it was hoped, at any rate, that there was something beyond the fatal river.”

- **Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV** He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.
- Today we want to let the stone of Jesus' tomb speak out to us as it did to Frank Morison

- **Mark 15:46-47 NIV** 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 Joseph saw where he was laid.

- **Mark 16:1-4 NIV** 1 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.



The stone would have been 4-6 feet in diameter and 2 to 6 inches in depth and weighed between 1 ½ to 2 tons



It would have been placed in a tract that ran down toward the opening and locking in place



To remove it required it to be rolled uphill

Mark used Greek words to “roll something up a slope or incline”

- Luke adds to the picture by adding a different preposition which means "a distance from."
 - So, the stone was not just moved! It was moved up a slope, for a distance.

Mark used Greek words to “roll something up a slope or incline”

- John adds more to the picture, he uses words meaning “to pick something up and carry it away.”
 - The stone was a good distance away and out of place
- God doesn't waste anything or do something without meaning and purpose. What is He telling us this morning about the way He handled the stone?

The stone tell us that death's ancient prison-house is without a door

- Death's house was firmly secured by a huge stone on Friday as it had since the first sin in the garden
- But on Sunday, God removed that massive stone through an angel and the living Christ came forth
- That massive door was not just taken away, but unhinged, put in a position it could not be rolled back to shut Jesus in

The stone tell us that death's ancient prison-house is without a door

- Death's prison-house is without a door
- Those who through faith have looked forward to this day and those who look back to this day believing in faith will pass through, they shall not be shut in
- There is nothing to prevent them from coming out in due time

The stone tell us that death's ancient prison-house is without a door

- **Judges 16:3 NIV** 3 But Samson lay there only until the middle of the night. Then he got up and took hold of the doors of the city gate, together with the two posts, and tore them loose, bar and all. He lifted them to his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

The stone tell us that death's ancient prison-house is without a door

- Samson took upon his shoulders the gates of Gaza-post, and bar, and all- and carried all away leaving the Philistine stronghold open and exposed
- So has it been done unto the grave by our Savior
- Our sins were the great stone which shut the mouth of the tomb and held us captive in death, darkness and despair

The stone tell us that death's ancient prison-house is without a door

- Our sins have now been rolled/carried away by Jesus
- **Romans 4:25 NLT** He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.
- Death to the saved is no longer a punishment for sin, but an entrance into rest
- Who can bar us in when the door is gone? Who can confine us when the barricade is taken away?

The stone acts as a memorial stone of God's great work of salvation

- This stone before our eyes of faith consecrated that day as a memorial of Christ's eternal victory over the powers of death and hell

The stone acts as a memorial stone of God's great work of salvation

- **Joshua 4:1-3 NIV** When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, 2 “Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, 3 and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from right where the priests are standing, and carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight.”

The stone acts as a memorial stone of God's great work of salvation

- **Joshua 4:4-7 NIV** 4 So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, 5 and said to them, "Go over before the ark of the Lord your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites,

The stone acts as a memorial stone of God's great work of salvation

- **Joshua 4:4-7 NIV** 6 to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' 7 tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."

The stone acts as a memorial stone of God's great work of salvation

- This stone rises before us today as a reminder that His victory was achieved for us, and the fruits of it are all ours
- We have to fight with sin, but Christ has overcome it
- We are tempted by Satan, but Christ has already defeated him

The stone acts as a memorial stone of God's great work of salvation

- The Lord's victory for us is our guarantee that eternal life is ours in the presence of our Master, we have no need to fear
- C. H. Spurgeon, Set up that stone before your eyes this morning and say, "Here my Master conquered hell and death, and in His name and by His strength I shall be crowned too, when the last enemy is destroyed."

The stone speaks of the foundation stone of our faith

- The fact of the resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith
- Disprove the resurrection of our Lord and our holy faith would be a mere fable
- There would be nothing for your faith to rest upon if He died upon the tree and did not rise again from the tomb

The stone speaks of the foundation stone of our faith

- **1st Corinthians 15:14, 17 NIV** 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.
- Then it is all deceit and delusion
- But the angel said it best, “He is not here! He is risen! Just as He said!”

The stone speaks of the foundation stone of our faith

- Are you resting your everlasting hopes upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead?
- Do you trust in Him, believing that he both died and rose again for you?
- Do you place your entire dependence upon the merit of his blood, certified by the fact of his rising again?

The stone speaks of the foundation stone of our faith

- If yes, then you have a foundation of fact and truth, a foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail
- But if not, you are building your eternity on a foundation of sand which cannot not last

The stone acts as a boundary stone

- The stone became the boundary between the living and the dead, between the seekers and the haters, between the friends and foes of Christ
- The guards trembled with fear as dead men, but the angel spoke gently to the women
- To His enemies His resurrection became a “stumbling block” or a “rock of offense”
- To His followers, the resurrection is the cornerstone in which all else gets its bearings

The stone acts as a boundary stone

- It is much like the pillar of fire between Egypt's army and Israel
- **Exodus 13:21 NIV** By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.
 - It was darkness and fear to the Egyptians, but light and security to the Israelites

The stone acts as a boundary stone

- How great the joy which the resurrection brings to those who are on the right side of that stone
- How they look for His strength and presence in their lives
- How they look for His appearing
- How they build upon the sweet truth that they too shall rise and with these eyes they will see their Savior

Ask yourselves this morning, “On which side of boundary stone do I stand?”

- It really is that simply
- Will you face eternity on your own merit or on the finished work of Jesus Christ?
- A seemingly simple decision with eternal consequences - so choose carefully

Ask yourselves this morning, “Which side of boundary stone am I?”

- **2nd Corinthians 6:2 NLT** For God says, “At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you.” Indeed, the “right time” is now. Today is the day of salvation.



Let the Stone speak to you this morning! Come to Jesus and live!