



CHRISTUS REX

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BLESSÉD EASTER

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We are called to love, worship and obey God; to put His love into practice in the power of the Holy Spirit through our witness and service, that all may know Christ our King

Who will roll the stone away?

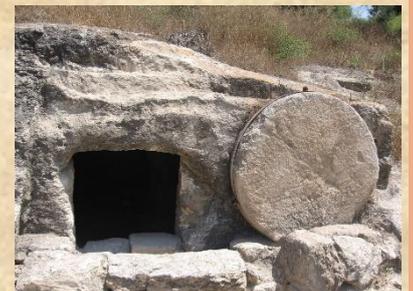
As the women hurried to the tomb carrying the spices with which to anoint the body of their Lord, they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

Some of us face such a problem this Easter time. We would minister to a loved one perhaps, but a great stone lies in the way. Between us and that dear one a great barrier has appeared, one so big that our puny desires appear ludicrous beside it.

Perhaps you face a hostile teenager and, with your hands full of good things—sweet and special presents carefully prepared—you have hurried toward her only to be confronted with that huge stone of anger or resentment, misunderstanding or deceit.

"Love can't find a way for me; I know, I've tried," you say.

Jesus' friends must have known some of our feelings. As the women hurried toward their insurmountable "mountain" of trouble ahead of them, they couldn't think of anyone in the whole world except Jesus Christ Himself who had the power to roll that stone away; and that was their biggest dilemma – Jesus Christ was dead! They had every right to believe He was lying there, sealed into ineffectiveness by the very stone they confronted.



Now you face an immovable object in fear, an object that you have no strength to move, and you believe that the God you had trusted in is unable to help you. On top of it all, you are overcome with a sense of inadequacy; you may be tempted to give up and run away! But love doesn't give up or run away. Love always walks on, even when it believes the object of its love is dead.

The thing to do in the face of insurmountable problems is walk right on up to them with every intention of walking right through them, even if they show no signs of yielding. If you can't walk through, walk around—find a way past, to the Lord, who may or may not move or intervene on your behalf. Somehow, we need to live life with the attitude, "I love the Lord; my hands are full of gifts for Him; and one way or the other, I will find Him on the other side of

this problem.” It’s certain that you’ll never arrive at the other side of your problem by running away from it! So face it; face it together with other believers, if possible. And don’t blame anyone, for that way you’ll exhaust yourself before you ever get there!

I have spent so many years anticipating the stone ahead and practicing rolling it away in my imaginings; I have tried to peer apprehensively around the corner of tomorrow, convinced there are mountains to move just out of sight! “Don’t buy what hasn’t happened,” advised a dear friend of mine as she saw me struggling to move an obstacle that I just knew faced me six months into the future. “Why don’t you wait until you get there?” she asked. I found out that I could spend all my energy pushing away that stone from “long distance” if I liked, but I would probably end up an emotionally depressed wreck.

Don’t do that! Instead, wait until you get there, will you? Most of the things we worry about never happen anyway. We may as well be using that energy to worry about the stones that have been rolled in front of us instead of the ones that might or probably never will be.

The women hurried on through that early morn toward that huge rock that separated them from the body of their beloved Christ. They were frightened, yes, but they went anyway. Don’t wait until you are unafraid before you walk up to the sepulchre. If you can’t walk up to it unafraid, walk up to it afraid. And maybe, just maybe, when you get there, you will find the stone has been rolled away.

Christ cannot be contained within the tombs of our troubles, inside the sepulchres of our sorrows, or behind the doors of our doubt. No stone can shut Him up or away from His disciples. The stone still stood there in that quiet garden, a reminder of the reality of the problems we all must live with; but Christ had moved it to one side so very easily, demonstrating His resurrection power on our behalf. Rejoice for the stone has been rolled away!

[Source: Jill Briscoe, Founder and Executive Editor of *Just Between Us* Magazine and Ministry.]

