

Mark 16:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

Analysis

When they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away (ἀνακεκύλισται ὁ λίθος, anakekylistai ho lithos—perfect tense, "stands rolled back")—God solved their problem before they arrived. The passive voice suggests divine action: the stone didn't roll itself. **For it was very great** (ἦν γὰρ μέγας σφόδρα) emphasizes the impossibility they faced and the magnitude of God's intervention.

This detail typifies Mark's vivid eyewitness style—Peter likely supplied this detail to Mark. The rolled stone didn't let Jesus out (He passed through grave clothes, John 20:5-7) but let witnesses in. Resurrection power removes obstacles we cannot budge: our tomb-stone of death has been rolled away in Christ.

Historical Context

Matthew 28:2 records an earthquake and angel rolling the stone—Mark focuses on the women's perspective, what they discovered. Early Christians saw the empty tomb as central proof of resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). The stone's removal provided physical evidence that couldn't be explained by theft (guards prevented that) or hallucination (an empty tomb is objective reality).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What "very great" obstacles has God removed in your life when you stepped forward in faith?
2. How does the already-rolled stone demonstrate that God works ahead of our arrival?
3. Why was physical evidence (empty tomb, rolled stone) important for resurrection faith?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἀναβλέψασαι	θεωροῦσιν	ὅτι	ἀποκεκύλισται	ὁ
And	when they looked	they saw	that	was rolled away	G3588
G2532	G308	G2334	G3754	G617	
λίθος·	ἦν	γὰρ	μέγας	σφόδρα	
the stone	it was	for	great	very	
G3037	G2258	G1063	G3173	G4970	

Additional Cross-References

John 20:1 (Parallel theme): The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Luke 24:2 (Parallel theme): And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.