

HE STILL MOVES STONES

A stone presented a formidable problem that first resurrection morning. Massive and threatening, it blocked the entrance to Jesus' tomb for the women needing to anoint His body. "Who will move it for us?" they puzzled--but found no answer.

When they arrived at the garden, however, astonishment gripped their hearts. The stone had already been set aside, allowing them to enter the tomb. But the dead Jesus they expected to find was not there! Risen, an angel told them, just as He had said.

That great stone of worry, the deepest of concerns in the early morning hours, had been rolled away for their benefit, not His. And on the inside of the empty tomb they discovered not the worst of their expectations, but the best. Though Jesus had promised to rise from the dead, they hadn't believed... until the stone was moved. Then gripped by both fear and joy, they raced to tell others.

This was not the first stone to conceal a great work of God from those who desperately needed deliverance and relief. It had happened before at the tomb of Lazarus. Because of that stone, the family couldn't see in, nor did they want to. After four days of death, putrefaction and stench on the other side of the stone surely awaited them. Or so they thought.

But Jesus had promised, "Your brother will live again." Still, they hadn't believed... until He moved the stone. Then Lazarus, dead just moments before, walked out of his dark tomb into a bright new life.

The glimpse of resurrection and life eternal foreshadowed with Lazarus was secured when Jesus Himself passed from death into life; not even an immovable stone could hold Him there.

Stones persist today and gain their power in the same way as they did in the time of Jesus: our reluctance and refusal to believe what He has said. For me, ominous stones of fear, confusion, doubt, bitterness and a host of their companions have repeatedly entombed my future and outlook in darkness and blinding hopelessness.

But He still moves stones, and for every one that has gained ascendancy there's a life-giving promise begging me for belief and obedience. Am I anxious? He promises peace that passes understanding. (Phil. 4:6-7). Am I confused? He promises wisdom. (James 1:5).

The empty tomb of Jesus on that first resurrection morning paints this picture of truth: a stone is powerless in the face of promise. And on the other side of the stone we will discover not the worst of expectations, but the best. He lives, and so shall we-- for time and eternity.

HE STILL MOVES STONES

Both Death and Darkness ruled the day
Around the tomb where Laz'rus lay.
Cried Jesus in authority,
"Remove the stone and set him free!"

Have stony trials progressively
Extinguished hopes of victory?
Embrace His word triumphantly:
He'll move those stones and set you free.

Have stones of fear, confusion, doubt
Destroyed your faith and burned you out?
Then look to Him expectantly:
He'll move those stones and set you free.

Are your dreams blocked or gone astray
By stones of hindrance in the way?
His Spirit will bring clarity:
He'll move those stones and set you free.

(Refrain)
He still moves stones, so give Him glory!
He still moves stones to change your story!
What e'er your trial or loss or need
If there's a stone, He wants you freed.