The Etymology of the Easter Hymn: I Know that My Redeemer Lives

This hymn is one of great praise, especially coming from someone who did not know God’s love until later in life. The story of Samuel Medley shows that God does not leave us alone, even when we constantly tell ourselves that we do not want, nor do we believe in, God’s love. This hymn reminds us that God does live every day in us, and that he lives for us, not just so that we may sing his praise, but that we may be saved in Him. Why does God use us, and furthermore, why does He want to use us? There isn’t really any other answer to this question other than His love for us is so strong that he wants us to be with him eternally, and the way to do that is for us to live in His way. Living like Christ and is not an easy task and is something that we as humans cannot do simply on our own. It takes God and His power to allow us to live a life worthy of Him.

Often some of the best-known works in the religious world come from people that did not begin their life in a religious way. Samuel Medley was a prime example of this, much like fellow poet John Newton. Born on June 23, 1738 in Chestnut, England, Medley was the son of a School teacher, but none-the-less, he was educated privately by his grandfather. While studying with his grandfather, Medley was taught to live faithfully by Christian values, but he was not interested in following what was being taught. As he grew up, Medley became friends with boys who were not Godly, and lead sinful lives. Eventually at the age of 17 he joined Royal Navy. While in the Navy, Medley’s lifestyle did not improve, but rather became even more crass and profane than before.

In 1759, during the Seven Year's War, Medley's ship engaged in a naval battle with a French ship, during which Medley's leg was severely injured. After the battle was over, Medley's leg continued to grow worse, to the point of potentially having to amputate it to save his life. One evening, the physician aboard the ship told Medley that if his leg did not improve by morning, they would have to amputate, or he would die. During the night, Medley remembered what his grandfather had taught him, and he began to pray that his leg would be spared. The next morning, to the surprise of all on the ship, the physician examined the leg and determined that amputation was no longer needed. Immediately afterwards, Medley returned to his room, found the bible his grandfather had given him, and began reading. When Medley's ship had finally returned to England, he was sent to his grandfather's house to recover. During his recovery, his grandfather read to him a sermon written by Isaac Watts, which moved Medley so greatly; he became a committed Christian. After his conversion, Medley began attending the Baptist Church in Eagle Street, London. Shortly after that he opened a school, which he ran with considerable success for nearly six years, but then he found a new calling.

Medley began preaching – and was called to be Pastor at the Baptist Church in Watford, England but he soon moved to Byrom Street, Liverpool, where he ministered to a large congregation. Here he wrote "I Know That My Redeemer Lives". It was first published in George Whitefield's *Psalms and Hymns* without attribution. He later self-published it in 1800 in the London edition of his *Hymns* hymnal. It was usually set to the "Duke Street" hymn tune.

The first appearance of the tune "Duke Street," came anonymously in Henry Boyd's 1793 publication of *Select Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes*. Eventually the tune was credited to one John Hatton, of which virtually nothing is known, other than he lived on Duke Street in St. Helen, Lancaster, England. The tune is only one of many different potential tunes that can be used with the text.

These lyrics appeal to many because of one word –**my**. As Samuel Medley finally understood, I know that Jesus is "my" Redeemer; He came to die for me, specifically. Of course, He came to die for all of us. But isn't it wonderful to know that each of us can profess Jesus as "my" Redeemer; He loves all of us and claims each of us as His own.

I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living Head.

He lives to bless me with His love,
He lives to plead for me above.
He lives my hungry soul to feed,
He lives to help in time of need.

He lives triumphant from the grave,
He lives eternally to save,
He lives all glorious in the sky,
He lives exalted there on high.

He lives to grant me rich supply,
He lives to guide me with His eye,
He lives to comfort me when faint,
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to wipe away my tears
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives all blessings to impart.

He lives, my kind, wise, heavenly Friend,
He lives and loves me to the end;
He lives, and while He lives, I'll sing;
He lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.

He lives and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death:
He lives my mansion to prepare;
He lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to His Name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives!

April Bible Quiz "Raised from Dead"

Link the person raised to the responsible party
(The responsible party may have acted more than once)

Person Raised from Dead

1. Son of the Widow of Zarephath
2. Son of a Shunammite woman
3. An Israelite man
4. Saints in Jerusalem
5. Jesus.
6. Son of the Widow of Nain
7. Daughter of Jairus
8. Lazarus
9. Dorcas
10. Eutychus

Party responsible

- a. Jesus
- b. Holy Spirit
- c. Elisha's bones
- d. Elijah
- e. Elisha
- f. Peter
- g. Paul

Answers to March Bible Quiz Jesus' Last Week

Fill in the missing phrases.

1. On the **Sunday** before his death Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah by **entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey.** (Mark 21:5 and Zechariah 9:9)
2. The **Monday** Jesus caused a furore in the temple area by **overturning the tables of money lenders and driving out merchants.** (Mark 11:12-18)
3. On the **Tuesday** Jesus was teaching in the temple and sat down opposite the place where offerings were placed, and seeing what occurred he called his disciples, and told them: **"This poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on."** (Mark 12:42)
4. What do the Gospels record Jesus doing on the **Wednesday**? **The Gospels do not mention this day, but counting the days from Mark 14:1 and John 12:1 there is a day about which the Gospels record nothing.**
5. **Thursday.** Jesus tells his followers to ask the owner of a house: **"Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples"?** (Mark 14:14)
6. **Friday.** The last words Jesus spoke before his death on the cross were: **"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"** Translated, **"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"** (Mark 15:36)
7. **Saturday.** Jesus' body was **wrapped in linen cloth and lay in a tomb cut from solid rock.** (Mark 15:46)
8. **Sunday.** When Jesus rose from death He appeared first to **Mary Magdalene** who went and **told those who had been with him.** (Mark 9-10)

Richard Reviews

Who Moved the Stone?

by Frank Morison

I suspect that some readers of CHRISTUS REX will find it strange to see this review as it relates to a book that was first published ninety years ago. Others will find it odd that this classic of Christian apologetics, a best-seller that has been reprinted at least 20 times in numerous languages, requires further review.

My well-thumbed copy of the book, that I do regard as a treasured classic, is dated 1981 and I have re-read it several times since then. I recall that I bought it to study during Lent that year, and that I had been rather lackadaisical in working my way through it. In those far-off days Christ the King, Claremont used to observe an all-night vigil at the Altar of Repose between Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. I signed up for an hour close to midnight and took along my copy of *Who Moved the Stone* to read during my watch. I have no recollection of the next eight hours, only of the surprise expressed to me at the rite of Communion from reserved Sacrament (which in those days ended the vigil) that I had spent the entire night in the Corpus Christi Chapel. Time had stood-still: and I had read the entire book from cover to cover. My experience was like that of Lee Strobe who wrote in the Foreword to a reprint of the book 'I owe Morison a great debt of gratitude. *Who Moved the Stone?* was an important early link in a long chain of evidence that God used to bring me into his kingdom. Morison's stirring intellectual exploration of the historical record proved to be an excellent starting point for my spiritual investigation.'

The book analyses biblical texts about the events related to the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The author (Frank Morison was a pseudonym of journalist Albert Henry Ross) was sceptical about the resurrection of Jesus and set out to analyse original sources and to write a short paper to debunk what he regarded as a myth. However, in compiling his notes, he came to be convinced of the truth of the resurrection and set out his reasoning in the book.

The book gives a vivid and moving account of Christ's betrayal, trial, and death as it builds up to the climax of the Resurrection itself. *Who Moved the Stone?* is a well-researched book that appeals to reason as well as accurately portraying the Biblical narrative. There are 15 chapters presented in a factual, almost legalistic way (some reviewers of the 1930 first edition assumed the author must be a lawyer). These include close examination of the legal system of the time, in chapters titled "The real case against the prisoner" and "What happened before midnight on Thursday?" The chapters "Between sunset and dawn" and "The historic crux of the problem" look in detail at possible explanations that would refute the Resurrection, and four chapters are devoted to the evidence of witnesses.

Having read this review I hope that it will either have reminded you of the important book that you have already read and may have persuaded you to read it again, or if you have never read it, that you may think it worthwhile to obtain a copy to read. It is a book I recommend unreservedly – and equally to Christians, Jews, Moslems, and atheists.

A Concluding Thought

We proclaim the resurrection of Christ
when his light illuminates
the dark moments of our existence.

- Pope Francis

CHRISTUS REX.

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